

WHAT IS COMING OUT?

“Coming out” is understanding your own sexual orientation or gender identity and then deciding to share it with some, or all of the people in your life. Coming out is different for everyone and there are lots of ways to do it. Some LGBTQIA+ people choose to come out only to themselves, and not to anyone else. Others may come out to friends, but not family. Only you can know what’s best for your life.

REMEMBER THAT EVERYONE’S JOURNEY IS DIFFERENT

There’s no wrong time to come out. Some people come out at a young age, some never do. Some people tell everyone they know, others only share it with a select few. There’s no right or wrong time or way to go about this, because how you come out will depend on your own experiences and situation.



IF YOU WANT TO COME OUT, GO FOR IT!

In our society, most people assume that you’re straight unless you say otherwise, which is why people come out. Coming out can be a liberating and exciting experience. It can also feel scary and overwhelming. There are many reasons you might want to come out. For example:

- You’re in a relationship and you’d like to introduce people to your partner.
- You’re looking for a relationship.
- You want to connect with people who are the same sexual orientation as you.
- You simply want to share the news.
- You don’t need a particular reason to come out - if you want to do it, that’s reason enough!

FINDING SUPPORT

Young people in search of support in their identities or help with coming out can check out these support organizations:

The Trevor Project:

<https://www.thetrevorproject.org/trvr-support-center/coming-out/>

TrevorLifeline 24/7 at 1-866-488-7386.

Counseling is available via chat at

[TheTrevorProject.org/Help](https://www.thetrevorproject.org/Help),

or by texting START to 678-678.

GSA Network: <https://gsanetwork.org/>

Q Chat Space:

<https://www.qchatspace.org/Learn-More>

PFLAG: <https://pflag.org/get-support>



DEALING WITH PRESSURE

You don’t ever have to “come out of the closet” if you don’t want to. You may hear a lot of talk about the importance of coming out. An unfortunate side effect is that some people feel pressured to come out when they’re not ready. They may even feel like they’re being dishonest if they don’t. Nobody should feel forced to come out before they’re ready — or at all.