

Being an LGBTQ+ Ally in Tennessee



*PFLAG is the nation's largest organization
dedicated to supporting, educating, and advocating
for LGBTQ+ people and those who love them.*

PFLAG
NASHVILLE



www.pflagnashville.org
to sign up for emails

PFLAG Nashville meets on most Third Tuesdays.
Contact us at info@pflagnashville.org or 615-208-4528
P.O. Box 331562 Nashville, TN 37203

The world is making a discovery that there is a regularly occurring, non-pathological, minority variant in the human condition known in our time as being gay. James Allison, Theologian, 2009

He compares it to the discovery of the New World of the Americas, when mapmakers who ignored this reality soon went out of business.

From the *Guide to Being a Straight Ally*, 2021, PFLAG National: Roughly half of people who are LGBTQ+ are not out in their workplace, and about half of LGBTQ+ Americans say that they have experienced discrimination in their personal lives in places like the workplace, housing, and education. Among LGBTQ+ youth in school, nearly 6 of every 10 say that they feel unsafe in their schools simply because of their **sexual orientation**, while nearly half say they feel unsafe because of their **gender expression**.

downloadable at <https://straightforequality.org/resource/guide-to-being-a-straight-ally/>
see also <https://straightforequality.org/resource/guide-to-being-a-trans-ally/>
and <https://straightforequality.org/resource/10-things-you-can-do-to-be-an-ally/>
and <https://pflag.org/find-resources/>

A little bit of history:

- May 6, 1868 - The first documented use of the word *homosexual* was in a letter from Karoly Kertbenny on this date, along with the first use of the words *heterosexual* and *monosexual*.
- May 10, 1933 - The first Nazi book burning was the library of the *Institute of Sexology* in Berlin where transgender research was being done. Anti-Trans laws can pose an existential threat.
- 1946 - The word *homosexual* was not in the Bible until the RSV.
- June 28, 1969 - PRIDE month is rooted in the Stonewall Uprising that began after one more police raid on the Stonewall Inn in New York City. Drag queens and trans folk played a major role.
- June 25, 1972 - Jeanne Manford walked with her son Morty in the third Christopher Street March.
- March 11, 1973 - **PFLAG** was born. Here is a short video on the story: <https://pflag.org/50years/>
- December 15, 1973 - The *American Psychiatric Association* board of trustees voted unanimously to remove homosexuality from the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*.



- October 11, 1988 - The first National *Coming Out Day*, following the AIDS Memorial Quilt remembering victims of AIDS.
- Summer of 1990 - A small group of LGBT Native Americans coined the term **Two-Spirit**, from the Northern Algonquin word *niizh manitoag*, for the coexistence of feminine and masculine in one human being. It seems that many tribes worked out ways for these people to find valued places in the community.
- October 26, 1996 - Surgical treatment of Intersex infants was first protested at the *American Academy of Pediatrics*.
- June 26, 2015 - *Obergefell v Hodges*: Prohibitions against same-sex marriage are unconstitutional per the U.S. Supreme Court.
- June 15, 2020 - *Bostock v Clayton County*: U.S. Supreme Court declared the Civil Rights Law applies to LGBTQ workers.

More to know:

- Being **Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Pansexual**, or **Asexual** is about who you are attracted to and who you fall in love with.
- Being **Cisgender** means that your gender agrees with the gender assigned to you at birth.
- Being **Transgender** usually means that your gender may not align with the gender assigned at your birth. Visit the *Middle Tennessee Transgender Alliance* at <https://middletntrans.org/>.
- Being **Nonbinary** can mean you don't identify with a gender.
- **Q** can represent **Queer** or **Questioning**.
- The **plus sign (+)** means there is more.
- The fastest growing queer identity among young people is the **B**, or **Bi**, or **Bisexual**.
- About 1.7 percent of people are born **Intersex**, meaning that it is not immediately clear that the newborn is either male or female, about the same percentage of people with red hair.
- Being LGBTQ+ is **not a choice** that a person makes but rather **a discovery** that is discerned. This is why using phrases such as *the gay lifestyle* and *gender confusion* can be insulting.
- From listening to life stories, we have learned that an LGBTQ+ discovery is usually accompanied with an awareness that a person has always known this to be true about their self.
- **Coming Out** as LGBTQ+ is a life-long process, and no one should **Out** someone else.

LGBTQ+ Identity, by Generation, 2023

Which of the following do you consider yourself to be? You can select as many as apply.
Straight or heterosexual; Lesbian; Gay; Bisexual; Transgender

	Generation Z	Millenials	Generation X	Baby Boomers	Silent Generation
Birth years	1997-2005	1981-1996	1965-1980	1946-1964	1945 & earlier
Total LGBTQ+	22.3 %	9.8 %	4.5 %	2.3 %	1.1 %
Lesbian	3.0	1.3	0.7	0.7	0.2
Gay	2.6	1.6	1.3	0.9	0.4
Bisexual	15.3	5.9	1.9	0.6	0.1
Transgender	2.8	1.1	0.5	0.2	0.4
Other LGBTQ+	1.0	0.4	0.2	0.0	0.0

Sum of categories may exceed the total because respondents can choose multiple identities.
Based on aggregated data from 2023 Gallup telephone polls. GALLUP

For pondering becoming an ally:

- Be polite. If someone shares preferred pronouns or tells you they are LGBTQIA, believe them.
- If no one has ever come out to you as LGBTQ+, please patiently be open to the possibility that you may be sending out signals that you are not a safe place to share their story.
- For young people who are LGBTQ+, even one supportive adult can make all the difference.
- Display the rainbow. Wear purple on *Spirit Day* with youth resisting bullying on the 3rd Thursday in October. (See GLAAD.)
- Attend a PRIDE parade and a PRIDE festival with other allies.
- Speak up...when you hear anti-LGBTQ+ slurs, jokes, or misinformation... Lead with why you are an ally.
- Read a banned book, perhaps *A Queer History of the United States*, *The Umpire Is Out*, *The Deviant's War*, or *Reclaiming Two-Spirits*.
- Watch a movie such as *Boy Erased*, *Birdcage*, *The Matthew Shepard Story*, *Milk*, *1946*, *Every Body*, *Prom*, or the British film *Pride*.
- Subscribe to weekly newsletters from *Tennessee Equality Project* during the Tennessee legislative session: <https://www.tnep.org/>.
- Keep learning. PFLAG Nashville is available for presentations on *Trans 101*, *How to Be an Ally*, and others.

We're here for you!