Presumed Heterosexual

When a child enters the world, society presumes that he or she will grow up to be heterosexual. However, this will not be the case for one in four of them.

Although it’s more common for people to become aware of their sexual orientation when they’re in their teens, for others, it may occur much later. Regardless of when this discovery occurs, it is absolutely essential to keep healthy relations with the family intact.

The family has been shown as the theme for the 2005 Edition of the National Day Against Homophobia campaign. Its goal is to shine a light on homophobia surrounding the family environment and to draw attention to the realities of sexual orientation issues within families.

BEING A GAY OR LESBIAN CHILD

If the family is the first place they experience incidents of homophobia in their lives, gay and lesbian children will hear rejection from their parents, allies, grandparents, aunts and uncles.

BEING A GAY OR LESBIAN PARENT

Some people accept their own sexual orientation while they’re in a heterosexual relationship and, on top of that, they have children, they may have a new partner or they live in a common-law or other non-traditional relations.

BEING SAME-SEX PARENTS

Same sex parenting is a new reality. For example, female couples give birth to children, both male couples and female couples adopt children or raise their children without the help of a biological father or mother.

FAMILY AND CIVIL MARRIAGE

Marriage for same-sex couples has the right to develop without having to be victims of homophobia.

BEING A GAY OR LESBIAN PARENT

Some same sex couples have children, they may have a new partner or they live in a common-law or other non-traditional relations. Many of these couples have children, they may have a new partner or they live in a common-law or other non-traditional relations.

FAMILY COUNSELING

The debate over marriage for same-sex couples will be affected by the fact that same-sex couples have the right to develop without having to be victims of homophobia.

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Taking Action

It Concerns Everyone.

Fighting homophobia gives true results only when everyone participates. The National Day Against Homophobia is the perfect opportunity for:

- Parents, to tell their children that no matter what their child's sexual orientation, it does not change their love towards them;
- Teachers and Instructors, to discuss homophobia in class;
- Libraries, to showcase books on homophobia;
- Employers, to implement programs to combat homophobia;
- Trade Unions, to organize consciousness-raising activities in the workplace;
- Community Groups, to forge awareness amongst their constituencies;
- Telecommunications Broadcasters, to present special reports and documentaries on the subject;
- Newspapers, to publish reports and articles on the subject;
- Radio Stations, to call upon artists and personalities to speak on the subject;
- Internet Broadcasters, to remove or refuse any homophobic content and to promote works that foster tolerance;
- Legislators, Governments and Municipal Administrations, to make a symbolic gesture, to express their disapproval and to promote tolerance;
- Employers, to invite clients to inform them on such atrocities;
- The General Public, to declare a National Day Against Homophobia;
- Employers, to present special reports and documentaries on the subject;
- School Boards and Management of Education Institutions, to include this subject in their teaching programs;
- Canadian Rainbow Health Coalition, P.O. Box 3043, Saskatoon, SK S7K 3S9 (1-800-955-5129 / www.rainbowhealth.ca)

The Many Faces of Homophobia

Homophobia surfaces in various ways.

Both in a conscious or subconscious level, homophobia surfaces in various ways and can affect anyone and can manifest itself in different ways:

- **Homophobic Attitudes**
  - Feelings or conditions that gays and lesbians are abnormal or evil;
- **Heterosexual Individualism**
  - The false belief that everyone is heterosexual and that only heterosexuality is acceptable and legitimate. This belief is based on the idea that the majority sets the norm.
- **Homophobic Language**
  - The use of vocabulary and expressions that can span from jokes to insults.
- **Internalised Homophobia**
  - The built-in institutional practice of putting gays and lesbians at a disadvantage.
- **Condoned (passive) Homophobia**
  - An extreme display of homophobia that leads to violence and can range from acts of violence to restrictive laws.
- **Internalised Homophobia**
  - An often sub-conscious form of homophobia that is a product of education and social values passed down by society. Gay men and lesbians, too, can suffer from this form of homophobia.
- **Interpersonal Homophobia**
  - Non-verbal displays of being ill-at-ease, feeling unsafe or experiencing fear sets the norm.
- **Homophobia-Infused Heterosexism**
  - Feelings or convictions that gays and lesbians are abnormal or sick.
- **Institutionalized/Systemic Homophobia**
  - The use of vocabulary and expressions that can span from jokes to insults.
- **Opportunistic Homophobia**
  - Being interested in homophobia solely for financial or personal gain, and not being associated with or connected to homophobia or with gay men and lesbians.
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Speaking Out Against Homophobia

A personal, social, and civic duty.

Just as we should for any other form of discrimination, we must speak out against homophobia.

- **National Day Against Homophobia**
  - An event that sets the norm.
  - We fight prejudice.

**Presumed Heterosexual**

A Family Reality

**National Day Against Homophobia**

**First Wednesday of June**

**www.homophobiaday.com**

**Fondation Émergence**

Foundations exist to support certain causes and to provide financial assistance. In this case, Fondation Émergence supports the development of projects and initiatives that aim to fight prejudice against gay men and lesbians. These projects are usually recognized by governments as charitable organizations and are therefore eligible for tax deductions. To make a donation, you can visit their website or contact them directly.

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**ON THE ROAD TO AN INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA**

The struggle for gay and lesbian rights has made more and more people see that it is possible to overcome the obstacles that society has placed in their way. This is the reason why International Day Against Homophobia has been established. The holding of an international conference in Montreal in 2004, entitled The Right to be different, was a turning point in giving an international scope to such an initiative. For further information, see www.holopobiaday.com

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