

Information and Guidance on Engaging Young Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual People

connexions

The best start in life for
every young person

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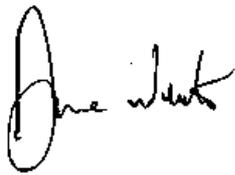
1. Foreword

This guidance aims to provide all those working in Connexions with information and guidance on many of the issues facing young lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) people. It would be impossible to cover every issue faced by both young LGB people and personal advisers (PAs) in one document but I hope this guidance will provide a good starting point for Connexions Partnerships to develop good practice in dealing with this group of young people.

This guidance could not have come at a more appropriate time. In 2001 the Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act equalised the age of consent between two males to 16 years old. In November 2003 Section 28 was repealed. This piece of legislation prohibited local authorities from 'promoting' homosexuality often causing the needs of young LGB people to be ignored. Also, on 1 December 2003 new regulations came out to protect LGB employees in the workplace.

Many young LGB people fear accessing mainstream services because of discrimination they have suffered in the past. Service providers have often failed to meet the needs of this group of young people, and I am delighted that Connexions is taking such a positive step to address this.

I hope this guidance will raise awareness amongst those working for Connexions and inspire Partnerships to engage this group of young people and offer them the best possible start in life.



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Chief Executive
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2.

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Al Fatiha – Gay Muslims

Quest – Gay Catholics

Jewish Gay and Lesbian Group (JGLG)

3.

Introduction

The role of Connexions is to support 13 – 19 year olds in their transition to adulthood. One of the key founding principles of the Connexions Service is ‘extending opportunity and equality of opportunity’ to *all* young people. The Connexions Business Planning Guidance (2002 - 03) states that a key requirement is to ensure that “*young people have access to services wherever they live and that these services are effective whatever their background, ability, gender, religion, race, sexuality or disability*” (see Annex A).

The aim of this Guidance is to raise awareness of lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) issues for young people and to encourage Connexions Partnerships to work effectively in meeting the needs of young LGB people. The principles and methods of inclusion are similar for all groups so this is not something new for Partnerships as they are already working to combat discrimination on the grounds of race, gender and disability.

The Guidance covers research findings, issues for Personal Advisers (PAs) to consider and the role of Connexions as an organisation. It is concerned with Connexions duties as service providers, not as employers. The European Employment Directive, which outlaws discrimination in the workplace on grounds of sexual orientation, was introduced on 1 December 2003.

Transgender issues have not been covered in this Guidance as this is specifically about lesbian, gay and bisexual young people. Transgender issues are gender related, not about sexual orientation. The Sex Discrimination Act was amended in 1999 to include Gender Reassignment Regulations in relation to employment. The Department for Trade and Industry are currently looking at transgender issues relating to the provision of facilities and services and a possible future move could extend it to education. However, this does not mean that Connexions Partnerships should not be looking at how they can support young transgender people. For further information on this issue please see Mermaids <http://www.mermaids.freeuk.com/> (a detailed list of support organisations is listed in Annex B).

There are serious issues to be taken into consideration when looking at work in this area. If young LGBT people in need are given the correct support and help at the appropriate time in their life this may prevent a downward spiral into multiple disadvantage (eg. truancy or absence from school related to bullying, homelessness due to parental disapproval, or physical and mental health problems due to lack of support).

It is common to assume that people are heterosexual unless they tell us otherwise. This is termed 'heterosexism' and is as damaging to LGBT people as homophobia. Homophobia can be defined as an irrational dislike, hatred or fear of individuals who are LGBT. It results in negative consequences ranging from damage of self-esteem to premature death. Heterosexism assumes that heterosexuality is natural, normal and superior. PAs should also be aware of 'bi-phobia' where bisexual people face prejudice and discrimination from both the lesbian and gay and the heterosexual community.

Many LGBT young people will not be sufficiently confident in their sexual orientation, or trusting of the reactions of others to disclose their sexual orientation. For this reason, it is important that in the long-term, Connexions takes a pro-active approach to LGBT issues in order to foster a supportive image and encourage LGBT young people to seek support if and when they need it. The support they require will vary and will not necessarily be related to their sexual orientation.

Connexions has a target to reduce the proportion of young people not in education, employment and training. Young LGBT people often find themselves in this category because they do not have the right sort of support behind them to help when they first experience homophobia and heterosexism.

This Guidance encourages Connexions Partnerships to review their policies (where necessary), identify any staff development needs in this area and ensure that the environment in which Connexions staff and PAs are working is welcoming to *all* groups of young people.

Young people have been consulted in the preparation of this Guidance and their concerns are addressed throughout (see Annex C).

4.

Research Findings

Research studies in the UK, supported by cross-national findings from the US, Europe and Australia, have generated a clear picture of the needs and experiences of young lesbian, gay and bisexual people (see Annex D for references). Time and time again, the findings point to the damaging effects of homophobia on young people, the invisibility of young LGB people and a lack of understanding of the needs of this group and effective service provision amongst service providers.

4.1 Emotional Well-Being and Mental Health

Discriminatory attitudes to homosexuality, and the invisibility of lesbians, gay men and bisexuals within society can have a profound effect on the emotional health and well being of young people. For many young LGB people coping with a sense of 'difference' within a youth culture which is based on 'fitting in', the sense of isolation experienced and the rejection by family and friends takes it toll. Young people who are victims of bullying or harassment face additional stresses.

Research suggests that young lesbian, gay and bisexual people are particularly affected by mental health problems such as depression, anxiety, self-harm and suicidal tendencies.

- One in five young LGB people have attempted suicide.
- Those young LGB people who have experienced bullying at school are more likely to be affected by poor mental health.

4.2 Bullying and Harassment

Experiences of bullying and harassment are extremely common for young LGB people, and research suggests that the school environment is particularly problematic in this respect. In a survey of 4000 lesbian, gay and bisexual people conducted by Stonewall in 1996, 40% of violent attacks on lesbian, gay and bisexual young people were found to have taken place within school settings. These are generally not one off incidents and have been sustained for the duration of the young LGB person's time in school.

Whilst schools are on the whole aware of the problems, many feel poorly equipped to deal with them effectively. Only 6% of schools include homophobic bullying in their anti-bullying policies and few have equal opportunities policies that include LGB people.

Metro Centre Sexuality Support Service

A 15 year old young man was referred to the Metro Centre's Sexuality Support Service by a Connexions Personal Adviser in Bexley. The young person had experienced extreme homophobic bullying at school and as a result had excluded himself. The experience had been highly detrimental to his self-esteem and he started seriously contemplating suicide.

The young person started attending Tribe, the Metro Centre's under 16s group, and started regular one-to-one sessions with the Connexions Sexuality Support Service. The service continued to work closely with the young person's PA, taking a collaborative approach with other agencies and service providers involved. This approach has been particularly successful as the young person did not want his parents to know of his sexual orientation. The PA has been able to take on a role mediating with the parents where the Metro Centre could not. The Metro worker also supported the PA in arranging a new school for the young person to attend where there are specific strategies in place to ensure he does not experience bullying again. As a result the young person is continuing to adjust to his new school, with ongoing support from both the PA and the Metro Centre.

4.3 Academic Achievement

Young LGB people who experience homophobic bullying are likely to truant or drop out of education. Recent research has shown that 75% of young LGB people bullied at school have a history of absenteeism and truancy, despite being academically proficient.

4.4 Housing and Homelessness

Young LGB people often find themselves homeless once they have come out as LGB. Family and friends may disown them. When they are in this situation they often are faced with homophobia from housing services and charities. There is a need for housing services and specialist agencies to train their staff in this area and create a culture of awareness and understanding.

North London Line LGB Project

A 16 year old young woman referred herself to the project. She had been given the number by the lesbian and gay switchboard. Her mum had thrown her out of home when she found out about her daughter's sexuality. The young woman was staying with a friend and needed somewhere to live. She was attending college and was concerned that she might have to stop going.

The project made a referral to a lesbian and gay housing service (Stonewall Housing) and she was successfully housed within their supported housing project. She has continued with her college course, is on a waiting list for her own flat and has resolved some her differences with her mother. They regularly meet up and talk.

What enables individual young people to be resilient in the face of marginalisation, or to resist processes of marginalisation, is their ability to develop and maintain their self-esteem. This is achieved through validation of their sexual identities and the provision of emotional/ practical support from peers, mentors, role models or on/off-line support groups. It is also achieved by the ability of young people to achieve success and validation in one aspect of their lives (eg. school work or social interest) that can bolster their confidence in other areas. PAs can play an important role in this process.

5.

Issues for PAs

5.1 Section 28

Section 28 is the common name for Section 2a of the Local Government Act 1986. This section prohibited local authorities in England and Wales from "promoting" homosexuality and also labelled gay family relationships as "pretend".

On 10 July 2003 the House of Lords voted to repeal Section 28 of the Local Government Act in England and Wales. This followed a similar vote in the House of Commons in March. The repeal of Section 28 became law in November 2003.

The existence of Section 28 caused confusion and harm. Teachers were confused about what they could and could not say and do, and whether they could help pupils to face homophobic bullying and abuse. Local authorities were unclear as to what legitimate services they could provide for lesbian, gay and bisexual members of their communities. It was often used incorrectly by those who provide education and services for young people, as an excuse to do nothing to support young LGBT people. Now that it has been repealed there is no excuse for inaction. For further information on national legislation and government guidance see Annex F.

5.2 Confidentiality

Young people have the same right to confidentiality as adults and there is no obligation on PAs to inform parents¹ or other professionals that a young person has 'come out' to them as LGB. The DfES 'Don't Suffer in Silence' bullying guidance mentions that a useful strategy in dealing with homophobic bullying in schools is to guarantee confidentiality to gay or lesbian pupils who report such bullying.

The Department for Education and Skills legal advisers have stated it is up to the PA to make a decision about what to keep in confidence. The basic principle is the welfare of the young person, and the younger the client, the more the PA should be inclined to sharing the information with others. In the case of sexual orientation, involving parents and teachers can be very damaging. All young people have a basic right to privacy unless their disclosure becomes a child protection issue. Some professional associations believe that parents will take out a case against them if advice offered runs contrary to parents' belief. This is not the case. There would be no basis upon which legal action could be taken, unless the advice offered did not safeguard the welfare of the young person.

¹ Throughout this document the word 'parent' refers to parents, guardians and carers

It will have taken a lot of trust and courage for a young person to make this type of disclosure and it must be dealt with sensitively. Colleagues should only be informed with the expressed permission of the young person.

However, for PAs operating in schools the situation may be different.

5.3 PAs Operating in Schools

Individual schools, although having common aims and principles are likely to have variations in their ethos, culture, priorities and styles. In order to work effectively together Connexions will need to determine how best to support each institution whilst ensuring equal access and quality of service to all young people. The PA needs to build up a positive working relationship with the school/college built on trust, with clear role boundaries and objectives.

Connexions' present position in schools is that levels of confidentiality should be negotiated between Connexions and the school via the Partnership Agreement. However, if agreement is not possible, the PA has to conform to school policies. Head teachers and governors vary in their attitude to Connexions and confidentiality. Some insist that the PA shares important information with the school; others are content that he PAs make their own judgements about whether or not to pass on information.

PAs operating in schools should ensure they are clear on both their Partnership's and the school's policies on confidentiality (line managers should be able to provide this information). These should be clearly explained to the young person before they disclose information.

The Schools Out! website offers useful links and information on available resources for those working in an school environment: <http://www.schools-out.org.uk/>

For further clarification on the areas of confidentiality and data sharing please see Module 4 (section 2.3) of the Diploma for Personal Advisers.

5.4 Child Protection

A clear distinction should be made between child protection disclosures and disclosures that a young person is LGB.

In some circumstances, child protection mechanisms may need to be triggered as a result of a young person's disclosure. Young LGB people, like young heterosexual people, may come to you with an issue about sexual abuse or exploitative relationships with adults. In such circumstances the PA will need to act quickly and decisively to ensure the safety of the young person concerned. Under these circumstances confidentiality cannot be maintained and PAs must follow local policies and procedures for reporting incidences of abuse.

In light of this, PAs should be aware that as a result of the Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2001, the age of consent between two males was equalised and is now 16 for everyone.

All police services have to produce a community safety strategy in partnership with local authorities and this often includes having a priority around hate crime, which should include homophobic harassment.

If young people under the age of 18 wish to make a complaint to the police it is likely they would recommend that their parents are contacted. If the parents do not know about their child's sexual orientation this may stop the young person making a complaint. For the young person, the risk of their parents finding out about their sexual orientation may outweigh the risk of abuse. However, the Crown Prosecution Service states that it does not have to be a parent present but an 'appropriate adult', who could be their PA. The Police are currently writing a policy on advocacy that should make the approach consistent across Forces.

5.5 Coming Out

'Coming out' is a term used by LGB people to describe their experience of self-discovery, self-acceptance, openness and honesty about their sexual orientation and their decision to share this with others when and how they choose.

All young people go through a process of discovering their sexual identity and determining whether they are heterosexual, lesbian, gay or bisexual. They have a right to be open about their sexual orientation if they so wish. The coming out process results in the person identifying as LGB personally and publicly if they so wish. The choice must remain theirs due to the homophobic reactions within society.

The strain of being unable to come out as LGB can cause some young people to suffer from low self-esteem, loss of confidence, delayed emotional development, depression and self-hatred. These emotions can lead to self-destructive behaviours including drinking, drug taking, running away, committing crime, unsafe sex, forming unhealthy/violent relationships, withdrawing from friendship and family networks, eating disorders, depression and attempted suicide.

Young LGB people need to consider seriously the potential implications of coming out in a variety of situations (at school, home, work, etc). Coming out can have a devastating impact on the young person and those around them if they have not fully thought through the implications and likely reactions of others.

Ultimately, it may be best to refer the young person on to a specialist agency who has experience of dealing with this type of situation. However, it is important to consider why a young person has chosen a PA to come out to. It could be because they have built a trusting relationship and do not want to talk to a stranger, or because they may not think their parents or teachers are appropriate people to come out to at this time.

'Coming out' does not just happen once in a lifetime. For the rest of their life they will have to make decisions about who to come out to and the likely impact of such a disclosure. They may have to come out more than once to the same person, as sometimes parents and friends carry on as if nothing has been said and continue to treat the young person as if they were heterosexual. They also need to be aware that other people may 'out' them where they themselves did not want to be 'outed'.

There is no set age at which young people come out and specialist LGB agencies can support young people aged 13 – 19. It is vital that PAs take disclosures of LGB sexuality at face value and respect the young person's right to define their sexuality. It is confusing and frustrating for young people to be informed that they are not sufficiently mature, or merely 'going through a phase' when they disclose that they are lesbian, gay or bisexual. Heterosexual young people are not told that they are too young to know their sexuality and young LGB people should be treated in the same way.

For further information on supporting young people coming out please see: Peer Support project: <http://www.peer-support.org.uk/> ('articles and advice') and Leicester Lesbian and Gay Action <http://freespace.virgin.net/lesgay.action/youth.htm>

Young LGBT people have limited opportunities of getting information outside LGBT organisations, phone lines, internet and specialised magazines. The invisibility of young LGBT people is characterised by the fact that their experience is rarely documented and that the LGBT culture is not represented in mainstream culture. There are several websites designed for young LGBT people. They provide information, support and contribute to the sharing of experiences, especially on the coming out process. These websites, phone-lines and support groups are crucial as they tend to be the first port of call for young LGBT people looking for information and support.

There are a number of specialist agencies you can refer a young person on to for support in coming out and a number of other areas either related to their sexual orientation, or just about issues in general. Try searching on the internet for local support agencies.

Please contact the group before passing their details on to ensure they still exist, and bear in mind child safety issues.

5.6 Responding to Disclosures

If a young person discloses that they are LGBT the PA should offer them the option of being referred to a specialist LGBT agency.

If the young person wants to talk to the PA, the PA should:

- Outline the confidentiality policy (in case the young person discloses information that will need to be acted on).
- Create a safe space by ensuring you will not be interrupted by the telephone or other people and, if possible, assuring them you are not going to tell anyone else.
- Offer them the opportunity to talk about their feelings, either with the PA or another appropriate person such as the school counsellor, a youth worker or Childline.
- Reassure them that there is nothing wrong with being LGBT (without being patronising).
- It is important to stress that LGBT issues are not just about sexuality. There are also emotions and wider relationships with friends and family to work through.
- Be aware of non-verbal communication as the young person may hear one thing but see another in your body language.

If a young person discloses that they are *questioning* their sexuality, go through the above steps and:

- Reassure them that it is normal for young people to question their sexuality as they develop and establish their identities. With time they will come to know and feel comfortable with their identity.
- Reassure them that they may be heterosexual, lesbian, gay or bisexual. Their sexual identity may change over time.

5.7 Sexual Health

The stigma and prejudice that surrounds LGB sexuality may make it difficult for such young people to feel good about themselves, and their right to pleasure and good sexual health. This is why it is extremely important to develop self-esteem work with LGB young people, and offer them support in accessing services to support their sexual health and wider health needs. Many LGB young people may fear that their sexuality will be judged when accessing services. It is important to talk to young people and allay their concerns and anxieties particularly in relation to the confidentiality policy of sexual health services.

Young gay and bisexual men have been two of the population groups most affected by HIV in the UK. They are fifteen times more likely to have contracted HIV than young heterosexual men. When young men are coming out or exploring their sexuality, they may be particularly vulnerable to HIV and other sexually transmitted infections due to the unlikelihood of having received an education in sexual relationships in school that addresses the issue of safer sex in relation to the needs of gay and bisexual men. As a result they may lack the necessary confidence and skills to negotiate safer sex, or pressures on the commercial gay scene in relation to sex, drugs and alcohol. The Terrence Higgins Trust is a good source for leaflets and other information for gay and bisexual men (Tel: 020 7831 0330) <http://www.tht.org.uk/>

Sexual health services have often failed to meet the needs of lesbians and bisexual women. Whilst it is true to say that lesbians and bisexual women are not at high risk of contracting HIV through sex between women, they are vulnerable to other sexually transmitted infections. For this reason it is important that lesbian and bisexual young women are made aware of sexual health services such as Genito-Urinary Medicine Clinics.

If a young LGB person discloses underage sexual activity, this should be treated in the same way as underage heterosexual activity and be covered in policies on 'Confidentiality' or 'Sex and Relationships Education' in schools. Remember the age of consent between two men is 16.

PAs should be aware of the Fraser Guidelines (sometimes referred to as the 'Gillick' principles) which provide clear criteria for the provision of sexual health information to young people aged under 16.

The Fraser Guidelines state that the adult providing advice or information without parental consent must satisfy themselves that:

- The young person can understand the advice and has sufficient maturity to understand what is involved in terms of the moral, social and economic implications
- The young person could not be persuaded to inform parents or carers
- The young person would not be likely to begin, or to continue putting themselves at risk of sexual or emotional exploitation and/or sexually transmitted infections
- Without advice, the young person's physical or emotional health would be likely to suffer
- The young person's best interests required the PA to provide advice and support without parental consent

5.8 Referral to Specialist Agencies

The important role played by LGB community agencies should be recognised and young LGB people should be offered referral to a relevant local agency.

In setting up and implementing referral systems, the young person must remain at the centre of all decisions. It is possible that the young person might not want to be referred on and might want the PA to work with them towards a solution. However, it is important for the PA to recognise when their professional (or personal) boundary has been reached and to negotiate a referral on with the young person.

LGB agencies can offer specialist support and advice to young people, and support social contact with other young LGB people. Young LGB people often find this support extremely beneficial. Many local youth services now offer some provision for young LGB people. There are also voluntary and community organisation that can offer local support. The National Consortium of Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual voluntary organisations may be able to provide you with local information (<http://fp.lgbconsortium.plus.com/>).

Individual Partnerships should make it their responsibility to keep an up-to-date reference list of support available at local and national level. Please check groups/websites still exist before passing their details on and please be aware of child protection issues.

5.9 Parents

If a young person chooses to inform their parents that they are LGB, or parents discover this, it may be appropriate for PAs to contact the parents concerned (with the permission of the young person) in order that they can work together to help the young person. Given the negative views and stereotypes held by some parts of society, it can be a traumatic experience for parents to discover that their child is LGB. They may have no social norms to help them define how they should respond to their child's sexuality and relationships. Most are unaware of where to find help and support. The PA may be able to address concerns that parents have and offer them support. Additionally, there are a number of national and regional agencies and resources designed to support parents of LGB children.

FFLAG (Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) have published a booklet that offers advice and guidance for families and friends of LGB people. This can be downloaded from **www.fflag.org.uk**

PAs may be able, or required, to provide support and objective information to parents of LGB young people. It is important that they are able to challenge prejudiced and misinformed beliefs held by some parents with sensitivity. They should be able to deal with this in the same way that they would deal with a parent who was espousing racist beliefs.

While it is important to support the parents and help them to support their child, the PA must bear in mind that whatever else is going on, the best interests of the young person are paramount.

5.10 LGB Family and Friends

It is important not to assume heterosexuality in parents when dealing with heterosexual or LGB young people. This in itself could raise a number of issues for the young person, such as discrimination and bullying, and feelings of shame and embarrassment. These feelings may also arise if the young person has an LGB sibling. There is often an unspoken pressure to keep their home life secret or devise an alternative family for themselves.

Siblings are often bullied because their brother or sister has come out or been outed. PAs may have to provide appropriate support to the sibling as well as the young LGB person.

PAs should be prepared for parents to approach them to discuss their child and issues that are arising for them because of either the parent's or the child's sexuality. Seek clarification with the young person on what they are willing for you to discuss with their parent.

5.11 Individual Strategies to Combating Homophobia

There are 10 simple steps that PAs can take to ensure young LGB people feel comfortable. These steps are by no means exhaustive but give practical guidance in combating homophobia.

→ **Make no assumption about sexual orientation**

If a young person has not used a pronoun when discussing a relationship, don't assume one. Use a neutral language such as 'Are you seeing anyone?' instead of 'Do you have a boyfriend?' Additionally, let young people identify themselves what their sexual orientation is.

→ **Have something gay-related visible in your office or environment**

A sticker, poster, flyer, brochure, book etc... Signs that most LGB people will recognise include the rainbow, the pink triangle and the double sided axe. If your Partnership subscribes to magazines you could persuade them to subscribe to the Pink Paper or the local LGB group's newsletter, and make sure it is visible within the office. Many local LGB youth groups will have posters or postcards you can put up. This will identify you as a safe person to talk to and will hopefully enable a LGB young person or someone who is questioning their sexuality to break her/his silence.

→ **Support and validate a young person's feelings about their sexual orientation**

Let them know you are there for them. If you are unable to support the young person, please refer them to someone who can. Do this in a sensitive way so the young person does not sense rejection. You may then need to spend some time increasing your awareness reading, learning and talking to people comfortable with the issue. It is the PAs role to work in a way that is inclusive of all young people so this issue must be addressed. If you feel you need support check things over with another PA or your manager.

→ **Do not advise young people to come out to parents, family and friends as they need to come out at their own safe pace.**

Studies show that 1 in 10 LGB young people are forced to leave home after they tell their parents. It is their decision and they have to live with the consequences. Help them figure out what makes sense to them and what the potential consequences (positive and negative) could be.

→ **Guarantee confidentiality with Young People**

Young people need to know that their privacy will be respected otherwise they will not be honest about this important issue. If you cannot maintain confidentiality for legal reasons or because of the environment in which you are working, let the young person know in advance. Provide a quiet space by closing a door or moving to a private office.

→ **Challenge Homophobia**

As a role model for young people, respond to homophobia immediately and sincerely. Do not let your colleagues or clients get away with using homophobic language, such as using 'gay' to describe anything in a derogatory way, or referring to people using negative, derogatory and abusive language based on homophobia. If left unchallenged people will never question the use of such terms. Encourage in-service training for staff on homophobia and its impact on LGB young people.

→ **Combat heterosexism in your environment**

Include visible lesbian and gay role models in your environment. eg., politicians, actors etc. Try and include diverse role models – do not use stereotypical images.

→ **Learn about appropriate organisations and LGB projects, help lines etc in your locality**

Familiarise yourself with local organisations that are able to provide appropriate support for young LGB people and call them before making a referral to make sure they are ongoing. More and more organisations are using websites to publicise themselves. However, remember that the young person may not want to talk to someone else – it will have taken enough courage to open up to you. In this case, you should maintain contact with a local support group to ensure the information and advice you are providing is correct.

→ **Encourage the adoption and enforcement of anti-discrimination policies within your Partnership to include sexual orientation**

Often equal opportunities policies do not include sexual orientation – if you notice this omission, draw it to the relevant person's attention. Also, if your Partnership subscribes to a diverse range of magazines and journals ask if you can subscribe to an LGB magazine such as the Pink Paper.

→ **Provide Role Models**

Young LGB people benefit from having open LGB role models (teachers, PAs, etc), although, obviously, this may not always be possible. Diverse role models give all young people an alternative to the inaccurate stereotypes they may have received.

5.12 Individuals with Multiple Issues

Young LGB people are not a homogenous group.

Like heterosexual young people, young LGB people's identities are made up of factors such as their gender, ethnicity, faith, disability, class, or family circumstances, as well as their sexual orientation.

Young LGB people may have individual needs related to different aspects of their identity, particularly if they are experiencing multiple prejudice or discrimination, e.g. being harassed because they are Asian and gay, or facing poor job prospects because of employers' discriminatory attitudes towards them for being disabled and lesbian.

PAs should not make assumptions about young people's sexual orientation based on other facets of their identity, nor stereotype young LGB people. PAs need to be able to respect individually expressed needs. They also need to be able to recognise the additional barriers that young LGB people from different groups might be experiencing and the potential consequences.

It is important that young LGB people having problems because of multiple identity and discrimination issues have somewhere to turn that can provide specific support for them. However, the extent and impact of homophobia means that such services are few and far between. Most of those that do exist are not aimed at young people; or focus on sexual health (not the only or main issue for most LGB young people); and/or are vastly under-resourced.

In many cases, the only LGB-specific support available locally (if any) will be a generic LGB youth service, which may or may not be willing or able to deal sensitively with multiple identity and multiple discrimination issues.

Stonewall's Citizenship 21 project tackles homophobia, racism and other prejudices and multiple discrimination by building bridges between communities and providing information. Its website **www.c21project.org.uk** has information and contact details on these issues, as well as highlighting the work of 52 local cross-community projects it supports.

a) LGB and Ethnicity

Young LGB people from minority ethnic backgrounds often face strong pressure about their sexuality. For example, they may have grown up surrounded by (racist) stereotypes of what it is to be an African-Caribbean man or an Asian woman, which run counter to who they know they are. Wherever they go they have to deal with people who wrongly assume that they are straight because of their ethnicity. They often cannot turn to their family or ethnic community for support because of specific (negative) cultural attitudes against lesbian, gay or bi-sexuality. They may also suffer racism from LGB communities and support agencies.

NAZ (Asian and North African LGB group) has posters and leaflets available - www.naz.org.uk

Terrance Higgins Trust (black and gay) <http://www.itstimetoaccept.org.uk/>

FFLAG – an organisation that provides help and support for parents - www.fflag.org.uk

b) LGB and Faith

PAs working with LGB young people in faith based organisations or from faith backgrounds must carefully consider the implications for the young person of being LGB in a faith context. Across the different faith groups - and even within them - there will be a range of attitudes and responses to LGB young people.

It is important that PAs do not assume that they know what these attitudes are and they must take the time to find out - sometimes on a case by case basis - before providing advice and guidance to the young person. There are a range of support groups for LGB young people from faith backgrounds, some provided by the faith groups themselves (see Annex E) and others that are independent and PAs should seek to use these as appropriate. In all cases, PAs must not presume to make value or moral judgements about the beliefs of different faiths. They must offer impartial advice and guidance that helps the young person to understand the possible implications of being LGB in a faith context and ensure that appropriate support is available to assist the young person in any decisions they may choose to make.

c) LGB and Gender

Young lesbian and bisexual women and gay men are affected by stereotypes about 'femininity' and 'masculinity' and about traditional or mythologised interpretations of gender roles. Some are told that they aren't 'real' men or women because of their sexuality, or it is implied. This has potential detrimental effects on their self-esteem and mental health. Some young people have their job prospects limited by other people's stereotypes about what gay men and lesbians supposedly can and can't do.

Young lesbian and bisexual women also have to deal with sexist attitudes to women's sexuality, and with misogyny more generally.

Marginalisation and a sense of isolation appear to be even greater among young lesbians and bisexual women than the experience of young gay and bisexual men. This is partly due to the invisibility of lesbians within the gay community. This invisibility exists in several countries across Europe and results in greater isolation and marginalisation along the lines of gender.

Young transgender people (those who are transsexual, transvestite or intersex) are often assumed to be gay or lesbian and experience homophobia (in addition to transphobia) because of that assumption, irrespective of whether they actually are gay, lesbian, straight or bisexual.

<http://www.outzone.org/girldiva/ithink.htm>

- information for young lesbians (mostly London based)

d) LGB and Disability

One of the ways that disabled people experience prejudice is that society denies, controls and/or abuses their sexuality (whatever their sexual orientation). This is also true for most disabled young LGB people. In addition, they may face physical, communicational and attitudinal barriers in accessing LGB-specific support: LGB youth groups may be held in inaccessible venues; they have to rely on parents or carers for transport to get to an LGB group but are not 'out' to their parents or carers; information isn't available in accessible formats; and non-disabled people in LGB communities can be prejudiced against disabled people.

<http://www.regard.dircon.co.uk/>

- REGARD – a national organisation of disabled LGB people

e) LGB and Socio-Economic /Family Background

PAs need to be aware that young LGB people's family and socio-economic background can affect their experiences of being LGB and of homophobia. For example, young people from lower and higher socio-economic backgrounds may have to deal more with their families' expectations on them to conform to social norms and to marry and have children. Middle class families' aspirations for their children are often defined more in terms of educational and career achievements and their concerns may focus on how being LGB might effect those aspirations. As has been stressed elsewhere, however, PAs should guard against stereotyping and question assumptions, and should respond to the young person's individually expressed needs.

Homophobic domestic violence by parents and/or siblings is a major concern for many young LGB people (irrespective of their socio-economic background). Police community safety units should be able to deal with homophobic and/or domestic violence.

<http://www.lgbt-dv.org/> - *Broken Rainbow – an organisation for LGB people who suffer from domestic violence*

www.c21project.org.uk - *for community safety unit contacts (Information Centre/Violent and Hate Crime)*

<http://www.acpo.police.uk/> (*policies / hate crime manual*) - *for more information on the police's position on homophobic hate crime, see ACPO*

f) Looked after young LGB people

Young people in care, also referred to as people who are/have been looked after, often face prejudice and stigmatisation.

Amongst the many reasons for the discrimination that they face are the frequent changes in placements they are likely to have had whilst being looked after and the subsequent disruption to their education. Other factors may be the many fallacies that exist about why young people are placed in care and negative labels frequently attached to care leavers.

Looked after young people who are LGB may experience additional discrimination on the basis of their sexuality while in care, and after leaving care.

g) LGB and Rural Isolation

In rural areas transportation is an important issue. Many villages have no bus service or buses only on certain days or at infrequent times. Therefore young people rely heavily on their parents to get around. If the young LGB person is not 'out' to their family, or their family are not supportive of their sexuality, their movements and access to support can be severely restricted. This is particularly the case for both rural areas and small towns, as support services for LGB young people are few and far between and will probably exist only in the largest town or city in the county.

This means that young people are left with the option of accessing information by electronic means (Internet or telephone). On the telephone there is the risk that the number could appear on the telephone bill. The increasing number of young people with mobile phones is helping to solve this problem, and most villages do still have a public phone box. If young people want to access LGB services and information on the Internet they will often find that their access is blocked by a 'Net-Nanny'. This is because words like 'lesbian' and 'gay' are blocked as a standard measure in most parental control software packages, and also by some libraries.

Often in rural areas and small towns everyone knows everyone else. In the unlikely event of there being a local drop-in facility or LGB service in a rural area or small town the risk of being seen using by someone you know is quite high. If the facility is shared with other groups the young person may pretend they are visiting the other group in order to maintain anonymity.

6.

The Role of Connexions as an Organisation

6.1 Policies & Procedures

The Connexions Service should be accessible to all current and potential clients, regardless of their background. To achieve this Partnerships must be aware of the background of potential users and of any specific needs they may have; in addition they must know how to communicate information about their services to them. Partnerships should be aware of the work of other agencies and try to work together to fill the gaps and avoid duplication. Many Youth Services are running LGB groups for young people across the country. Partnerships should use this resource to identify and build on areas of best practice.

There are a number of reasons that can prevent young people from using the Connexions Service. For example, in the case of sexual orientation, the young person may be afraid that they will be met with hostility if the subject is raised, or they may not even know that the service exists. They may have had homophobic experiences with other organisations and assume that Connexions would treat them in the same way. Targeted and appropriate publicity materials can help minimise these risks.

6.2 Monitoring

It is difficult to monitor a young person's sexuality as it is not something that can be easily asked when taking personal details. However, Partnerships can start to monitor the number of requests for information, advice and guidance related to sexual orientation and see if there is a significant increase once the above measures are implemented.

6.3 Consultation and Planning

Partnerships should plan their services to meet the requirements of the whole community. In some cases this may mean adapting these services to the specific needs of a particular group. Partnerships should remember that, although providing accessible services means adapting them to the individual user, it is essential to provide the same standard of service to everyone.

The key to providing a good quality service to young people is feedback. Partnerships should consult their clients regularly to measure both the take-up of the service by particular groups, and their satisfaction with those services. Partnerships might also think about commissioning independent research into what prevents young people from using their services and act upon the findings to enable them to constantly improve.

Effective services are rarely provided in isolation. Partnerships should know how their services fit in with those provided by other organisations. Consulting widely and maintaining those relationships established with other organisations will ensure any gaps in the service are identified.

6.4 Staff Awareness

Professionals who work with young people in schools and colleges make a substantial contribution to the development and emotional well-being of young people. For several reasons the PA may be aware that a young person is LGB when the young person's parents are not aware of this. The PA and the environment in which they work may be seen as a potential source of support if the young person's parents are not supportive.

Sexual orientation is mentioned in the PA training but not in any depth. Partnerships should look at providing specific training around LGB issues, such as raising awareness, how to recognise homophobia and heterosexism and how to effectively engage with young LGB people.

6.5 Sharing Good Practice

An effective Partnership is outward-looking and making the most of expertise already out there. It values its links with other organisations and shares its expertise in order to foster the development of good practice.

Partnerships have a lot to learn from other organisations, and them from you. Working together saves both time and money.

NLL (North London Line), an LGB youth project, is working in partnership with the London Lesbian and Gay Teenage group, and the Islington Connexions Service to provide individual, personalised support to help young LGB people in the London Boroughs of Camden and Islington to overcome barriers to learning. They have received funding from the Neighbourhood Support Fund to pay for two part time PAs and a part time IT, life and basic literacy skills trainer.

The young LGB people had complained about their experiences in statutory education and training. The complaints included homophobic bullying by both peers and staff members, the heterosexism of the people and the environment, a lack of relevant information and a fear of their sexuality being disclosed.

The main focus of the NLL project has been to provide one to one support based on the Connexions Personal Adviser model.

This has involved;

- Basic counselling
- Advocacy to other services such Social services, Housing services, Schools and other training providers, Play and Youth Services, and others
- Referrals to other agencies
- On going support, such as attending meetings with young people

- Access to the Net and other resources within the youth project
- Access to peer-support and a social infrastructure through the youth project

They have also developed a number of resources. These include;

- A support and information leaflet about the project targeted at LGB young people and their friends
- A series of posters providing supportive information as well advertising the project
- A web site (under construction)

In order to bring about change within existing organisations that deliver services to young people in Islington and Camden NLL have:

- Done and continue to do outreach work to promote the service.
- Attended conferences and staff meetings
- Delivered staff training to 2 youth projects in Islington on issues around sexuality
- Are currently delivering regular training to young people attending the E2E service in Camden looking at sexuality, bullying and difference.

Uptake of the service continues to grow. Often in the one to one sessions young people speak of their isolation and loneliness. The youth project gives direct access to a peer support network, a group of friends and a social life. These are vital to the personal and social development of every young person.

More and more professionals are referring young people to the service. Many professionals are struggling to challenge homophobia and heterosexism within their organisations. Some of the issues they face when trying to challenge institutional homophobia and heterosexism are:

- Lack of support they receive from other colleagues and in particular the senior management team
- Feeling isolated or being isolated when challenging the culture of the organisation.
- Lack of adequate and relevant resources and training to support LGB young people
- Lack of confidence in supporting LGB young people
- Lack of relevant resources to bring about change within the organisation

If you are considering starting a project in your area you should:

- Research local providers;
- Determine whether the need is there and if there is no service, lobby for it to be started;
- Contact local LGB support services. They will access research that you might need to lobby for a service;
- Look broadly for partners. Connexions, voluntary sector, Youth Services, education providers, Primary Care Trust, local businesses;

- Have courage and be persistent. You will be given lots of excuses as to why it is not a priority. This is just a cover for the fear associated with addressing this issue.
- Seek support from colleagues and work with them so that you can't be isolated as 'someone with a personal agenda'.

If you want further support or information you can contact:

Education Support project

North London Line
Barnsbury Complex
Offord Road
London N1 1QG

Tel: 020 7527 5914

Email: northlondonline@hotmail.com

6.6 Organisational Culture

The culture of a Partnership affects everything it does: how it delivers its services, how it plans new activities and how the people involved with it (managers, staff and service users) relate to each other.

Young people may access Connexions if they are LGB, or if they are questioning their sexuality. These young people may or may not be the victims of homophobic bullying. Having the opportunity to discuss their thoughts and feelings in a supportive and non-judgemental context is extremely important. Whatever their personal or religious beliefs, all PAs must support young LGB people. Negative reactions from authority figures are potentially very damaging to young LGB people. Be aware that the response they receive from you will affect how they tell others in the future.

A commitment to equal opportunities and diversity should be so deeply embedded in the culture of a Partnership that it influences all its actions. Thinking about the equality implications of an activity needs to become as routine as thinking about its financial or staffing implications.

Institutional homophobia means that LGB people are fearful of being visible in many aspects of public life. This lack of visibility allows organisations to justify their failure to acknowledge the needs of, and provide appropriate services/support for, LGB people. In this way institutional homophobia contributes to the marginalisation of sexual minorities.

Changing organisational culture means changing the way people think and act. Everyone in the Partnership must understand why equality matters. Just as importantly, they must realise what it means for the way they do their job. A good starting point is to review the Partnership's processes and structures, as this is a visible sign of a commitment to equality.

Above all, everyone in the Partnership must be able to see that the managers are committed. They must lead by example and ensure that equality is permanently on the agenda.

6.7 Organisational Strategies

The recommendations listed below have come directly from young LGB people on how services can better cater for them (Peer Support Young People's Focus Group, Manchester, 20/5/02).

- Partnerships should have clear Equal Opportunities / Diversity policies that deal with sexual orientation discrimination. policies should relate to both the employment of staff and the provision of services. All policies will need to be looked at to ensure that they do not directly or indirectly discriminate against LGB people.
- Homophobic bullying and abuse – there should be clear policies condemning homophobic bullying and clear procedure for dealing with complaints, which should be monitored.
- Training – PAs need to understand the issues around being a young LGB person and the type of difficulties they might face. They need to be able to recognise and deal effectively with homophobia, homophobic abuse and bullying.
- Pastoral & Support services – Young LGB people need somewhere safe and confidential to go which will provide support if needed. It may be useful for Partnerships to identify a designated person who young people can talk to about these issues in confidence.

- Information on External Support Services – An integral part of Connexions for young LGB people is to ensure that they can readily access information and contact support agencies. Posters and leaflets should be accessible. Many young people may not feel comfortable talking to PAs in a 'formal' environment but may wish to access support from specialist agencies directly. This should be respected.
 - Information on LGB support services should be available in organisational material and other appropriate information access points. These should be regularly checked and updated.
 - Provide positive images of LGB people both past and present. Do not just use stereotypical images.
 - Design social events so that they are welcoming to all.
- Local Connexions Partnerships can provide grants of up to £30k per annum to community organisations to support projects with young people, particularly those who are in hard-to-reach groups. However, there is considerable demand for these grants. To find out more you will need to contact the Partnership covering your area, details of which can be found on the Connexions website. The Partnership will normally have a VCS Co-ordinator or Development Worker who should be your first port of call.

Annex A

Section N: Equal Opportunities (2002/03)

**Key Requirements
(Cross Ref: SAS questions 2.12,
3.4, 3.7, 4.1, 5.4, 5.7, 6.3, 6.4,
7.2, 7.6, 7.7):**

- **Young people have access to services wherever they live, and that these services are effective whatever their background, ability, gender, religion, race, sexuality, or disability;**
- **Those working on Connexions are recruited, trained and employed through fair and open access to equal treatment.**

To meet these requirements, the business plan **must** follow the five broad equal opportunity principles set out below and **show** these clearly. These principles have been identified, in consultation with a number of organisations including the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) and the Disability Rights Commission (DRC) as encompassing the totality of Connexions Service operation and activity. These areas will be a key element in the internal quality assurance processes of each Connexions Partnership and actioning these principles will ensure the mainstreaming of equal opportunities throughout each Connexions Partnership. A best practice approach in respect of each of these principles is available in the *Connexions Business Planning Guidance: Website Annexes*.

PRINCIPLE 1: Management and Business Structures & Policies

Every Connexions Partnership (and its major sub-contractors) must establish management structures, including senior and board level accountability, policies, Equal Opportunities training and an implementation plan to deliver their equal opportunities obligations including those under existing legislation.

PRINCIPLE 2: The Service

Every Connexions Service must have in place monitoring systems to ensure the complete range of services offered, including those delivered outside the service premises, are consistent with and promote equal opportunity objectives the EO Best Practice Principles, including the complaints procedure, communications systems, resources and materials.

PRINCIPLE 3: Management Information and Data Systems

Every Connexions Service will need to establish client record, management information and tracking systems to monitor the effectiveness of action to counter stereo-typing and discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, sexual orientation and disability and to promote race equality as encompassed by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act. This is essential to enable an organisation to establish where it is and the progress it makes to meet its responsibilities for countering bias and stereotyping.

PRINCIPLE 4: Work with Other Organisations

Every Connexions Service will need to work with outside organisations, local networks and communities to develop and take forward strategies which promote equality of opportunity and challenge stereo-typing and discrimination including organising events, exchanging information and sharing good practice. To do this each service will need to have a comprehensive “map” of the relevant local and national organisations.

PRINCIPLE 5: Internal Personnel Practice

Every Connexions Service will need to ensure equal opportunities and promoting diversity is at the heart of the organisation’s personnel policies including establishing equal opportunities as an essential element of their training and development plan, and increasing the number of employees from under represented groups.

In addition to the principles the plan should show:

- evidence that adequate processes, including the use of the APIR Framework, are in place for assessing and planning how to help 13-16 year olds with significant barriers to learning; and
- how the Partnership ensures that all premises used for its activities and provision are accessible and fit for both staff and young people with LDD, including sufficient and appropriate equipment and information resources.

Extending Opportunity and Equality of Opportunity

1. Extending opportunity and equality of opportunity is one of the eight key principles that underpin the new Connexions Service. It cannot be treated as a one off project or a series of activities that can be grafted onto the Connexions Service's functions. It is something that must permeate the whole of the Service – that is, it must be part of each organisation's culture and core practice.
2. Equality of opportunity applies not only to the areas covered by the Race Relations, Sex Discrimination, Disability Discrimination and Human Rights Acts. It links to the responsibility that each service has for its local community. However, the Connexions Service will be asked to do more than merely comply with existing legislation and forthcoming European anti-discrimination legislation commonly referred to as the 'Race Directive' to be implemented in the UK by July 2003 and the 'Employment Directive' to be implemented by December 2003 for sexual orientation and religion/belief and by December 2006 for disability and age. Some aspects of disability will be implemented earlier than this deadline.
3. The 7th principle set out in Connexions: The best start in life for every young person is "Extending opportunity and equality of opportunity". This means that the Connexions Service's equal opportunities responsibilities go much wider to cover all areas where an individual or group of individuals is disadvantaged by virtue of their appearance, status or background. This ranges from individuals who experience bullying behaviour, including homophobic bullying, to those who have had to care for a relative on a long-term basis and as a result are subject to discriminatory action. It also extends, for example, to those who are disadvantaged because their religion or sexual orientation does not conform to the views of others, these will be given a legal base upon implementation of the European Employment Directives.
4. Of particular concern are those individuals who are affected by multiple disadvantages such as disabled people who are from a black and minority ethnic group. The Connexions Service must be able to identify and address the needs of these individuals.

Annex B

Transgender Groups

All groups appreciate being sent a 9x5 sae. Most groups have regular newsletters, some have meetings/contact lists/help for parents or partners/regional contacts/practical information. Most groups will have information/resource lists of meetings/professionals/medical information etc.

MERMAIDS

BM MERMAIDS
LONDON
WC1N 3XX

Web:

<http://www.mermaids.freeuk.com>

Email: mermaids@freeuk.com

Helpline: 07020 935066
(12 noon – 9pm)

For children and teenagers who have gender identity problems, their families, friends, carers, professionals etc.

THE GENDER TRUST

BM GENTRUST
LONDON
WC1N 3XX

Web: <http://www.gendertrust.com>

Helpline: 07000 790347
(before 10pm)

For all transsexuals. Has good links to other websites.

FTM NETWORK

BM NETWORK
LONDON
WC1N 3XX

Helpline: 0161 432 1915
(Weds, 8.00 - 10.30pm)

For female to male transsexuals.
Very good for legal info.

PRESS FOR CHANGE

BM NETWORK
LONDON
WC1N 3XX

Web: <http://pfc.org.uk>

Political pressure group dedicated to achieving full civil equality for transsexuals. Information packs available. Very good for legal info. regarding transgender issues (e.g. employment rights etc.)

WOBS

Web:

<http://members.aol.com/wobsuk/>

Helpline: 01223 441246

Women of the Beaumont Society – for parents, partners, families of TVs and TSs.

DEPEND

Email: info@depend.org.uk

A network linking friends, partners and families of transsexual people in the UK.

Annex C

Issues Facing Young LGB People

The following have been put together by the Sheffield LGB Youth Initiative

Barriers/Blocks

Bullying at school – school policies
– faith school policies

“Going to lose everything if you are out at school”

“Barriers to jobs because of sexuality”

Trust/Lack of Trust - confidentiality

Homelessness – being kicked out of home or unhappy at home

Shyness/Nervousness of speaking to someone new

Section 28 – “ A teacher said we couldn’t put up a poster about the group because of section 28”

Availability of PAs – who are they?

Lack of sex education and sexual health information aimed at young lesbian, gay and bisexual people in schools.

“Young LGB people’s happiness – or lack of it”

Things that help:

“Friendship & Support, more informal but confidential”

Anti-homophobia policies

Out LGB workers – positive role models

“Publicity in schools on lesbian and gay stuff”

“Workers that listen as well as advise”

“Info on groups and support available to all”

Annex D

Source Materials

Ford, H, 'Emotional Health & Well-being: Challenging Homophobia', MESMAC North East (school resource)

Ford, H and Rivers, I, Homophobic Bullying in North East Schools: Summary of Research Findings, MESMAC North-East, 2002.

Mason, A and Palmer, A, Queerbashing: A national survey of hate crimes against lesbians and gay men, Stonewall, 1996.

McColl, P, Estimates of Self-Harm for Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Youth in the UK, Rotherham Priority Health NHS Trust, 1995.

O'Connor, W and Molloy, D, 'Hidden in Plain Sight': Homelessness amongst Lesbian and Gay Youth, National Centre for Social Research, November 2001.

Public Health Laboratory Series HIV/AIDS Quarterly Tables, UK to end of December 1999 (Published March 2000).

Rivers, I, 'Social exclusion, absenteeism and sexual minority youth', Support for Learning, Vol. 15 (i), 2000.

Rivers, I, 'The bullying of sexual minorities at school: Its nature and long-term correlates', Education and Child Psychology, 18 (i), 2001.

Trenchard, L and Warren, H, 'Something to Tell You', London Gay Teenage Group, 1983.

Valentine, G, Skelton, T & Butler, R, 'The vulnerability and marginalisation of lesbian and gay youth', Youth and Policy: *The Journal of Critical Analysis*, 75, 4-29. (2002)

Warwick, I (et al), Playing It Safe: Responses of Secondary School Teachers to Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Pupils, Bullying, HIV and AIDS Education and Section 28, Institute of Education, 1997.

Warwick, I & Douglas, N, 'Safe for All: a best practice guide to prevent homophobic bullying in secondary schools' (2002)

Schools Out Website:
<http://www.schools-out.org.uk/>

Peer Support Website:
<http://www.peer-support.org.uk/>

Annex E

Useful Contacts

Stonewall Housing – support for homeless LGB people

Tel: 020 7359 6242;

(Advice Line) 020 7359 5767

Minicom: 020 7359 8188

Fax: 020 7359 9419

Email: info@stonewallhousing.org

Albert Kennedy Trust - Advice and support for gay and bisexual teenagers made homeless because of their sexuality,

Tel: 0171 8316562 (office hours)

Web: www.akt.org.uk

Connexions Direct - anonymous and confidential helpline offering information, advice and guidance to all 13 – 19 year olds. They can also be contacted through chat rooms on the website.

Tel: 080 800 13 2 19

Text: 077664 13 2 19

Web: <http://www.connexions-direct.com/>

Childline – a free 24 hour helpline for children and young people in the UK. Can also be contacted via their website.

Tel: 0800 1111

Web: <http://www.childline.org.uk/>

Biscuits Network

National activities for young bisexuals

PO Box 3, Herts. AL8 7DB.

Victim Support – support for victims of crime. Confidential helpline.

Tel: 0845 30 30 900

Stonewall – National organisation for LGB equality

Tel: 020 7881 9440

Web: <http://www.stonewall.org.uk>

Email: info@stonewall.org.uk

Stonewall Youth Project

Tel: 0845 113 0005

(Tuesday 7.30 – 9.00pm)

Web: <http://www.lgbtyouth.org.uk/>

FFLAG – support for families and friends of LGB people

Tel: 01454 852 418

Web: <http://www.fflag.org.uk>

Email: info@fflag.org.uk

Pink Parents – support organisation for LGB parents and their children

Web: www.pinkparents.org.uk

Intercom Trust – rural based group in South West England.

Web: <http://www.intercomtrust.org.uk/>

Lesbian and Gay Action –

generic LGB Youth web site with info on coming out

Web: <http://freespace.virgin.net/lesgay.action/youth.htm>

Terence Higgins Trust –

HIV and AIDS charity

Web: <http://www.tht.org.uk/>

Lesbian & Gay Switchboard -

a national helpline and information resource on LGB issues

Tel: 020 7837 7324,

Hate crime issues - contact the local police and ask to speak to their Community Safety Team.

Sexual health issues – contact the NHS for local details

LGB people of faith

<http://www.lgcm.org.uk/> -

Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement

www.al-fatiha.org –

Muslim LGB support organisation

www.safraproject.org –

Muslim lesbian, bisexual and transgender women

<http://www.questgaycatholic.org.uk> – Catholic LGB support organisation

<http://www.jglg.org.uk/> -

Jewish Gay and Lesbian Group

[http://members.aol.com/gender](http://members.aol.com/gendervariant/faith/sikh/)

[variant/faith/sikh/](http://members.aol.com/gendervariant/faith/sikh/) - Sikh LGB

web site which provides links to

Hindu, Buddhist and other LGB

faith websites. While the sites

don't have much information they

do provide links to other sites and

resource information.

Queer Youth Alliance –

The UK Alliance of LGBT Young People

National Social Political Support Organisation

Principal Representative of Queer Youth in the UK

Tel: 07092 031086

Web:

<http://www.queeryouth.org.uk>

Email: info@queeryouth.org.uk

Centre for HIV and Sexual Health –

The Centre offers a wide range of publications, resources and materials including packs and manuals, leaflets, games, posters, videos, credit cards and tool-kits around sexuality and sexual health

Tel: 0114 226 190

Web:

<http://www.sexualhealthsheffield.co.uk/index.shtml>

Email: chiv.admin@chs.nhs.uk

Annex F

National Legislation and Government Guidance

Local Government Act 1988

Details of section 28 of the Local Government Act 1988 applied to local authorities only and never legally applied to the activities of individual schools, teachers or governors. **Section 28 was repealed in November 2003.**

The Learning and Skills Act 2000

This puts in place the statutory framework for Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) in maintained schools and makes it clear that SRE is neither the responsibility of LEAs nor Health authorities, but of the school itself.

School Standards and Framework Act 1998

This Act placed Governors and head teachers under a statutory duty to prevent bullying

School Inclusion: Pupil Support – DfEE Circular 10/1999

This circular gave official recognition to homophobic bullying. It stated: “The emotional distress caused by bullying in whatever form – be it racial, or as a result of a child’s appearance, behaviour or special educational needs, or related to sexual orientation – can prejudice school achievement, lead to lateness or truancy and in extreme cases, end with suicide... Pupils should be encouraged to report any bullying to staff or to older pupils they can trust. Low report rates should not of themselves be taken as proof that bullying is not occurring”.

Sex and Relationship Guidance – DfEE circular 10/1999

This officially recognises the needs of lesbian and gay pupils, and the importance of tackling homophobic bullying.

Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act (2001)

This amendment lowered the age of consent between two men to 16.

DfES Anti-Bullying Pack: Don't Suffer in Silence for Schools

This was re-launched by the DfES in September 2002 and the pack suggests a number of strategies for tackling homophobic bullying. Each CXP has received 5 copies in September 2002

Stonewall's 'Safe For All' – endorsed by the DfES

Stonewall, the national organisation for lesbian and gay equality, commissioned a best practice guide to prevent homophobic bullying in secondary schools 'Safe For all'. This has been endorsed by the DfES and each CXP has received a copy in September 2002.

Employment Legislation - December 2003

Article 13, as approved as part of the Amsterdam Treaty, is the legal base to combat discrimination in employment and training on grounds of racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

Copies of the wording of this report can be made available in alternative formats. Please see contact details below.

Further copies of this publication can be ordered from:

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The logo for Connexions, featuring the word 'connexions' in a lowercase, sans-serif font. The 'c' is stylized with a white outline, and the 'x' has a white outline. The 'i' has a white dot. The 'o' has a white outline. The 'n' has a white outline. The 'e' has a white outline. The 's' has a white outline. The 'i' has a white dot. The 'o' has a white outline. The 'n' has a white outline. The 's' has a white outline.

The best start in life for
every young person