

Leading in Grace and Truth

With an LGBT emphasis
(lesbian - gay - bisexual - transgender)

Main Goal: Create a Safe Place to Belong

Lead your group to value acceptance, confidentiality, and honesty. Also, know what you can and can not keep confidential.

Atmosphere of Grace: An atmosphere begins with the heart but it is reflected in speech. Even casually using the phrase "that's so gay" in a derogatory manner shuts down an atmosphere of grace. Do not speak this way and immediately correct students who do. All students belong in

our ministry - no matter their beliefs or behavior.



A storm cloud can form in the soul when an individual feels tension between their religious and sexual identities.

What do I do if a student shares they have a sexual identity struggle?

First, remember the A.T.A.'s (below). Then, mentor and resource.

1

ACKNOWLEDGE

Acknowledge their **COURAGE** in sharing such personal information with you

2

THANK

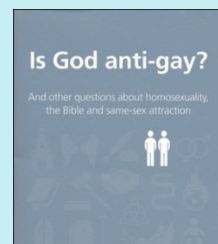
THANK them and show your **GRATITUDE** for their **TRUST** in you

3

ASSURE

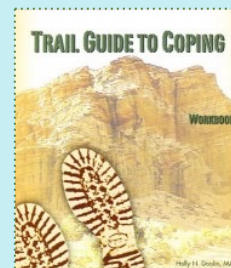
Assure them that if it's best to share with others you will let them know and give them a chance to do so first

Great resources for further information and help:



Is God Anti-gay? By Sam Allberry

A Biblical look at homosexuality and same-sex attraction



A Trail Guide to Coping to Coping

A workbook for teens struggling with sexual identity

What does the Bible say?

"All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right." - 2 Timothy 3:16 (NLT)

- ▶ God created us male and female (Genesis 1:27 & 5:2)
- ▶ Homosexual behavior is a sin (Leviticus 18:22 & Romans 1:18-27)
- ▶ We are ALL sinners in need of Jesus' forgiveness and grace! (Romans 3:23)
- ▶ We are called to speak the TRUTH IN LOVE (Ephesians 4:15)

What is a choice?

We are all tempted with various sins, some stronger to us than others. **Being tempted is NOT a choice but how we respond is our choice.** Having same-sex attractions or transgender feelings are NOT a choice. Claiming a same-sex/transgender identity label or participating in same-sex behavior IS a choice.

LAST THINGS TO REMEMBER:

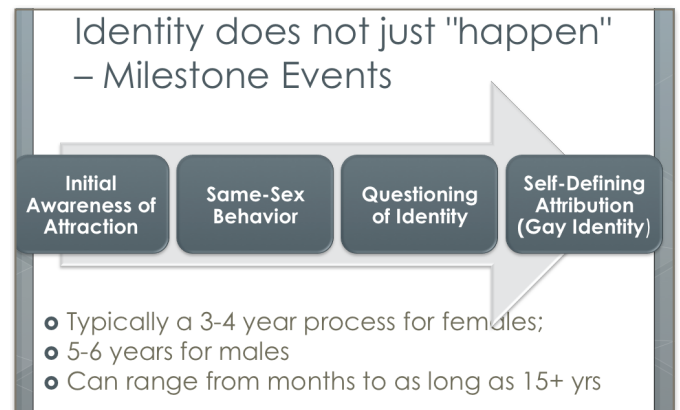
- 1) CREATE A SAFE PLACE IN SMALL GROUPS
- 2) WE CAN NOT TEACH OUR OPINION
- 3) WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER

You, your student, and their family are NOT alone. Student Ministry staff are here to partner with you and your students in helping them discover and follow God's incredible plan for their life! **Talk to your campus staff ASAP if a transgender student wants to be in a different small group than their physical gender.** If you have more to talk through, contact Student Ministry Staff.

References: Dr. Yarhouse, Sam Allberry, The Holy Bible, Lead Small

Adolescent Development

Sexual identity does not just happen instantaneously. There is a progression of milestones that happen as a person wrestles with their inner storm. **Encourage your student not to label themselves but to seek godly wisdom and support.** Adolescence is a time of significant



physical, cognitive, and social development. Teens are in the Identity Role vs. Role Confusion Stage. The two main questions they ask themselves are, "Who am I?" and "Where do I belong?" It's important that the church has supportive answers for both. Lots of shame, guilt, and depression can come with this storm, but **remind your students that Jesus came to set us free and overcome shame, guilt, and depression!**

We don't have to have all the answers when we lead, we just need to walk alongside with the One who does!