

Promoting positive childhood experiences in LGBTQ2IA+ families

All children thrive when they have access to the key types of positive childhood experiences (PCEs) we call the Four Building Blocks of HOPE. But, families with LGBTQ2IA+ (LGBTQ+) parents, caregivers, children, and/or youth can face barriers to PCEs because of bias. The good news is that families and communities can support and celebrate their LGBTQ+ identities by promoting each Building Block.



RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships

For LGBTQ+ families, building safe relationships other LGBTQ+ children and families gives them the chance to share common experiences and opportunities to create PCEs. Connect with LGBTQ+ individuals via social media. Search “LGBTQ+ organizations near me” online for national and local organizations and nonprofits. No local groups? Start a small group for your local community.



ENVIRONMENT

Environment

Being a part of an LGBTQ+ family can feel isolating, especially when children do not see themselves or their families represented in the classroom. Work with teachers and parents to make the classroom a more inclusive environment for LGBTQ+ families. Participate in parent-teacher groups or engage with your local school board members so that LGBTQ+ families are included in school or district-wide decisions.



ENGAGEMENT

Engagement

Camps and family meetups are great opportunities to encourage engagement with your child. Children learn the value of acceptance by being physically surrounded by families that look like theirs, where they do not need to explain or feel anxious about their LGBTQ+ identities. When appropriate, celebrate Pride parades with your children where they can express who they are.



EMOTIONAL GROWTH

Emotional Growth

Children need opportunities to talk about their identity or their family structure. Provide them with appropriate words that they can use to explain their LGBTQ+ family. Role play different scenarios so that children learn to be comfortable sharing their experiences. Brainstorm what to say if another child is negative about their family. Adults can also lead by example in their everyday conversations.