

## What to do when your child comes out to you Tips for parents/guardians

Coming out is often a task that requires an immense amount of bravery, vulnerability, and honesty. While it can come as a shock and can be disorienting, it is also an act of trust and an invitation to get to know your child's authentic self. Here are some suggestions on how to react in a way that will support your child.



### DOs

- Tell your LGBTQI2S child that you love and accept them for who they are
- ASK your child if and how you can share their LGBTQI2S identity to other people
- Welcome your child's partner and LGBTQI2S friends, get to know them and understand that they are important and supportive to your child
- Support your child's gender expression by using their correct pronouns, name, and affirming that they can dress however they want and style their hair however they want.
- Advocate for your child in the face of homophobia, biphobia or transphobia from other people
- Educate yourself on LGBTQI2S issues, and (if applicable) encourage LGBTQI2S acceptance at your religious institutions
- Believe your child can have a happy life as an LGBTQI2S adult



### DON'Ts

- Tell your child that it is "just a phase"
- Try to change your child's identity
- Blame your child's LGBTQI2S friends for influencing your child to identify this way
- Ignore their request to use a different name and/or pronouns
- Reject your child based on something they cannot change
- Allow homophobia, biphobia or transphobia to occur in the conversations around you, whether your child is present or not
- Prevent your child from participating in LGBTQI2S groups or events
- Police how they want to dress or style their hair
- Use religion as an excuse to reject your child
- Avoid talking about your child's identity
- Out your child without their permission