

Some Do's and Don'ts For Parents of Gays

1. Don't rush the process of trying to understand your child's homosexuality.

Do take the time to seek information about the lives of gay people from other parents of gays, friends of your gay child, literature and, most of all, from your own son or daughter.

2. Don't criticize your son or daughter for being different.

Do listen to what your son or daughter's life is like, and what kind of experiences he or she has had in the world.

3. Don't blame your own feelings on your child.

Do accept that you are responsible for your negative reactions.

4. Don't expect your children to make up for your own failures in life.

Do help your child to set his or her individual goals, even though these may differ drastically from your own.

5. Don't try to force your child to conform to your ideas of proper sexual behavior.

Do try to develop trust and openness by allowing your child to choose his or her own lifestyle.

6. Don't blame yourself that your son or daughter is gay.

Do be proud of your child's capacity for having loving relationships.

7. Don't respond to anger with anger.

Do look for the injured feelings underneath the anger and respond to them.

8. Don't discriminate against your own child.

Do defend him or her against discrimination.

9. Don't demand that your son or daughter live up to your idea of what a man or woman should be.

10. Don't try to break up love relationships.

Do respect your child's right to find out how to choose the right person to love and how to make relationships last.

11. Don't insist that your morality is the only right one.

Do say, "I love you."

12. Don't assume that your child should see a professional psychotherapist.

Do get professional help for anyone in the family, including yourself, who becomes severely depressed over your child's homosexuality.