

LGBTQ Families - Research Article Summaries**10. Children of Same-sex Couples:
Study Deals with Children's and Parents' Experiences in Massachusetts Following the
Legalization of Same-sex Marriage**

Hall, G. (2006). *These are my parents: The experiences of children in same-sex-parented families during the first year of marriage legalization in Massachusetts*. Paper given at the Family Pride Academic Symposium, May 2006, Philadelphia.

The following study deals with the experiences of 14 legally married same-sex couples and their 27 children (with an average age of 13 years) as related to gay marriage, couples' relationships, and family development.

An analysis of the interviews with the children revealed that they find different meaning in the availability and actual event of a same-sex marriage. Children feel that same-sex marriage is a necessary right, but do not necessarily feel a marriage ceremony is important—rather, it is a “very ordinary” event.

Children had a strong influence on many couples' decisions to get married. Same-sex parents discussed gaining numerous advantages for their children and themselves as a result of getting married. They felt their children would experience a greater sense of pride, belonging, or permanence when their parents were “legally married”. The study did not confirm whether these feelings were shared by children. Since most of the children had peers who also had same-sex parents, it may not be the case that having legally married parents is essential for children to feel “part of the group”. However, the results do indicate that children of same-sex parents maintain a balance between feeling their families are “unique” and “no different” from other families.

Most children in the study were the biological children of one member of the couple and had been adopted by the other member of the couple. The other children had been adopted or fostered by the couples. Same-sex couples had been partners an average of 13 years.