

FAMILY EQUALITY COUNCIL

PATH² PARENTHOOD

Supporting the Bi+ Community on the Path to Parenthood

A GUIDE FOR BI+ PEOPLE IN DIFFERENT-SEX RELATIONSHIPS

Research is beginning to suggest that members of the bi+ community who have children in the context of a different-sex relationship may be more likely to experience depression and anxiety symptoms in the postpartum period.

The speculation is that during the transition to parenthood, there is a loss of identity around sexual orientation and a feeling of disconnection from the LGBTQ+ community.



If you find yourself in this category of “invisible sexual minorities,” meaning your current relationship appears “mainstream” to others, we have created this resource for you. Affirming all parts of your identity throughout major life transitions is key to emotional well-being, and the shift to parenthood is no exception! The suggestions below aim to keep you connected to your identity throughout the pregnancy and parenthood journey.

Learn more & contact Family
Equality staff at:
www.familyequality.org/p2p



Advancing Equality for
LGBTQ Families



DURING PREGNANCY

- Find an LGBTQ+-friendly healthcare provider.
- Disclose your sexual orientation to your provider early. Allow it to be part of the full picture of who you are in the room.
- Find local social support from others who know and support your identity as bi+.
- Connect virtually to other bi+ parents who have created their families in the context of a different-sex relationship. Many groups exist on social media to support you!

POSTPARTUM AND BEYOND

- **Consider hiring a queer doula to support you in the postpartum phase.** During the interview process, mention that affirming your identity postpartum is a goal of hiring a doula. Having a doula around helps all new parents, but for those at risk of postpartum depression and anxiety, the support can be life-changing.

Not only will the doula be able to assist with the reality of life with a newborn, most doulas are also trained on screening for postpartum mood disorders. If you are struggling, a doula will be to help you identify the struggle and access care earlier than your six-week postpartum check-up. A queer doula will be able to validate and affirm your sexual orientation in this new role of parenthood.



- **Stay connected with the LGBTQ+ community.** Regardless of whether you are in a different-sex relationship, YOU are a member of the LGBTQ+ community which means your child is part of an LGBTQ+ family. Find a local LGBTQ+ parent group, consider joining Family Equality at Family Week in Provincetown each summer, connect with virtual bi+ parents groups, speak out about bi+ realities in Op-Eds/podcasts/blog posts, or attend LGBTQ+ events in your community.
- **Stock your child's shelves with books of diverse family structures.** Allow your identity to be part of your family narrative.

The transition to parenthood is a major life shift for all who enter into it. When a part of your identity feels closeted or minimized, it can make the metamorphosis that much more challenging. If you are looking for ways to get engaged with the LGBTQ+ community, Family Equality is here for you. Please don't hesitate to reach out.



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