



International Day
Against **Homophobia**
and **Transphobia**

An initiative from



Taking action for the emergence of a
world inclusive of sexual and gender diversity.

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International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia

The annual campaigns to fight homophobia and transphobia culminate on May 17th, the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia. This date is symbolic; the World Health Organization (WHO) removed homosexuality from its list of mental illnesses on May 17, 1990.

Holding an annual theme day dedicated to fighting homophobia and transphobia is an idea that originated in Quebec in 2003, at the initiative of Fondation Émergence. With the help of partners, this day also became recognized in Canada, Belgium, France and other countries, finally becoming an international day: homophobiaday.org.

The annual campaigns to fight homophobia and transphobia belong to everyone. Fondation Émergence creates the annual theme, produces promotional material and invites people from all backgrounds to adopt the campaign, organize activities and spread the message.

Participate!

This day belongs to YOU!

The campaign to fight homophobia and transphobia provides a special opportunity to contribute to the development of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in many ways, including:

- hanging posters and distributing brochures;
- using the campaign's promotional material available on the internet or any other relevant material to spark discussion;
- organizing activities, conferences or talks or setting up booths;
- screening films and documentaries that have an LGBT theme;
- speaking out against acts of homophobia and transphobia;
- asking administrative and governmental bodies to adopt resolutions to support the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia;
- encouraging major players in civil society to acknowledge the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia and to participate in the campaign.

Find out more ways you can participate by going to homophobiaday.org and clicking on "Participate"

Resources for immediate assistance



Aide aux Trans du Québec

24/7 helpline and e-mail assistance during daytime hours. Aide aux Trans du Québec's main goals are to assist transgender-identifying people and help them break out of their isolation.

www.atq1980.org



Interligne

24/7 helpline, online chat and e-mail for LGBTQ+ communities, their friends and family, and service providers in the health, education and social service sectors.

www.interligne.co

Tools and resources

All of Fondation Émergence's awareness campaigns since 2001 can be seen at www.homophobiaday.org. It is also possible to order material such as stickers, information guides, informational brochures, etc., at the website free of charge.

Visit the "Resources" section on
www.homophobiaday.org to find out about
other available resources and tools,
suitable for all settings.

Same-sex couples

A love story



An initiative from



homophobiaday.org

Fondation Émergence needs your donations

Donations by cheque made payable to:
Fondation Émergence inc.

Online donations can be made on homophobiaday.org



Fondation Émergence is a registered charitable organization authorized to issue official receipts for income tax purposes. Charitable registration number: 875907420RR0001

Same-sex couples. A love story
A campaign produced in 2011



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Same-sex couples

A love story

Every year, the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia is an opportunity to launch a campaign to raise awareness about the realities of sexual and gender diversity. The theme of the 2011 campaign is *Same-Sex Couples – a Love Story*.

Too often, homosexuality is seen in a restricted way, with sexual orientation being merely the expression of one's sexuality. As with heterosexual couples, feelings of love and affection are the basis of the formation of same-sex couples. Sexuality definitely plays a role in most couple's relationship and is often what kindled the flame initially. However, couples shouldn't be reduced to simple sexual acts, they are made of so much more !

Same-sex couples, whether made up of two women or two men, experience the same joys and hardships as different-sex couples.

Defining roles

Contrary to an enduring popular belief, couples consisting of two men or two women do not copy the stereotypical roles of a heterosexual couple. In a lesbian couple, there is not one partner that "is the man" and one who "is the woman". The same holds true for two men in a relationship. However, as for heterosexual couples, commitment, support, mutual assistance, equality, complementarity and task-sharing are important values for same-sex couples. In this respect, they are no different from heterosexual couples.



The awakening of love

It is often a love-at-first-sight experience with a person of the same sex that makes a young person aware that they are not heterosexual and it might mark the beginning of their first relationship. Although parents are rarely prepared for this type of situation, their love for their children should allow them to support them in their new life.

Sexuality

Sexuality takes up a different place and manifests in different ways in each relationship. Each couple determines its sexual behavior and its commitment to one another. No matter their sexual orientation or their gender identity, it's important to respect people's right to privacy.

Domestic violence

As with heterosexual couples, couples consisting of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people can potentially experience domestic violence, but the victim rarely speaks out. The victim may fear that they won't be believed or that they'll be ridiculed, or they may not want to participate in giving a negative image of LGBT couples. Society's ideas about violence in the intimate relations of LGBT people can also contribute to stigmatizing them and perpetuating the myths about them.

Family

Most same-sex couples do not have children. This can be attributed to many factors, such as the perceived mismatch between the parental identity and a homosexual identity and the fear of raising children in a heterosexist environment. These factors can weigh negatively on their decision to be parents. However, the number of LGBT people with children increases with legal, social and scientific advancements.

Growing old as a couple

Most LGBT couples want to grow old together. They do not want to be separated during the last years of their life. Neither do they want to go back in the closet. Some couples are not comfortable about formalizing their commitment, but they should be encouraged to make the necessary arrangements to avoid having their rights negatively affected at the end of their life. In addition, it is important to insure that the living environments and services offered to older adults are sensitive to the realities of older LGBT people.

To learn more about LGBT seniors, go to the *Aging Gayfully* section on homophobiaday.org

Couples and rights

Some countries, such as Canada since 2005, recognize civil marriage and common-law marriage for same-sex couples. The situation is different from one country to another. Several countries recognize LGBT couples' legal status without allowing marriage. As for religious ceremonies, each church determines its code of conduct.

Children of LGBT families

Many LGBT people, single or couples, want to have children by adoption or assisted reproduction and in many places, such as Quebec and Canada, there is a legal relationship of filiation between the children and their two same-sex parents.

Concerning the child's development, an increasing number of scientific studies show that children brought up by one or two LGBT parents develop as well on the emotional, cognitive, social and sexual levels as children raised by heterosexual parents, and that they are as well-balanced.



Famous LGBT couples

In all civilizations and periods, many famous LGBT couples have marked history, literature, arts, politics and science. Among them, some were discreet about their relationship, while others were daring enough to assert their difference and claim their right to equal treatment.

Here are a few examples of couples who have served as models for generations of LGBT people: Leonardo de Vinci and Salai, Paul Verlaine and Arthur Rimbaud, Marguerite Yourcenar and Grace Frick, Frida Kahlo and Chavela Vargas, and Ellen DeGeneres and Portia De Rossi.

Those couples and more are featured on our exposition *d'Apollon à DeGeneres*. To learn more, visit homophobiaday.org.

