

 **Coming Out: Living authentically as LGBTQ**

* **What it means?** Coming out is when a person decides to reveal an important part of who they are with someone in their life. For many LGBTQ people, this involves sharing their sexual orientation and/or gender identity.
* Coming out is a personal decision. There is not right or wrong way to do it. A person can come out at any age and do it through different ways:
	+ Calling someone on the phone
	+ Sending a text
	+ Sending an email
	+ Writing a letter
	+ Talking with someone in person
* LGBT Youth that come out to their immediate families are more likely to report being happy than those who are not out.
* 9 in 10 LGBT youth are out to their close friends.
* 26% of LGBT youth say their biggest problems are not feeling accepted by their family, trouble at school/bullying, and fear to be out/open.
* 4 in 10 LGBT youth say the community in which they live is not accepting of LGBT people.
* About half (53%) of LGBT Latinx youth are out to their immediate family; more than a quarter (29%) are out to their extended family and only 17% are out to their doctors.

**What can we do?**

1. If someone comes out to you, make that individual feel heard, seen and respected by saying something like “Thank you so much for sharing this with me.”
2. Reiterate your care and love and ask what you can do to provide support.
3. Ask for permission before sharing this information with someone else.
4. If you are planning to come out, there is not perfect time and place to do it but we encourage you to choose a time when you are relaxed and willing to listen and a place where you feel safe (it can be a public space or at home).
	1. Unfortunately, coming out doesn’t always go according our plans. It could be efficient to prepare a back-up plan for housing, food, transportation and school in case it’s needed.
5. Either, if you are out living authentically or if you are a LGBTQ ally and supporter, Celebrate National Coming Out Day (Sunday, October 11th, 2020) it will motivate others to come out and will increase visibility for the LGBTQ community and Allies.
6. If you are having a hard time coming out or processing that someone came out to you. We invite you to join individual counseling or support groups such as “El amor hace la familia.”- a spanish speaking PFLAG ( Parents and Friends of Gay and Lesbians) support group in NYC, or look for your local PFLAG chapter.
7. Join as a volunteer for LGBTQ Community based organizations. Share time, ideas and smiles with community members.

<https://www.thetrevorproject.org/trvr_support_center/coming-out/>

<https://www.thetrevorproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Coming-Out-Handbook.pdf>

<https://www.hrc.org/youth-report/view-and-share-statistics>

<https://assets2.hrc.org/files/assets/resources/LatinoYouthReport-FINAL.pdf?_ga=2.267891022.1918887848.1587847319-1099392535.1587847319>