



**LESBEHONEST!**

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## INTRO

*We are a small sub group from ALLsorts LGBT group in Dundee who feel there is a lack of understanding and knowledge of lesbian issues and the experience of being a lesbian in society. Therefore we have decided to write this booklet to fill this void.*

*We aim to raise awareness of lesbian stereotypes, everyday issues that they go through and outline STI's and how to avoid them. We feel that if we raise this awareness then there will be less of a stigma for lesbians and it will be more of a help for those who wish to educate themselves.*

*We hope that this will give knowledge to everyone who reads it in one way or another. Whether you are a school pupil looking for other people's experiences of being out, a parent of someone who is out wanting to educate themselves in the general issues lesbians go through, or someone who wants to avoid getting an infection.*

### **DISCLAIMER**

**The content of this booklet reflects the personal opinions of its creators based on their own experiences. There are no accepted standard definitions.**

# STEREOTYPES

## ***What Is a Stereotype?***

*The definition of a stereotype is any commonly known public belief about a certain social group or a type of individual. Stereotypes are often confused with prejudices, because, like prejudices, a stereotype is based on a prior assumption. Stereotypes are often created about people of specific cultures or races.*

*Almost every culture or race has a stereotype!*

*Stereotypes are not just centered on different races and backgrounds, however. Gender stereotypes also exist. For example, if you say that men are better than women, you're stereotyping all men and all women. If you say that all women like to cook, you are stereotyping women.*

*Sexual orientation stereotypes are also common.*

*These stereotypes occur when you have negative views on gays, lesbians, and transgender individuals. People who have these negative views are often known as homophobic.*

## ***Why Is it Bad to Stereotype?***

*Stereotyping is not only hurtful, it is also wrong. Even if the stereotype is correct in some cases, constantly putting someone down based on what you think you know about LGBT young people will not encourage them to succeed.*

## STEREOTYPES

*Stereotyping can also lead people to live lives driven by hate, and can cause the victims of those stereotypes to be driven by fear. For example, LGBT people are afraid to admit their sexuality in fear of being judged. It is a lose-lose situation, both for those who are doing the stereotyping and those who are victims.*

*These are examples of the impact that stereotypes can have on young people:*

- stereotypes make young people feel they have to look or feel a certain way to be LGBT.
- stereotypes make it harder for young people to come out.
- stereotypes perpetuate (make it continue for a long time) homophobia as they feed into gender imbalances that exist in society.

## STI's

### **Sexually transmitted infections are very common.**

You don't have to have lots of partners to catch one!

**Many infections have no symptoms and so the only way to be sure that you do not have an infection is to have an STI test.**

**Even if you don't have symptoms, this does not mean that the infection is not causing damage to your health or to your fertility. For example, Chlamydia often does not cause symptoms, but can cause damage, which can result in infertility (not able to have children) many years later.**

**Condoms/Dental Dams do reduce the risk of catching a sexually transmitted infection if used properly, however some infections can be transmitted during close genital contact, or by having oral sex.**

## STI's

*You should be screened for sexually transmitted infections if you are a woman, are sexually active and have any of the following symptoms:*

- A change in vaginal discharge.**
- Pain or bleeding during sex.**
- Bleeding between your periods.**
- New, lower abdominal pain.**
- Lumps or blisters in the genital area.**

*You should also be tested for sexually transmitted infections if you have no symptoms or signs but have:*

- Had sex with a partner who has been found to have a sexually transmitted infection.**
- Have been contacted by the sexual health clinic and told that you may have been in contact with a sexually transmitted infection.**
- Had unprotected sex with a new partner.**
- Had unprotected sex in the past.**

*Information gathered from  
[www.sexualhealthtayside.org](http://www.sexualhealthtayside.org) April 2014*

# FACEBOOK



**Jane** I wish I had the guts  
About an hour ago · [Like](#)



**Jodi** You okay? PM me <3  
57 minutes ago · [Like](#)



**Jane** I've been waiting ages I'm just going to say it I'm gay  
51 minutes ago · [Like](#)



**Cally** Frape!  
48 minutes ago · [Like](#) ·  8 people



**Beth** Go out with me then?  
38 minutes ago · [Like](#)



**Carol** Dyke  
37 minutes ago · [Like](#)



**Jodi** well done so proud of you  
37 minutes ago · [Like](#)

# FACEBOOK



**Jane** I'm telling the truth. I actually am gay

29 minutes ago · [Unlike](#) · 25 people



**Jodi** aww babe, so proud of you for this, you don't need any of those haters I love you for who you are and you are amazing. Always here for you.

26 minutes ago · [Like](#) · 40 people



**Jane** Change in Relationship: going out with Gemma

21 minutes ago · [Like](#)



**Cally** with boyish butch lezzer

20 minutes ago · [Like](#)



**Jodi** Aww...

17 minutes ago · [Like](#)



**Beth** Dunno why people are homophobic! It really gets to me!

12 minutes ago · [Like](#)



**Carol** What, are you a dyke or something?

11 minutes ago · [Like](#) · 4 people



**Jane** Yeah, I'm a lesbian, get over it!!

6 minutes ago · [Like](#)

## CELEBRITY ROLE MODELS

### UK

Claire Balding (TV presenter)

Heather Peace (Actress/Singer)

Sue Perkins (TV presenter)

Nicola Adams (Olympic Boxer)

Carol Anne Duffy (Poet)

Sarah Outen (Rower)

Casey Stoney (Englands football Captain)

Jane Hill (Newsreader)

Mary Portas (TV Presenter)

Claire Harvey (Paralympic Volleyball Player)

### USA

Megan Rapinoe (Footballer)

Wanda Sykes (Comedienne)

Rachel Maddow (News Presenter)

Portia and Ellen Degeneres

(Actress and TV Host/Comedienne/Actress)

Jane Lynch (Actress)

Mary Lambert (Singer)

## TRUE STORIES

### Story 1

*I thought I would have to come out to my distant family, but it turned out that I didn't need to. Not because they thought it was obvious, but because they genuinely didn't expect me being a lesbian to be a big deal.*

*They automatically accepted that not everyone is heterosexual and never presumed that if I was seeing someone it had to be a boy. This was reassuring and I am lucky because not every family could have responded this way.*

### Story 2

*When I came out to my guardian she pleaded for years that it was 'just a phase' and that 'I was too young to know' but, recently, after given enough time she has come to terms with it and now understands that it is part of who I am.*

*It might have taken longer than I hoped for her to accept me, but when she did it made me feel really happy.*

### Story 3

*In school, a girl in my PE class had a problem with me being a lesbian and indirectly objected to working with me. This led me into picking a different course because it made me uncomfortable knowing that I made her uncomfortable.*

*I ended up doing a completely different course because I couldn't stand her nasty comments and because of this I was unable to do what I really wanted.*

## TRUE STORIES

### Story 4

*I've known I was gay from the age of twelve, but I had a hard time admitting it to myself and others. I found school particularly hard due to the homophobic atmosphere.*

*Many people were bullied for either being gay or being suspected as gay. I was unfortunately suspected to be gay. It caused my attendance and self-esteem to plummet.*

*At home I felt like I was hiding a big part of myself. I eventually got referred to a youth worker, who herself was gay. She encouraged me to come out at my own pace and helped me feel comfortable and proud of my sexuality.*

*I came out at home at 16, my family took it well. It took a fair few months for them to get used to it though. I left school before I ever came out to anyone at school except my friends. Four years later, I can honestly say my life has never been better. I have a stable and loving relationship, a great support system of friends and family and vast pride and confidence in my sexual identity.*

## TRUE STORIES

### Story 5

*Before I came out a rumour spread round school that I was a lesbian, I got my hair cut short and I hung around with the guys a lot and supposedly that was all the 'evidence' they needed. Many people didn't take it well and I got bullied quite badly, people would spit on me, call me names, hit me and throw things at me. They made my school life a living hell. I would cry myself to sleep and dread coming into school because I was terrified of what they were going to do next.*

*It was affecting my education, I was scared to go to school and when I did, I couldn't concentrate at all on my work. But one day I woke up and realised that if this was how people were reacting to a rumour, they wouldn't do any worse if I came out, so that's exactly what I did. And to my surprise things got better, when the rumour was confirmed to be true people stopped caring, it didn't bother them anymore.*

*My school life was becoming bearable and I made new friends and that was when I realised, I should never have been worried about coming out.*

## TRUE STORIES

### Story 6

*My first Pride (this is a national event that celebrates being LGBT) happened in 2013. Being my first ever event it was petrifying, however it changed my opinions on how people would react to me being a lesbian.*

*This moment happened when walking around shopping on the high street, hand in hand with my girlfriend and my friend dressed in a pride flag like a dress, we drew eyes and questions but no maliciousness occurred. But when an older man came to us I thought here we go raging man against homosexuals.*

*All he asked was which country our flag was from.*

*When I replied it's the pride flag for LGBT he retorted that is the best flag I have ever seen... This moment changed my pride in my own sexuality. I am proud!*

### Story 7

*When I finally came to terms with my sexuality, I first told a close friend who I knew was in the LGBT community and got me in touch with an LGBT worker. I had a one to one meeting with the worker along with my close friend and decided that I would go along to the Allsorts group to build up a support network.*

*Although I was nervous about going to the group in the beginning, I soon became friends with the members and built up enough courage from the support I received at the group, to come out to my family and friends. They were all very accepting and although I've been asked some weird questions, I haven't gotten any negative comments and my coming out experience has been a very positive one!*

## **LINKS & WEBSITES**

**LGBT Youth Scotland**

**[www.lgbtyouth.org.uk](http://www.lgbtyouth.org.uk)**

**LGBT History month Scotland**

**[www.lgbthistory.org.uk](http://www.lgbthistory.org.uk)**

**LGBT Domestic Abuse Project Scotland**

**[www.lgbtdomesticabuse.org.uk](http://www.lgbtdomesticabuse.org.uk)**

**National LGBT Forum, Scotland**

**[www.scottishlgbt.org](http://www.scottishlgbt.org)**

**Equality Network**

**[www.equality-network.org](http://www.equality-network.org)**

**Scottish transgender Alliance**

**[www.scottishtrans.org](http://www.scottishtrans.org)**

**International Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual,  
Transgender and Queer  
Youth & Student Organisation**

**[www.iglyo.com](http://www.iglyo.com)**

**Human Rights Campaign**

**[www.hrc.org](http://www.hrc.org)**

**Allsorts Youth Group** is run by youth work staff and volunteers from LGBT Youth Scotland and The Corner every Tuesday from 6pm – 8pm at The Shore, Dundee. It is for young people (aged 13-25) who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender and their friends.

You can also drop by at The Corner drop-in from 3pm – 5.30pm every Tuesday and ask to speak to the LGBT Youth Scotland Worker.

If you are coming for the first time it would be recommended that you get in touch to speak with a worker first, who can let you know what is happening at the group and answer any questions you may have.

For more information get in touch through:

[www.lgbtyouth.org.uk](http://www.lgbtyouth.org.uk) or email: [info@lgbtyouth.org.uk](mailto:info@lgbtyouth.org.uk)

[www.thecorner.co.uk](http://www.thecorner.co.uk) or email: [office.corner@nhs.net](mailto:office.corner@nhs.net)

Phone: 01382 206060



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