

# Questions Students May Consider Before Coming Out to Parents

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## **1. Are you sure about your sexual orientation?**

Don't raise the issue unless you're able to respond with confidence to the question "Are you sure?" Confusion on your part may cause your parents or confidants confusion and decrease their confidence in your conclusions.

## **2. Are you comfortable with your sexuality?**

If you're wrestling with guilt and periods of depression, you might be better off waiting to tell your parents and loved ones. Coming out to them may require tremendous energy on your part. It will require a reserve of positive self-image.

## **3. Do you have support?**

In the event that your parents' or loved ones' reaction devastates you, there should be some one or a group that you can confidently turn to for emotional support and strength. Maintaining your sense of self-worth is critical.

## **4. Are you knowledgeable about homosexuality?**

Your parents or loved ones may respond based on a lifetime of misinformation from a homophobic society. If you've done some serious reading on the subject, you'll be able to assist them by sharing reliable information and research.

## **5. What's the emotional climate at home?**

If you have the choice of when to tell your parents and loved ones, consider the timing. Choose a time when they're not dealing with other critical matters such as financial difficulty, pending surgery, the loss of a job, etc.

## **6. Can you be patient?**

Your parents and loved ones may require time to deal with this information if they haven't considered it prior to your sharing. The process may last for an extended period.

## **7. What's your motive for coming out now?**

Hopefully, it is because you care about your loved ones and are uncomfortable with the distance and secrecy you may feel. Never come out in anger or during an argument, using your sexuality as a weapon.

## **8. Do you have available resources?**

Homosexuality is a subject most people know little about. Have available at least one of the following: a book addressed to parents and loved ones, a contact for the local or national Parents and Friends of Lesbian and Gays, the name of a non-gay counselor who can deal fairly with the issue.

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## **Questions Students May Consider Before Coming Out to Parents (con't)**

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### **9. Are you financially dependent on your parents?**

In the event that they respond negatively to your coming out and might withdraw college finances or force you out of the house, you may choose to wait until they do not have this power to hold over you.

### **10. What is your general relationship with your parents and loved ones?**

If you've gotten along well and have always known their love and shared your love for them in return, then chances are they'll be able to deal with the issue in a positive way.

### **11. What is their moral societal view?**

If your parents or loved ones tend to see social issues in clear terms of good/ bad or holy/sinful, they may have serious problems dealing with your sexuality. If, however, they're evidenced a degree of flexibility when dealing with other changing societal matters, you may be able to anticipate a willingness to work through this with you.

### **12. Is this your decision?**

Not everyone should come out to their parents or loved ones. Don't be pressured into it if you're not sure you'll be better off by doing so - no matter what their response.

**\*Questions derived from Texas A & M University's Gay and Lesbian Student Speaker's Bureau Manual**