

OLDHAM MBC

**Sexuality: Lesbian, Gay,
Bisexual and Trans.**

Information Booklet

February

2004

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Introduction – Oldham Council’s Commitment to Equalities and Diversity.

Oldham is a diverse Borough. It is home to people from a wide range of different racial and cultural backgrounds, people with different religious beliefs, disabled people, children and older people, women and men, people who are lesbians, gay, bi-sexual, trans and heterosexual. This diversity is strength, to be valued and nurtured.

However, along with this diversity there are also people who experience disadvantage. Deprivation affects all local communities but problems of deprivation and exclusion are most acute among particular groups - such as high rates of unemployment among young people, the risk of crime in particular neighbourhoods, and poor health in most of our communities. The Council, working with other organisations, including the Local Strategic Partnership, is committed to reducing these inequalities and so making Oldham a fairer, as well as a better, place in which to live.

In everything it does, the Council aims to promote diversity and equality of opportunity, eliminate discrimination, and bring about change for the better for those experiencing disadvantage. At its simplest, equality for all means quality for all – a diverse, multi-ethnic borough is an asset to be built upon.

The Council has recently launched its revised Equalities and Diversity Policy which not only meets recent legislative requirements on race, gender and disability, but also goes further encompassing equality statements on sexuality, religion/belief, HIV/AIDS and offenders.

This policy seeks to:

- enhance and promote high quality services which are responsive to different communities’ and individuals needs;
- assist in creating a productive, safe and prejudice-free work environment which treats all employees fairly and with respect;
- demonstrate and promote a commitment to equality issues amongst both the community and employees by challenging discrimination and valuing the diversity amongst communities and employees in the light of the benefits this brings to the Council's work;
- develop stronger internal and external communications on all aspects of Council business but specifically equality issues and ensure that people's views are listened to and responded to;
- improve the motivation, performance, skills and morale of the workforce.

This policy will also seek to serve as a lead to other employers by demonstrating our commitment to best practice in employment and service delivery.

We are committed to ensuring that our services are accessible to all our citizens and we will seek alternative methods of service delivery for groups of people where barriers may exist that make it difficult to use a service.

Oldham Council is committed to equality of opportunity for all and will carry out its duties with positive regard for:

- gender;
- race, ethnic origin and nationality;
- religious or cultural beliefs;
- marital status;
- disability or illnesses;
- sexuality or sexual identity;
- age;
- responsibility for dependents;
- economic circumstances;
- trade union membership or political affiliation;
- rights for rehabilitation of former offenders.

3.6 It is also recognised that some individuals experience multiple disadvantage and this policy will aim to address disadvantage and discrimination wherever it is found, in order to make Oldham a fairer and more equal place.

The Purpose of this document

This document has been designed to raise awareness of the issues/discrimination that certain individuals may face regarding their sexual orientation; why it exists, what effects it has and what the Council is committed to doing to eliminate forms of discrimination, including that based on sexual orientation.

This document concentrates specifically on issues that may affect existing or potential gay, lesbian or bisexual employees. This document however is an example of good practice initiatives and its principles can be applied outside the workforce or, integrated into policies regarding other minority groups vulnerable to discrimination.

Policy statement on discrimination against people on the Grounds of sexuality

Oldham MBC recognises that same sex relationships are a common characteristic in all cultures and that lesbians, gay men and bisexuals may experience prejudice, discrimination and disadvantage.

We are committed to ensuring equal treatment for all our employees and members of the public whether heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual or transexual. We seek to ensure that all our policies, procedures and practices on employment and service delivery are not based on the assumption that all employees and recipients of our services are heterosexual.

We will ensure that wherever it is possible, Conditions of Service for our staff offer the same benefits to people regardless of their sexual orientation and specifically that those in same sex relationships receive the same benefits as are available to all

other employees. This includes the provision of special leave, parental leave and time off for dependents.

We respect the right of any individual to choose whether or not they are open about their sexuality. We support the right of any employee to do this without fear of discrimination, harassment or bullying and for them to be confident that they will receive fair and equal treatment.

The Council acknowledges that it has had difficulties in the past in connecting with the lesbian, gay and bisexual communities but is committed to involving them in the consultation mechanisms that exist within the Council in the future.

Harassment of people on the grounds of their sexuality may be unlawful and will not be tolerated in any form whether in relation to service delivery or employment. Any reported incidents will be fully addressed in accordance with the Council's procedures, the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Human Rights Act 1998 and relevant equal opportunities legislation which may, where appropriate, result in disciplinary or legal action. Members of the public can use the Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure.

Legislation

Despite the lack of legislation in the area of sexuality, the Council has for a number of years treated harassment of employees due to their sexuality in the same way as any other form of harassment. Despite the lack of legislation the effects of harassment and bullying due to one's sexuality are no less damaging than harassment on the grounds of race, gender and disability.

Over the last few years we have seen a large growth in legislation surrounding sexuality and the introduction of the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations in 2003.

The first major piece of legislation that was introduced in the UK was the Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999. This piece of legislation was introduced as a measure to protect the rights of transsexual people and help prevent discrimination on grounds of gender reassignment. Gender reassignment is defined as:

"a process which is undertaken under medical supervision for the purpose of reassigning a person's sex by changing physiological or other characteristics of sex and includes any part of such a person".

The Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999 extends on the Discrimination Act 1975, to protect transsexual people in employment and vocational training. Any reference to discrimination in employment against men or women in parts II and III (so far as it applies to vocational training) of the 1975 Act should be read as applying similarly to discrimination on gender reassignment grounds. The new regulations make it unlawful to discriminate against a person for the purpose of employment or vocational training on the ground that that person intends to undergo gender reassignment, is undergoing gender reassignment, or has at some time in the

past undergone gender reassignment. This ensures that the various stages of the gender reassignment process are covered by the Regulations. It is not necessary for all three circumstances to apply for discrimination to have taken place.

The legislation does not impact on the provision of goods or other services and is limited to employment and vocational training because the Regulations were introduced to reflect the ruling of the European Court of Justice, that discrimination on grounds of gender reassignment is contrary to the EC Equal Treatment Directive. The Directive applies only to the fields of employment and vocational training.

The second and possibly most influential piece of legislation was the introduction of The Human Rights Act 2000. This piece of legislation came into force on the 2nd October 2000, incorporating into UK law the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (known as ECHR). The convention's provisions guarantee most civil liberties and seeks to balance the rights of the individual against other public interests. These rights are contained within 15 ECHR articles and the most relevant articles to sexuality include Article 8 (Respect for Private Life); Article 10 (Freedom of expression); and Article 3 (Degrading Treatment). Under this piece of legislation many landmark cases have been won which have dramatically altered the lives of many LGBT people in the UK.

Case Study:

Prean and Beckett v UK and Smith and Grady v UK (1999).

The above four people had served in the armed forces until the early 1990's when it emerged they were homosexual. They began their legal challenge against the forces in 1995 and in 1999 the European Court of Human Rights ruled that their right to respect for their private lives had been violated not just by the investigations carried out by the MoD Special Investigations Branch but by the actual policy of discharging homosexuals. The summary of the ruling said: "The Court took the view that neither the investigations nor the discharges of the applicants were justified within the meaning of Article 8 [The right to respect of private lives]."

In response to this ruling the Government promptly froze all investigations of suspected gay personnel and promised a new policy to be agreed "swiftly" after consultations with the Service chiefs. In January 2000, the ban on Homosexuals serving in the armed forces was lifted and a new code of Conduct was published.¹

In December 2003 the first legislation that protects people at work against discrimination on the grounds of sexuality came into force. The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations make it unlawful to discriminate

¹ http://www.stonewall.org.uk/stonewall/issue_bank/armed_forces/
http://www.stonewall.org.uk/docs/Judgement_from_ECHR_LustigPrean_and_Beckett.doc
http://www.stonewall.org.uk/docs/Judgement_from_ECHR_Smith_and_Grady.doc
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/htmlContent.jhtml?html=/archive/1999/09/28/ngay28.html>

against employees because of their sexuality. The regulations are briefly explained below

- The Regulations provide *protections* against discrimination and harassment. They do not establish entitlements.
- Discrimination is unlawful:
 - During recruitment and selection
 - In relation to terms of employment
 - In relation to access to training, promotion, promotion transfer or other employee benefit.
- Harassment is unlawful and is defined as circumstances that:
 - Violate a person's dignity, or
 - Create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.
- There is a very narrow limited range of circumstances where an employer can discriminate in favour of a person because of their religion, belief or sexuality
- Liability falls on both the employer and on the employee who is found to have acted in a discriminatory way.
- Employers have to prove that they did not discriminate or harass, once the complainant has made a *prima facie* case.
- There is no obligation on employers to monitor in relation to these new equality strands.

The Council ensures that it lives up to all its statutory responsibilities enshrined in the legislation. The Council goes beyond the legislation where ever possible and has set challenging targets in relation to the Equality Standard for Local Government which will ensure that it works toward the elimination of discrimination on the grounds of sexuality in the organisation.

History of Homosexuality

Homosexuality is not a modern phenomenon that has emerged out of the fashion trends of the 1980's. Homosexuality has been a fundamental part of the life, mind and culture of *homo sapiens* all over our planet for thousands of years, if not more. Cave paintings from the Val Camonica region of Italy depict sex between men dating back over eight thousand years. The world's oldest civilisation revered *assinu* as people of special significance and power, and the world's oldest story tells of the love of the semi-divine hero for a mortal man who travelled, fought and slept beside him.

History is overflowing with prominent lesbian and gay figures of the past and present. Many of the worlds most acclaimed personalities (politicians, religious leaders, actors, singers, soldiers, police officers, fire fighters and

many others) have been lesbians and gay men, who were freely open about their sexuality. For instance; Julius Caesar, Edward II, Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, Oscar Wilde, Eleanor Roosevelt, Freddie Mercury and Elton John, Alex Parks, Will Young, Val McDermit and KD Lang.

A common misconception is that homosexuality is a relatively recent phenomenon. However, this is more to do with changes in society, media and politics, which means that lesbian and gays are more visible.

National Context.

How many Gay / Lesbian people are there in the UK?

It is difficult to estimate the number of lesbian and gay people living in Britain as prejudice and discrimination is still prevalent. Lancet's study into Sexual Behaviours indicates that approximately 5.4% of the population are homosexual.² However, for the reasons outlined above it is likely that this figure is not a true representation. Since Lancet's previous study in 1990 (and as prejudices fall) the number of lesbians and gay men recorded had risen by 1.8% (from 3.6%).

The number of lesbians and gay men recorded in Lancet's national surveys has continued to be greater in Greater London compared to national figures. 10.5% of Greater London's Population were recorded as having had a same sex partner - nearly double the National figure. However, in 1990 the difference between national figures and those in Greater London was 60% - 10% greater than today. This may indicate that lesbians and gay men are becoming more comfortable in 'coming out' about their sexuality in regions other than London. Manchester in particular has demonstrated that it welcomes diversity, and consequently has a thriving lesbian and gay community, which proudly hosted Euro-Pride in 2003.

Issues Facing Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans (LGBT) groups.

A study by 'Beyond Barriers' into the lives and concerns of LGBT people found that;

- 27% of respondents did not feel part of the wider community.
- Younger LGBT people were more likely to say they did feel part of a Gay & Lesbian Community, which mirrors other findings that suggest older LGBT people may feel more isolated.
- 54% of respondents felt that a LGBT community was not just about a place to meet, but a place to find friendship and support.
- 22-28% of respondents stated they had experienced a problem in accessing information on health, community, human rights or Youth issues. This response was most common amongst female respondents.
- 15% of respondents reported experiencing difficulties in accessing mainstream healthcare.³

² www.lancet.com (NATSAL : National Study of Sexual Behaviours in Britain) 2000.

³ NB 53% of respondents did not answer this question.

- The two main issues that arose from this were:²
 - i) Inappropriate advice/treatment or lack of understanding/knowledge. (25%)
 - ii) Homophobic GP/Practice Staff. (24%)
- However 38% of respondents stated that they had positive experiences when accessing mainstream healthcare.²
- 68% had experienced verbal abuse/threats because they had been assumed to be LGBT.
- 23% had experiences actual physical assaults because someone had assumed they were LGBT.
- The main issues that respondents were concerned with were; Partnership rights (30%), Discrimination (22%) and acceptance (22%).

NB these figures were taken from a study conducted by Beyond Barriers. This organisation is Scotland Based and thus these results are based on respondents living in Scotland.

Guidance for Managers & Staff.

The successful implementation of these guidelines depends upon strong leadership, good management and supervision. It is essential that this commitment is reinforced in a nonjudgmental, positive manner by all managers throughout the organisation.

A good indicator that people feel safe in an organisation is when they are open about their sexuality at work eg when talking about holidays spent with their partners or when taking their partners to 'social functions'. Sometimes those who do not make any disclosures about their private lives can have this misinterpreted as lacking communication and social skills. This is not to suggest that people should be made to 'come out' as lesbian or gay but should feel free to make the choice if they want.

Realising that you are lesbian or gay and deciding to be publicly open about it (to come out) may be stressful, especially if caused by a relationship breaking down or bereavement. Disclosure is then doubly difficult because the person concerned has to consider having to explain the cause of their distress and the nature of their relationship. Lesbian and gay staff who also belong to another minority group may be under additional pressure.

It is important that all staff are aware of these possibilities and the need to work towards creating a working environment where an individual can find their own time and place to come out should they wish to do so.

Language: (Also see definitions)

- Use positive language when talking about sexuality.
- Use of language should be inclusive not exclusive. (e.g. use term 'partners' rather than husband and wife).

It is better to use terms which LGBT people prefer to use. The word homosexual is very scientific and clinical sounding, and many LGBT people prefer to use the word gay or lesbian. Another benefit of this is that they can be used in a wider context: The word homosexual largely refers to sex, whereas the words lesbian and gay can be used to describe aspects of culture.

- Reference to sexuality should be included within policies and documents alongside race, gender and disability.

- Documents should fully reflect the diversity of the workforce/community.

Privacy:

- All staff should work towards creating a working environment where an individual feels able to come out if they wish.
- Individuals should be able to feel comfortable about their sexuality and their choice to come out.
- However, individuals should never feel pressured into disclosing their sexuality.
- If a person does come out, treat the issues sensitively. Do NOT assume that because someone has come out, that it is ok to pass that information on to others.
- Personnel Files should not be marked or include papers that may indicate a persons sexuality without their consent. (This could cause problems if that person had not come out at home or in the workplace).

Commitment:

- Sexuality is a theme within Oldham Council's Equality and Diversity policy and as such the Council is explicitly committed to combating all forms of discrimination on such grounds, within the organisation.
- All staff should be aware of the Council's Equalities and Diversity Policy.
- All staff should fully understand the possible consequences of instances of discrimination if reported.
- Chief Officers should champion equality issues, including those relating to sexuality.
- Staff should challenge prejudice and discrimination.
- Staff should avoid inappropriate language, behaviour and stereotyping.

Training:

- Training on issues of sexuality should be incorporated into Equalities and Diversity training alongside gender, race, religion and disability.
- Staff need an understanding of sexuality issues in order to deliver quality services equally to members of the public and colleagues. Training should also help staff to understand the prejudices facing lesbians and gay men.

- Issues relating to sexuality should be incorporated into other areas of training other than Equalities and Diversity, to ensure that the relevance to service delivery is fully understood. (For instance, customers receiving a service from the 'one stop shop' could be a lesbian or gay couple rather than a heterosexual couple).

Recruitment & Selection:

- Recruitment and Selection processes should be reviewed to ensure that they do not discriminate on the grounds of sexuality.
- All individuals involved in recruitment and selection should have received appropriate and up-to-date Equalities and Diversity Training (which should incorporate sexuality).
- At interview stage, candidates should NEVER be asked questions on their sexuality. A person's sexuality is irrelevant to their suitability for that post (unless homosexuality is a genuine requirement of that post). Even general questions about partners or marital status can disadvantage lesbian/gay applicants and make them feel uncomfortable.
- Lesbians and gay men are minority, underrepresented groups and should therefore be targeted in advertisements for vacant posts.
- Advertisements should clearly state that Oldham MBC is an Equal Opportunities employer and preferably that they do not discriminate on grounds of sexuality, alongside other minority groups.

Monitoring:

- In the areas of gender, race and disability a key aspect of equal opportunity policies is to monitor the profile of the workforce. In the case of lesbians, gay men and bisexuals the problems are not primarily those of under-representation as there are likely to be lesbian and gay employees at every level. The key questions are whether they are treated less favourably within the workforce or forced to lead a "double life" to avoid harassment and discrimination. This makes monitoring, in its usual sense, inappropriate and impractical as it would require or force people to "come out" even if they did not want to.
- However other forms of monitoring can be applied. For instance, monitoring of complaints of harassment / exit interviews / reason for resignation / distribution of anonymous staff questionnaires.

Workplace Benefits:

- A number of workplace benefits now cover all couples rather than just married couples. Where benefits have been extended to cohabiting couples, same-sex partners can often also benefit. Examples of these benefits are flexible working, parental leave, maternity benefits and compassionate leave etc. (Please refer to your staff handbook / Personnel / Pension documentation for up-to-date policies).

Support Systems:

Oldham Council has recently established a LGBT Forum. This group is open to LGBT Council employees, representatives from local organisations and members of the general public.

The aims and objectives of the forum are:

- to act as a consultation forum on Council and partnership policies that affect people living and working in the Borough
- to perform a networking role to facilitate the exchange of information between individuals and organisations within and outside the Borough,
- to act as an advisory group to OMBC's Equality and Diversity Action group that will take forward OMBC's Equality and Diversity policy and action plan
- to act as a support network for LGBT people living and working in Oldham.

Membership of the Forum is open to lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people living and working in Oldham and to representatives of LGBT organisations. Representatives of other groups and organisations working to support LGBT people and communities may be co-opted onto the group.

The forum will be serviced by two lead officers from OMBC's Corporate Policy Division. For information, please contact Jo Charlan on 0161 911 3198.

Harassment and Bullying

Oldham Council believes that every member of staff has the right to work in a supportive environment, free from harassment, victimisation or bullying. It recognises that harassment, victimization or bullying at work or within a work related environment can cause stress, loss of confidence, low morale, interfere with job performance, lead to absenteeism and have consequent effects on the personal lives of affected staff.

The Council will not tolerate acts of harassment, victimization or bullying by any member of staff against another member of staff or against any other individual with whom a member of staff interacts in the course of his/her

duties. The Council expects all staff to be proactive in the creation of a working environment in which everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

Any complaints of harassment or bullying in relation to sexuality will be treated with the up most sensitivity and investigated fully by the Council and any employee found guilty of harassment or bullying will be dealt with firmly under the Council's disciplinary procedure.

Anyone who feels that they have been the victim of harassment or bullying will receive all the necessary support which they feel they need from the Council and its welfare services.

Myth Busting

Myths surrounding homosexuality exist for a number of reasons. Generally, homosexuality is something that few people understand, and can therefore be feared. Arguably it is a natural response to fear or hate something that you know little about.

Myth	Fact
Homosexuality is an illness.	Not True. Homosexuality is not an illness it is natural to lesbian or gays.
Can therapy change sexual orientation/ can it be 'cured'.	No, homosexuality is not something that can be or should need to be changed.
Stereotypes: i.e. gay men are all feminine and lesbians are all butch women.	Lesbians and gay men are ordinary people - like heterosexuals, no one is the same.
Parents are at fault - a weak or absent father or a strong dominant mother will produce a gay son or lesbian daughter.	Not true. If this were true there would be far more gay men / lesbians, to reflect the number of single parents / absent fathers (i.e. in the second world war).
Children raised by homosexuals will become homosexuals themselves.	Totally untrue. Children brought up by homosexual couples are just as likely to be heterosexual in adult life as anyone else.
Lesbians/gay men/bisexuals are bad parents.	Not true. A person's sexuality does not affect their parenting skills and children raised by homosexual couples have no developmental differences from those raised by and heterosexual.
Homosexuality is rare	Untrue. Studies indicate that at least 5% of the population have had homosexual relationships. (This figure is likely to be an under-estimate)
Homosexuals are promiscuous and will have sex with anyone.	Not true. Like heterosexuals, most homosexuals are monogamous and are no more likely to sleep with someone than straight people.

Lesbians and gay men are all white.	This is not true. Sexuality has nothing to do with race, there are lesbians and gay men in all ethnic communities. However, some religions and cultures are less accepting of homosexuality and thus 'coming out' may be more difficult.
All lesbians hate men.	Not true. Being a lesbian is not about hating men, just sexually preferring women. Lesbians are no more likely to hate men than women.
Lesbians are only lesbians because as children they were sexually abused by men.	Not true. Being a lesbian has nothing to do with the experience of sexual abuse. Lesbians are lesbians because they prefer women to men.
All lesbians are ugly and are only lesbians because they can't get a man. All they need is a good 'man' to sort them out.	Not true. Lesbians are just as beautiful, or not, as any other women. Many lesbians have had male partners in the past but come to realise that they prefer women.
Homosexuals (Gay men) are criminals, drug addicts and are generally anti-social.	Not true. There is no relation between sexuality and substance misuse / crime. Gay men are no more likely to engage in such activity than heterosexual men.
Homosexuals abuse children.	Not true. The vast majority of child abuse is committed by heterosexual men - usually within the family.

Terminology

It's not 'just a word' - using the right words matters.

Language can be used to shape ideas, perceptions and attitudes and the use of words reflects our (or societies) attitudes and beliefs.

It is not about 'political correctness', using wording and language acceptable to lesbian and gay people can help shape positive attitudes and create a prejudice-free environment.

- **Sexual orientation** means *sexual identity*; defining *which gender the individual is attracted to*. Forms of sexual orientation include heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual etc.
- **Heterosexual** means attracted to the opposite sex; females who are attracted to males and males who are attracted to females. It comes from the Greek word *heteros* which means 'different'.
- **Homosexual** means attracted to the same sex; males who are attracted to males and females who are attracted to females. There is sometimes confusion with this word, as homosexuality is sometimes used only to describe homosexual men
- **Bisexual** means attracted to both sexes; a female or male who is attracted to males and females.

- **Gay** means homosexual (male or female).
- **Lesbian** means a homosexual female.

The words homosexual, bisexual and lesbian are often used mistakenly to describe *sexual behaviour* which is misleading because it implies that sexual behaviour and *sexual identity* are the same thing, whereas they are not.

- **Gender Reassignment** is a process which is undertaken under medical supervision for the purposes of reassigning a person's sex by changing physiological or other characteristics of sex, and includes any part of such a process.
- **Transgender** is generally used as a catch-all term for a variety of individuals, behaviours and groups centred around the full or partial reversal of gender roles. It can often mean someone who does not identify with one specific gender fully.
- **Homophobia** means anti-gay prejudice. Is behaviour or attitudes directed at people on the basis of their sexuality. Like sexism and racism, it can be explicit and extreme (as in 'queer bashing') or implicit and more subtle (as in denying the existence of lesbian and gay people).
- **Prejudice** This is the forming of an opinion of an individual or group without having sufficient information upon which to base such an opinion.
- **Direct discrimination** This is when a person is treated less favourably than another for inappropriate reasons, such as on the grounds of their sexuality, gender, race or disability, for example. This may take place in the workplace or in the provision of goods/services.
- **Indirect discrimination.** This happens when a policy or practice is applied to everyone but in its application it causes disadvantage to particular groups, for example lesbians or gay men or members of certain racial groups. This may take place in the workplace or in the provision of goods/services.
- **Harassment** is behaviour that is offensive, frightening or distressing. This can be intentional / violent bullying or subtle, unintentional name-calling. (On basis of sexuality – actual / assumed).
- **Victimisation** is when a person is punished or treated unfairly because they have made a complaint of discrimination, or are thought to have done so, or because they have supported someone else who has made a complaint of discrimination.

Useful Organisations

National Organisations

Albert Kennedy Trust <http://www.akt.org.uk/> (Support for young lesbians and gay men) at the City Centre Project, 52 Oldham Street, Manchester M4 1LE 0161 228 3308

Body Positive North West <http://www.bpnw.org.uk/> (Provides support and services to those living with or affected by HIV/AIDS) Helpline 0161 873 8100 (Tuesday and Thursday 7 to 10pm)

D'Arcy Lainey Foundation support group for LGBT parents and their children. The group provides free, confidential guidance and support on a range of issues that LGBT families face as well as a varied social program that members can access. www.dalafo.co.uk

FLAGG <http://www.fflag.org.uk> Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays is a continually growing national voluntary organisation and registered charity with more than 40 telephone helplines across the UK and parents' groups which hold regular meetings.

International Lesbian Gay Association <http://www.ilga.org/>

LAGER: <http://www.lager.dircon.co.uk/> Lesbian and Gay employment rights.

Lesbian and Gay Foundation <http://www.lgfoundation.org.uk/> (Health organisation for lesbians and gay men) incorporating the Manchester Lesbian and Gay Switchboard (information, counselling, groups Contact LGF on 0161 235 8035. Contact Switchboard on 0161 235 8000 6pm to 10pm daily.

PinkParentsUK <http://www.pinkparents.org.uk/> - A UK-wide organisation of lesbian, gay and bisexual parents, parents-to-be and their children, offering information, advice and support through a helpline, magazine, publications, and workshops.

Rainbow Hope <http://www.geocities.com/rainbowhope2000/> - for lesbians survivors of abuse.

Regard : <http://www.regard.dircon.co.uk/> National Organisation of disabled lesbians gay men, Bisexual and transsexual people.

Stonewall <http://www.stonewall.org.uk/> (campaigning for equality and justice for Gay men, Lesbians and Bisexuals)

Unison-Lesbian & Gay. <http://www.unison.org.uk/Out/index.asp>

Youth Links

Gay Youth UK <http://www.gayyouthuk.co.uk/> Information and support to Young Gay people in the UK.

LGB Youth Services : <http://www.lgym.org.uk/>

PACE Youth work Service <http://www.outzone.org/> Information, support and events for young lesbians, gay men and bisexuals under 26.

Peer Support Project <http://www.peer-support.org.uk/links/groups.htm>

Young Lesbian / Gay / Bisexual Peer Support Project <http://www.peer-support.org.uk/> (Support for young lesbians, gay men and bisexuals) 0161 274 4664

Local Organisations.

42nd St (Support for Young People) Confidential Helpline: 0161 832 0170
Mon to Fri 2pm to 5pm

Lesbian / Gay / Bisexual Society Metropolitan University
<http://www.mmsu.com/> 0161 273 1162

Lesbian Community Project <http://www.manchesterlcp.org.uk/> (formerly the Lesbians' Participation Worker) providing information and newsletter for lesbians and support for groups setting up. 0161 273 7128 or email: mail@manchesterlcp.org.uk

Manchester gay village <http://www.manchester2002-uk.com/gay/gay-vill1.html>

Manchester Lesbian and Gay Foundation <http://www.lgfoundation.org.uk/>
(The Lesbian and Gay Foundation, Unity House 15 Pritchard Street, Manchester M1 7DA, 0161 235 8035)

Manchester Parents' Group <http://www.manpg.freemove.co.uk/> Support and information network for parents of lesbians, bisexuals and gay men in the North West (affiliated to FFLAG) 01565 733891

Northern Concord <http://www.northernconcord.org.uk/index.html>
Transsexual and transvestite organisations in Manchester. (Social and self help group for transsexuals and transvestites. P.O. Box 258 Manchester M60 1LN or email jennyb@northernconcord.org.uk)

Oldham LGBT group:.....

Out In Oldham <http://www.queeryouth.org.uk/youthgroups/count.php?a=85>

Magazines

Pink Paper <http://www.pinkpaper.com/>

Diva Magazine. Magazine for lesbians www.divamag.co.uk

Out Northwest. <http://www.lgfoundation.org.uk>