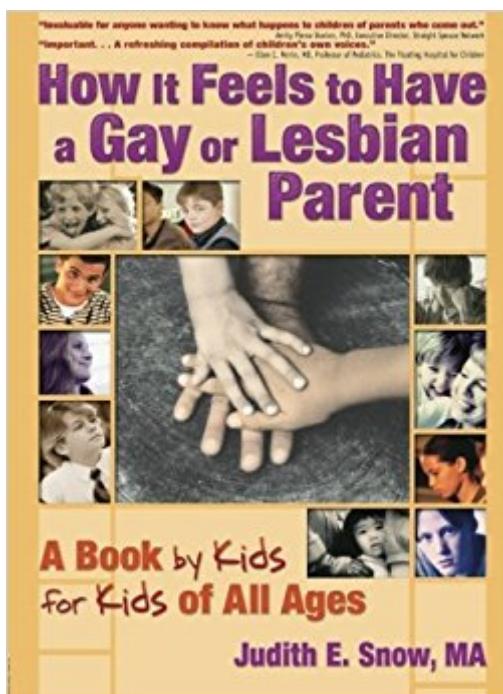


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# How It Feels To Have A Gay Or Lesbian Parent: A Book By Kids For Kids Of All Ages (Haworth Gay And Lesbian Studies)



## Synopsis

Sometimes I fantasize about having a magic wand. How awesome it would be to wave it and completely eliminate prejudice, hate, and ignorance. Just imagine what it would be like to live in a world like that. *How It Feels to Have a Gay or Lesbian Parent: A Book by Kids for Kids of All Ages* gives voice to the thoughts, feelings, and experiences of children, adolescents, and young adults who have a gay or lesbian parent. In their own words, they talk openly and candidly about how and when they learned of their parent's sexual orientation and the effect it had on them; and their families. Their stories echo themes of prejudice and harassment, conflict and confusion, adaptation and adjustment, and hope for tolerance and a family that can exist in harmony.

"Because it's an issue for other people, it becomes an issue for me. I'm angry about the way it works against me." The stories told in *How It Feels to Have a Gay or Lesbian Parent* not only reflect the day-to-day struggle of children with a GLBT parent, they also reveal the pain inherent in high-conflict divorce and child custody cases. Children of gay/lesbian parents ranging in age from seven to 31 recall the confusion and grief created when the disclosure of their parent's true sexual orientation ended a marriage and divided a family. The "straight" parent's resentment can lead to angry remarks that intentionally or unintentionally disparage the gay/lesbian parent and threaten the natural love and affection the child feels for both. "I guess the hardest part about having a gay dad is that no matter how okay you are with it, there's always going to be someone who will dislike you because of it." The one-on-one interviews presented in *How It Feels to Have a Gay or Lesbian Parent* document first-hand the effects of homophobia on family life. Children struggle with the choice between living in a closet, shamed by peers and family members, or dealing with discrimination as a parent's sexual orientation is used against them. Taken together, these stories make a statement for acceptance, understanding, and tolerance as children do their best to make the transition from a traditional family to a nontraditional lifestyle. "My mom is a normal person just like everyone else. The only thing that's different about her is that she's gay and if you can't deal with it, you're just going to have to live with it." *How It Feels to Have a Gay or Lesbian Parent: A Book by Kids for Kids of All Ages* offers comfort and support to children from those who share their journey. The book is a valuable aid for practitioners working with children of GLBT parents and an educational tool for GLBT adults considering children.

## Book Information

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## **Customer Reviews**

Grade 5 Up "Thirty-two individuals between the ages of 7 and 31 provide enlightening perspectives on the confusion and prejudices surrounding this issue. Snow emphasizes that problems arise due to divorce, homophobia, and discrimination from peers and politics, not because being gay or lesbian results in bad parenting skills. The voices range from naive to experienced and philosophical, depending on the narrator's age. A black-and-white spot illustration decorates the opening page of each chapter. This inspirational, eye-opening title gives readers who have gay and lesbian parents a much-deserved voice." Hillias J. Martin, New York Public Library Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

Gr. 5-8. Thirty-two individuals, ranging in age from 7 to 31, reflect on the experience of having a homosexual parent. Of course, some are more articulate than others, but all candidly express their feelings, which typically range from initial bafflement through hurt to acceptance. In many cases, divorce and its impact seem to be larger issues than a parent's sexual orientation, though the painful consequences of bigotry and homophobia are also factors. As one 16-year-old girl wisely notes, "People don't even seem to try to understand; they just get scared and confused and act out of hate because something is different." Though primarily targeted at children of gay and lesbian parents, this book has information, insight, and understanding to offer to readers of different circumstances and ages. Michael CartCopyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

This book had several stories I found to be helpful in discussing the topic with my daughter

My kids really appreciated being able to read that other kids feel and go through the same thing.

This was a gift for a family going through custody battle and they said it helped them with seeing opinions from other people and reading it.

Good book but I need to know more about older children that would be in foster care that need a stable home environment.

I read this short book for the #ReadProud challenge Week 2: Middle Grade GLBT books. This is such an #ownvoices book it literally has "own voices" on the cover. (Click to enlarge!) I really liked this aspect of the book - it has interviews with younger children and essays by older children, some of them adults themselves. This adds diversity - there is also ethnic and racial diversity - but it also makes the book harder to categorize. I found it on the middle grade shelves in my local public library, but some of the chapters might be too complicated for younger kids to read. Some parts are also clearly geared at parents. (Note that the interviewer herself also belongs to the group being interviewed, which is almost always a plus.) It is a very old collection, the legal landscape has really changed since then - queer people can marry, sexual orientation is not in itself grounds for visitation rights, custody etc. to be taken away in a post-divorce legal dispute, and so on. But I still found it an interesting and informative read, with some laugh-out-loud moments.

The kids interviewed for this book range in age from seven to thirty-one. It is interesting to see the differences and the similarities in all of their situations. It seems that most of them were okay with their parents being gay but when they were in elementary school or middle school they were scared their friends would make fun of them. Once the teens hit high school they didn't care as much but many were selective about who they told. The other interesting thing I found was that most of the kids were more concerned about their parents being happy and wishing that their parents were still together despite them liking the other people in their parents' lives. Almost all of the kids expressed that they were either happy to know other kids with gay parents or that they wished they did know other kids with gay parents. Sharing that bond was important for them. I really liked hearing the stories from the kids' point of view and seeing how they were similar or different.

depending on their ages. This book was originally printed in 2004, I would love to see a follow up book with a whole new crop of teens and pre-teens since there have been so many significant changes in the world since it was first published. Not to mention I think there are many more visible LGBT families out there now. I think this book could be very valuable to kids whose parents are just coming out or are having a hard time adjusting to their parents being gay. Knowing that there are other kids in their shoes and knowing that they might feel similar makes you feel not as alone.

I loved this book. I found that it's something so new over the past few years, as far as something that people talk about. We've come so far relative to diversity, acceptance, and sharing our personal stories, that a book like this is a breath of fresh air. I'm happy that it talks about things from a child's perspective, and doesn't try to be too clinical or matter-of-fact. My children loved the book (they're teens....and I'm a gay dad) and it put all of the challenges, blessings, and difficulties into perspective for them. We're all walking a different path, and it's great to see what others (and their children) have gone through.

I bought this book thinking it would be good for my daughter and my partner's daughter. It has some good writing, but definitely get this for an older teen. The stories weren't really coming from kids my daughter's age (10), so they were harder to relate to for her. Perhaps in a couple years she'll pick it up and give it another try. I love the premise of this book...and I'd like to see something just like it but written from younger kids' perspectives.

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