



Same-sex parenting and LGBTQ+ parenting cover a diversity of family configurations where at least one parent identifies as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or intersex. These families, long invisible and stigmatised, are increasingly numerous and recognized in our societies. However, they still face specific challenges, both legally and socially and psychologically, which are important to understand in order to better support them.

One of the first issues is access to parenthood. For same-sex couples, the possible routes are adoption, assisted reproductive technology (ART) with sperm or egg donation, surrogacy, or co-parenting (parenting project with another couple or single person). Each of these options raises complex ethical, legal and practical questions. Adoption is often a long and arduous journey, with few adoptable children and much discrimination. ART is not authorised for women couples in all countries and raises the question of donor anonymity. Surrogacy is banned in France and highly controversial. Co-parenting requires a fine negotiation of everyone's roles and responsibilities.

For trans people, access to parenthood raises the question of preserving fertility before or during transition. Hormone treatments and surgeries can indeed impact the ability to procreate. Gathering information on gamete preservation options (sperm, eggs) is therefore crucial for those considering biological parenthood. Trans people can also become parents within the framework of family recompositions or adoptions but face many prejudices about their parental abilities.

Another issue is the legal recognition of parentage. In many countries, including France, only married heterosexual couples can jointly adopt a child. For same-sex couples, only adoption by the child of the partner is possible, creating unequal rights and legal insecurity for the non-statutory parent. Similarly, children born through ART or surrogacy abroad

struggle to have their parentage recognized. This non-recognition has concrete consequences in terms of parental authority, inheritance rights, social protection. Recent advances, such as the upcoming opening of ART to female couples in France, move towards greater equality, but much remains to be done.

Beyond legal aspects, same-sex and trans-parent families are confronted with the weight of social norms and representations. The ideal of the heterosexual biparental family remains dominant in imaginations and discourses. Children of these families are often suspected of lacking benchmarks, having identity disorders and being exposed to perversion. These prejudices, fueled by outdated psychoanalytic theories and conservative religious currents, are nevertheless refuted by scientific studies. These show that children raised in LGBTQ+ families develop as well as others, as long as they evolve in a loving and secure environment.

Raising a child in a heteronormative world, however, requires specific resources and strategies. Parents must find the words to talk about the specificity of their family, to answer the child's and their social circle's questions. They must also deal with the gaze of others, the mockery or rejection their children may face. Establishing links with other LGBTQ+ families, relying on community resources (associations, children's books, events) is often invaluable to feel less alone and find positive models.

An inspiring example is that of the Association of Gay and Lesbian Parents and Future Parents (APGL) in France. Since 1986, this association has been helping individuals and couples with their parenting project, whatever their family configurations. It offers walk-in services, support groups, conferences, children's workshops. It also campaigns for equal rights and visibility of same-sex families. Its action has helped to deconstruct many prejudices and change mentalities.

As a coach, it is essential to adopt an open, informed and non-judgmental stance on LGBTQ+ parenting. This implies shedding own representations of what a family should be, not presuming the sexual orientation or gender identity of parents. It's about welcoming the diversity of paths and configurations, without hierarchizing them. Basic knowledge of legal, medical and psychological aspects is necessary for appropriate guidance.

The support can focus on different aspects, depending on needs and stages:

- Reflecting on the desire for a child and the choice of a method of conception/adoption. Help the person or couple clarify their motivations, representations, fears. Explore different possible options, their advantages and limitations.
- The management of the adoption or conception journey. Support in the face of administrative procedures, difficulties, and unexpected events. Work on communication within the couple, the management of stress and emotions.
- Preparation for parenthood and welcoming the child. Reflect on educational values, the distribution of roles, the place of third parties (donors, surrogates, co-parents). Anticipate

the child's and entourage's questions.

-The challenges of everyday life and affirming one's family model. Help find words to talk about their family, manage remarks or discrimination. Identify resources and support.

The goal is to enable these parents and future parents to experience their parenthood in a fulfilling and serene way, respecting their singularities. This involves working on self-esteem, legitimacy, creativity in the invention of new models. It is by making the diversity of families a wealth and not a problem that we contribute to moving society towards greater inclusion.

Key Takeaways:

- Same-sex parenting and LGBTQ+ parenting cover a diversity of family configurations that are increasingly numerous and recognized, but still face specific challenges.

- Access to parenthood for same-sex couples is via adoption, ART, surrogacy or co-parenting, each option raising complex questions. For trans people, preservation of fertility is a crucial issue.

- Legal recognition of parentage is another challenge, with unequal rights depending on family configurations, despite recent advances.

- Same-sex and trans-parent families are confronted with prejudices and dominant social norms, although studies show that children from these families develop as well as others.

- Raising children in a heteronormative world requires specific resources and strategies, such as finding words to talk about their families and relying on community resources.

- As a coach, it is essential to adopt an open, informed and non-judgmental stance, to welcome the diversity of paths without hierarchizing them, and to have basic knowledge of legal, medical and psychological aspects.

- Support can focus on the desire for children, the adoption or conception journey, preparation for parenthood, and everyday challenges, with the goal of enabling these parents to experience their parenthood in a fulfilling and serene way.

- Making the diversity of families a wealth contributes to a move towards greater societal inclusion.