

Copyright (c) 1994. Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, Inc.

http://www.outproud.org/brochure_be_yourself.html

IS IT NORMAL TO BE GAY?

THE SHORT ANSWER: Yes. Being gay is as natural, normal, and healthy as being straight.

No one knows exactly how human sexual orientation - gay or straight - is determined. Most experts think it's a matter of genetics, biology, and environment - that a person's sexual orientation could be set before birth or as early as two or three years old.

Dr. Richard Pillard, a psychiatrist at Boston University School of Medicine, points out that homosexuality exists "in virtually every animal species that has been exhaustively studied." Homosexuality is as much a part of nature as heterosexuality.

Not only is it as natural, it's as healthy to be gay as to be straight - no matter what some people might tell you. The American Psychiatric Association declared in 1973 that homosexuality is not a mental disorder or disease, and the American Psychological Association says that it would be unethical to try to change a gay person's sexual orientation.

Many other people besides scientists, psychologists, and psychiatrists now understand that, too, Ann Landers, the advice columnist, recently wrote: "It never ceases to amaze me that in this day and age, so many people fail to understand that homosexuality is not a lifestyle that is chosen. That 'choice' was made at birth."

So if you're wondering why you're gay, the answer is that some people are gay and some people are straight just as some people have blue eyes and some people have brown eyes. It's not something that anybody can choose to be or not to be. It's just one more piece of who you are.