



# Happy Holiday Tips For LGBTQ Individuals

- **Don't assume** you know how somebody will react to news of your sexual orientation or gender identity — you may be surprised.
- **Realize** that your family's reaction to you may **not** be because you are GLBT. The hectic holiday pace may cause family members to act differently than they would under less stressful conditions.
- **Remember** that “coming out” is a continuous process. You may have to “come out” many times.
- **Don't wait** for your family's attitude to change to have a special holiday. Recognize that your parents need time to acknowledge and accept that they have a GLBT child. It took you time to come to terms with who you are; now it is your family's turn.
- **Let your family's judgments** be theirs to work on, as long as they are kind to you.
- If it is too difficult to be with your family, **create your own holiday gathering** with friends and loved ones.
- If you are transgender, **be gentle** with your family's pronoun “slips.” Let them know you know how difficult it is.

## *Before the visit...*

- **Make a decision** about being “out” to each family member before you visit.
- If you are partnered, **discuss in advance** how you will talk about your relationship, or show affection with one another, if you plan to make the visit together.
- If you bring your partner home, **don't wait until late** into the holiday evening to raise the issue of sleeping arrangements. Make plans in advance.
- **Have alternate plans** if the situation becomes difficult at home.
- **Find out** about local GLBT resources.
- **If you do plan to “come out”** to your family over the holidays, have support available, including PFLAG publications and the number of a local PFLAG chapter.

## *During the visit...*

- **Focus** on common interests.
- **Reassure** family members that you are still the same person they have always known.
- If you are partnered, **be sensitive** to his or her needs as well as your own.
- **Be wary** of the possible desire to shock your family.
- **Remember to affirm yourself.**
- **Realize** that you don't need your family's approval.
- **Connect with someone else who is GLBT**—by phone or in person—who understands what you are going through and will affirm you along the way.