

Statistics Concerning Mixed Orientation Couples

Mixed orientation couples means that one spouse is either gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered.

According to the reliable estimates, based on several different studies, it is estimated that there are up to 4 million mixed orientation couples. "When the gay, lesbian, or bisexual spouse comes out, a third of the couples break up immediately; another third stay together for one to two years, sorting out what to do and then divorce; the remaining third try to make their marriages work. A half of these couples divorce, while half of them (17% of the total) stay together for three or more years."

[The Family Pride Coalition](#) compiled the following statistics:

- 20 percent of all gay men in America are in a heterosexual marriage.
- 50 percent of all gay men in America have fathered children.
- 40 percent of all lesbians in America are married to a male partner.
- 75 percent of all lesbians have children.

Key Issues Facing a Straight Spouse

- Sexual rejection.
- Damaged sexual self-esteem.
- Questions like "what did I do to cause this" or "am I not masculine/feminine enough"?
- Low self-image and a high level of self-doubt.
- Concern about the children. How will they handle the news? What about the gay influence when they stay with their gay parent?
- Shattered beliefs after living a lie.
- Confusion about marriage and whether it is worth saving.

- Fear of having your family torn apart.
- Hurt over being violated and lied to.
- Handling feelings of rage, bitterness, fear, shock, despair, devastation, repulsion, hurt and anger.
- Questions about infidelity.
- Coping with shame, secrecy and a fear of lack of acceptance.
- Dealing with a gay spouse who doesn't want to limit sexual preference.
- Fear of having been exposed to or having contracted sexually transmitted diseases including AIDS.

Things to Do and Not to Do

- Don't isolate yourself. Your family is in crisis. **Seek out a support group or professional help.**
- Decide what you both can and cannot live with. Some people can look past sexual preference and some can't.
- Don't assume that your marriage is over. Some straight/gay marriages are happy unions. **However, studies show that out of 15% of couples who try to make it work, only about 7% make it long term after learning one spouse is gay.**
- Accept that it takes two to make a marriage. One spouse can't save a marriage alone.
- Get checked immediately for sexually transmitted diseases whether or not your partner admits to any sexual infidelity.
- Remember that no one can turn a person gay.

- Do take care of yourself as you go through the grieving process. Your marriage as you knew it is over. If you stay married, it will be changed. Try to accept this reality and move on with your lives.
- Telling your children depends on their age and understanding. You may need professional guidance to deal with this. It is important for them to feel loved and secure and that they know they are not to blame for the situation.
- Don't let the years of deception and the sense of betrayal take away from the good times and the positive memories you had in your marriage.

This is Not Your Fault

Although the trauma of being a straight spouse can be overwhelming, it is important to realize that the situation you find yourself in is not your fault.

The first year will probably be the toughest. Faced with this life-changing experience, you and your spouse can make life-giving decisions for your marriage, for one another, and for your children.

These decisions may mean the end of your marriage. Some couples stay married and some don't. Moving on and letting go will take time and it will take a willingness to forgive.

You are not alone. You can get help. Send us an [email](#) or you can send us a message via our [Contact Us Page](#)