

# **5: Honoring Diversity/ Respecting Differences**

**Words of Wisdom**

**The Three Sisters**

**Stereotypes Labels**

**Myths & Misconceptions Statements**

**Myths & Misconceptions Signs**

**Myths & Misconceptions: What Does Science Say?**

**Resources**

**What should it matter  
if one bowl is dark  
and the other pale,  
if each is of good  
design and serves its  
purpose well?**

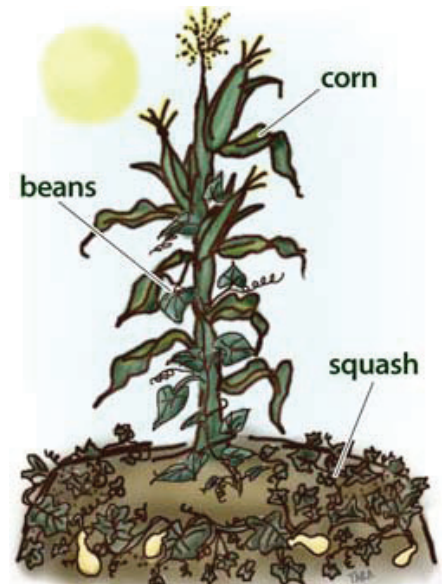
*Hopi*

## The Three Sisters

An Iroquois legend tells of three sisters who sprouted from the body of Sky Woman's daughter, granting the gift of agriculture to the tribes.

The sisters were all different in appearance and in personality. They lived together and helped each other grow and be strong.

- Corn, or maize, is the oldest sister. She stands tall in the center and provides a structure for the beans to climb, eliminating the need for poles.
- Squash is the next sister. She grows over the mound, protecting her sisters from weeds and shades the soil from the sun with her leaves, keeping it cool and moist.
- Beans are the third sister. She climbs through squash and then up the corn stalk to bind all together as she reaches for the sun



Each crop also complements the others in nutritional value:

- Maize is high in calories but relatively low in protein and is missing two critical amino acids.
- Bean, on the other hand, is a rich source of protein, and has an amino acid that complements maize.
- Eating the two crops together provides a complete array of amino acids.
- Squash is high in calories, vitamins, and minerals and its seeds are good sources of protein and oil.

Each of these crops does better when planted together than when planted on their own. They each contribute a different characteristics that helps all three of them grow and be strong.

The Three Sisters teaches us:

- Everyone has something to offer.
- Everyone brings something different to the table.
- There is strength in diversity.

# Stereotypes Activity Labels – Pg 1

<b>SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENT</b>	<b>PERSON WITH HIV/AIDS</b>	<b>GUITARIST IN A ROCK BAND</b>
<b>DEAF PERSON</b>	<b>JOCK</b>	<b>CHEERLEADER</b>
<b>ELDER</b>	<b>BRAIN</b>	<b>GEEK</b>
<b>FAST FOOD CASHIER</b>	<b>SCHOOL PRINCIPAL</b>	<b>HOMELESS PERSON</b>

## Stereotypes Activity Labels – Pg 2

<b>GAY PERSON</b>	<b>PARENT</b>	<b>TEACHER</b>
<b>MEDICINE MAN</b>	<b>MENTALLY ILL</b>	<b>POLICEMAN OR WOMAN</b>
<b>CRACKHEAD</b>	<b>PREGNANT TEEN</b>	<b>LESBIAN</b>
<b>QUEEN/TRANY</b>	<b>TRIBAL COUNCILMAN OR WOMAN</b>	<b>FOREIGNER WITH LIMITED ENGLISH SKILLS</b>

# Myths and Misconceptions Statements

1. Both girls and boys can play sports.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Disagree    Strongly Disagree

2. All overweight people are lazy.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Disagree    Strongly Disagree

3. All Native people are alcoholics.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Disagree    Strongly Disagree

4. People choose to be gay/lesbian/bi/transgendered.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Disagree    Strongly Disagree

5. You can tell if people are gay or lesbian by how they look or talk.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Disagree    Strongly Disagree

6. Both girls and boys can act, sing, and dance, regardless whether they are straight or gay/lesbian.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Disagree    Strongly Disagree

7. Gays and lesbians are more likely than straight people to be child molesters and pedophiles (people who are erotically attracted to children).

Strongly Agree    Agree    Disagree    Strongly Disagree

8. All teenagers make bad choices and cannot be trusted.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Disagree    Strongly Disagree

9. It's not a good idea to be friends with a gay/lesbian person because they will try to convert you.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Disagree    Strongly Disagree

10. It's common for teenagers to question their sexual orientation.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Disagree    Strongly Disagree

11. If you have ever had a sexual experience with a person of the same gender, then you are gay/lesbian.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Disagree    Strongly Disagree

12. Women who like to have sex are whores or sluts.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Disagree    Strongly Disagree

13. A person can change their sexual orientation.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Disagree    Strongly Disagree

14. Many people in wheelchairs or who have other disabilities can still have a sex life.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Disagree    Strongly Disagree

15. Gay guys only want sex. They are not as interested in relationships as straight people.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Disagree    Strongly Disagree



**STRONGLY  
AGREE**



**AGREE**

**DISAGREE**

**STRONGLY  
DISAGREE**

# Myths and Misconceptions

## What does science say?

1. Both girls and boys can play sports.  
**Yes.** Both males and females of all ages can play sports.
2. All overweight or obese people are lazy.  
**No.** Many people, both overweight and underweight need to be more physically active. Overweight can be due to genetics, stress, diet, and societal influence.
3. All Native people are alcoholics.  
**No.** While alcoholism is a problem in many Native communities, we know that every Native person is not an alcoholic.
4. People choose to be gay/lesbian/bi/transgendered.  
**No.** Science today tells us that sexual orientation is probably caused by a combination of genetic, hormonal, and social/environmental influences. Almost all GLBTQ people believe that they did NOT choose their sexual orientation.
5. You can tell if people are gay or lesbian by how they look or talk.  
**Not always.** Only some people fit the stereotypes; that's what makes them stereotypes. Some people who *aren't* gay also fit stereotypes about gay people. It's OK for a gay or lesbian person to fit those stereotypes, but many gay and lesbian people don't.
6. Both girls and boys can act, sing, and dance, regardless whether they are straight or gay/lesbian.  
**Yes.** Many boys and girls participate in all kinds of activities. Activities do not determine one's sexual orientation.
7. Gays and lesbians are more likely than straight people to be child molesters and pedophiles (people who are erotically attracted to children).  
**No.** Gay men and lesbians are usually just as respectful of children and others as heterosexuals are. There's a false stereotype that gay men molest children; most child molesters are heterosexual.
8. All teenagers make bad choices and cannot be trusted.  
**No.** Many teens can and do make good choices all the time. Just as many people have preconceptions about young people, others stereotype older individuals. Neither form of ageism is right.
9. It's not a good idea to be friends with a gay/lesbian person because they will try to convert you.  
**No.** Another stereotype is that gay people "recruit" or "come on" to heterosexuals. That's not usually true either. A person would just be setting themselves up for rejection if they flirted with someone who clearly wasn't interested.

10. It's common for teenagers to question their sexual orientation.

**Yes.** Adolescence is a time of “becoming.” Teens often experience feelings of attraction toward people of both sexes and may try having sexual experiences with them. We don't say that these people are bisexual (or gay/lesbian); we say they are “questioning.” And that's OK. Adolescence is a time of discovering who you are—and that includes what your sexual orientation is. Remember: Your sexual orientation isn't what you do; it's how you feel. The important thing is not WHICH orientation you have, but that you learn to feel good about who you are.

11. If you have ever had a sexual experience with a person of the same gender, then you are gay/lesbian.

**No.** Remember, many teens go through a period of questioning their sexual orientation that may include having experiences with people of either sex.

12. Women who like to have sex are whores or sluts.

**No.** Women can and should enjoy sex if they are making a choice to do so responsibly with their partners. Women have natural sexual urges that are just as strong as those that men have.

13. A person can change their sexual orientation.

**No.** Most experts say that you can't change your sexual orientation through therapy. Some people have changed their behavior. But there's no proof that therapy can make a person's sexual *feelings* or attractions change or disappear. Of course, many people wouldn't want their feelings to disappear.

14. Many people in wheelchairs or who have other disabilities can still have a sex life.

**Yes.** Many people of all abilities are able to have fulfilling sexual relationships.

15. Gay guys only want sex. They are not as interested in relationships as straight people.

**No.** There's a stereotype that all GLBT people want from a partner is sex. Some do, of course, just like some straight people.



# RESOURCES

## **Advocates for Youth**

<http://www.advocatesforyouth.org>

Advocates for Youth helps young people make informed and responsible decisions about their reproductive and sexual health.

## **BiNet USA**

<http://www.binetusa.org>

A network of bisexual individuals that promotes a sense of bisexual community, increases bisexual visibility, and advocates for bisexuals.

## **Bisexual Resource Center**

<http://www.biresource.org>

A resource directory for individuals who identify as bisexual and their allies.

## **GLBT National Youth Talkline**

<http://www.glnh.org/talkline>  
[youth@GLBTNationalHelpCenter.org](mailto:youth@GLBTNationalHelpCenter.org)

Toll-free 1-800-246-PRIDE (1-800-246-7743)—Mon-Fri 1-9 pm PST, Sat 9am to 2pm PST.

The GLBT National Youth Talkline provides telephone and e-mail peer-counseling, as well as factual information and local resources. Telephone volunteers are in their teens and early twenties; they speak with teens and young adults up to age 25 about coming-out issues, relationship concerns, parent issues, school problems, HIV/AIDS anxiety, and safer-sex information. All services are free and confidential. A project of the GLBT National Help Center.

## **Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Peer Help Line**

617-267-9001, toll-free: 888-340-4528

A youth support and information line staffed by trained GLBTQ volunteers age 25 and under. A service of Fenway Health.

## **Go Ask Alice!**

<http://www.goaskalice.columbia.edu>

Provides readers with reliable, accurate, accessible, culturally competent information and a range of perspectives so that they can make responsible decisions concerning their health and well-being. The site answers questions about relationships; sexuality; sexual health; emotional health; fitness; nutrition; alcohol, nicotine, and other drugs; and general health. A project of Columbia University.

## **Healthy Teen Network**

<http://www.healthyteennetwork.org>

LGBTQ web links.

## **Jump-Start Guide for Gay-Straight Alliances**

<http://www.glsen.org/cgi-bin/iowa/all/library/record/2226.html>

Information and resources for GLBTQ students and their straight allies, aimed at making school communities safe and accepting of all students. A service of the Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network (GLSEN).

**LAMBDA Community Services**

<http://www.lambda.org>

Resources for GLBTQ people and activists, including a Youth OUTreach program designed to help GLBTQ youth stand up for their rights, lead safe and healthy lives, and educate others.

**National Youth Advocacy Coalition**

<http://www.nyacyouth.org>

NYAC is a social justice organization that advocates for and with young people who are GLBTQ in an effort to end discrimination ensure their physical and emotional well-being.

**Native Out**

[www.nativeout.com](http://www.nativeout.com)

A nonpolitical grassroots Native American GLBTQ and Two-Spirit group based in Phoenix, AZ.

**Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays**

<http://www.pflag.org>

Information and resources for the families and friends of GLBTQ people.

**The Safe Schools Coalition**

<http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org/>

A public-private partnership in support of GLBTQ youth.

**Sex, Etc.**

<http://www.sexetc.org/resource/glbtc/hotline>

Resource list for GLBTQ youth.

**The Trevor Lifeline**

1-866-4-U-TREVOR (1-866-488-7386)—available 24/7

A national suicide hotline for GLBTQ youth staffed by trained counselors.

**YouthResource**

<http://www.amplifyyourvoice.org/youthresource>

YouthResource is a website created by and for GLBTQ young people. It takes a holistic approach to sexual health and exploring issues of concern to GLBTQ youth by providing information and offering support on sexual and reproductive health issues through education and advocacy. Through monthly features, message boards, and online peer education, GLBTQ youth receive information on activism, culture, sexual health, and other issues that are important to them. Hosted by Advocates for Youth's Amplify Your Voice.