

Thinking about your sexuality?

I think I might be gay, lesbian or bisexual but what if I don't know for sure?

Some gay or lesbian people say that they knew they 'felt different' from when they were very young. They might have had crushes on their same sex friends and no one else seemed to talk about that. Often it takes people a long time to put a name to their feelings – to be able to think of themselves as gay, lesbian or bisexual. But often when you start thinking about these words it starts to make sense.

Many other people don't start to think about their sexuality until they are older, and it can be very confusing. At some point almost everyone has a 'crush' on someone of the same sex like your favourite teacher, or a friend's older sister or brother. You may be closer to your same sex best friend than anyone else in the world. None of this means that you are definitely gay, lesbian or bisexual.

Many people have sexual experiences with someone of the same sex and this does not mean that you are necessarily gay or lesbian – just like one or two experiences with someone of the opposite sex does not mean that you are heterosexual.

You don't need to be sexually active with other people to recognise or understand your sexuality. Your feelings and your emotional and physical attractions will help tell you who you are.

Everyone's sexuality develops over time, so don't worry if you're not sure. You don't have to label yourself today, or ever if you don't want to.

Why am I same sex attracted?

People often ask 'why am I attracted to people of the same sex?' much more often than anyone would ever ask 'why am I attracted to people of the opposite sex?'. Being attracted to people of the same sex is just a part of who you are. Being gay, lesbian or bisexual is just a natural, normal and healthy and being heterosexual. There are thousands of other young people in Australia who are attracted to people of the same sex. Most research suggests that about 10% of the population are gay, lesbian or bisexual.

Will I ever have sex or a relationship?

You may have mixed feelings about having sex and/or a relationship with someone else. This is normal for everyone. Lesbian, gay and bisexual people do have positive sexual relationships and experiences that include genuine feelings of affection and pride in their sexual identity. The more you are able to value yourself, take your time, and use your best judgement, the more joyful and satisfying your sexual experiences are likely to be.