



Mom, Dad. I'm Gay. How Families Negotiate Coming Out

Ritch C. Savin-Williams

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As mainstream America becomes more aware of the non-heterosexual community, gay, lesbian, transgendered, and bisexual teenagers are revealing their sexual identities to their parents at a younger age than ever before. Often this happens while teens are still living at home. How do they decide whether and when to take this risky step? What is involved in negotiating a new identity with parents? And how common are the coming out "horror stories" published in the popular press?

Drawing from over 150 original interviews with teens, psychologist Ritch Savin-Williams separates fact from fiction in this survey of coming out experiences. Drawing from existing developmental research, he illustrates the wide range of family reactions and discusses the factors that determine how parents come to terms with the disclosure over time. He reveals that the coming out experience is greatly influenced by gender, and chapters highlight common mother–daughter, mother–son, father–daughter, and father–son dynamics.

At the end of the book, readers will find tips on how parents can be helped to negotiate the coming out process and learn to support their child's emerging sexual identity. This book will be an excellent resource for those who counsel or work with lesbian, gay, transgendered, or bisexual children and their families and for psychologists and researchers interested in this under-researched subject.



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