

Building a Society That Respects Sexual
Diversity and Different Ways of Life

Helping Everyone Understand Sexual Minorities



Let's learn
together!

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Introduction

Building a Gender-Equal Society

We must recognize and respect each other's diverse values and lifestyles so that all of us, regardless of gender, can fully demonstrate our individuality and abilities in various areas and flourish.

Hino City pursues measures to build a gender-equal society according to its Basic Regulations for Gender Equality and Gender Equality Action Plan.

Commonly held beliefs about fixed gender roles and prejudices related to gender differences have long been major issues. To resolve these issues, we need to cultivate respect for all human rights in households, schools, communities and workplaces.



Respecting Sexual Diversity and Diverse Values

A lack of understanding concerning sexual minorities such as homosexuals and those with gender identity issues remains a challenge to realizing a society that respects diverse values.

An open society where everyone, including sexual minorities can all live and flourish in various fields with vigor and in their own way can be considered a rich society.

We encourage you to re-examine your own prejudices and misunderstandings concerning sexuality and the ways that people choose to live.



**Let's think of this
issue together!**



I recently went to my cousin's wedding.

That's great!



Yeah, my cousin's really masculine, and his wife is so cute! They're the perfect couple!

They both sound nice.

Actually, though, I think there are many different types of "perfect" couples.



What do you mean?



Even though they're in the minority, some people like people of the same sex. And just because you're a guy doesn't mean you have to be "manly."

Really?

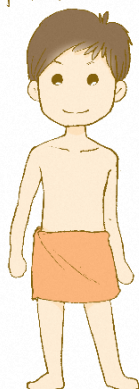


Tell you what. Let's learn together about "sexual minorities," meaning people whose sexual identities, orientations or practices differ from the majority.

What is a sexual minority (LGBT*)?

There are four primary characteristics of sexuality: the person's physical sex, gender identity, the sex they are attracted to, and gender expression.

身体の性 (生物学的性)



心の性 (性自認)

あなたとの性別は
なんですか



好きになる性 (性的指向)



表現する性 (社会的性)



The majority of people have clear physical sexual characteristics, their physical sex and gender identity are the same, and they are attracted only to people of the opposite sex. Anyone that this description does not apply to is considered a "sexual minority." The world's sexual minority population is reportedly about the same as the number of left-handed people. Between 5 and 10 percent of the people in any time period, country and culture are sexual minorities. Although they may not be clearly visible, they exist everywhere.

*LGBT: An abbreviation for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender. There are a variety of people in addition to LGBT people, such as people who do not have romantic feelings (asexual) and people who do not want to decide or seek sexuality (questioning).



I never really considered that. I guess sexuality is more complex than I thought.

You're right. Each person's sexuality is different.



I understand now that there aren't just men and women, and that people aren't just attracted to the opposite sex.



But what does it really mean when a person's sexuality is different from the majority?
What is life like for them?



Society strongly reflects the values of the majority, and that can make it difficult to understand the lives of minorities.

Okay, then I'll try to imagine what my life would be like if I were a sexual minority.



What would life be like if I liked boys, or if I identified as a girl even in this body...





So how was it? How did you feel?

Oh no... I may have hurt the feelings of some people in sexual minorities without thinking...



Why do you think that?



Well, society has a lot of words that make fun of gay people and people with gender identity issues, and I may have used some of those words myself.

You're right. Such words can make life difficult for sexual minorities. But realizing that is a start, and you can think more about it from today.



Let's take a moment to consider what sexual minorities feel and experience while reading comments from some of them.

When I'm asked about my sexual orientation and answer "bisexual," a lot of people say, "That means there's a lot of people you can date." Since bisexuals are attracted to both men and women, a lot of people seem to think that I could date anyone, but they don't seem to realize I have a choice, too. Just like anyone else, bisexuals are diverse, so obviously there are some people who are proactive and others who aren't.

(Bisexual woman, 20s)

I realized I was gay toward the end of elementary school, but the only time homosexuality came up in school was when classmates made gay jokes, and our teachers didn't teach us anything about sexual orientation. In junior high school, I felt that I had to hide that I am gay, and was desperate to make sure no one found out.

Thinking back now, I would like schools to teach about sexual diversity so that all students can be themselves.

(Gay man, 20s)

I hate the belief that men have to be "manly" and women have to be "womanly." I worked as a teacher at a prep school until recently. Teachers had to wear suits, and I really hated wearing pumps and a skirt suit. I felt like I was being forced to cross-dress. I wanted to keep teaching and working with children, but the rule that women have to be "womanly" always made me unhappy.

(Female physical sex, male gender identity, 20s)

My physical sex is female. If I had been born male, I think I wouldn't have realized that I can't express my gender identity in terms of male or female, and would have lived as a feminine gay guy.

There are times when I want to wear feminine clothing and speak in a feminine way. I don't like being seen as a woman, though, so I have to avoid doing these things. People tell me not to worry about it, but I don't think they realize how much effort that would take. Being in a woman's body, I don't have a place where I can return to being the feminine gay man that I feel I am.

(Female physical sex, X* gender identity, 20s)

*X gender: Indicates a transgender person who does not want to or cannot choose solely between being a man or a woman, or who identifies as being neither or androgynous.

The person interviewed stated that although their physical sex is female, their gender identity could not be fully expressed as only male or female. The interviewee also said that although they identified as X gender, their sexual orientation frequently leaned toward male. As such, they express themselves here as a gay man who likes other men.



Many places have recently launched a host of initiatives related to these issues. The goal is to create a society in which everyone can live comfortably and that recognizes various lifestyles.

Government Initiatives

2015: MEXT notified elementary, junior high and high schools urging consideration for children who are gay or have gender identity issues.

August 2017: The MHLW allowed the use of aliases on health insurance cards

Municipal Initiatives

The Same-Sex Partnership System, which started in Shibuya City in 2015, has spread to approx. 50 local governments nationwide (As of April 2020)

April 2019: Tokyo enforces the "Respect for Human Rights Ordinance" that prohibits LGBT discrimination

Corporate Initiatives

Nomura Securities, Sony, and IBM Japan established programs to treat same-sex married couples the same way they do male-female couples in common-law marriages

Many other companies followed suit, particularly those that offer consumer products and services (Applying for family discounts from mobile phone companies, applying for mortgages from financial institutions, etc.)

Support Organization Initiatives

The NPO ReBit conducts school visits for junior high, high school and university students and other young people; other organizations conduct grassroots activities across the country.

In spring 2017, the Tama Branch Office of the Three Tokyo Local Bar Associations began offering telephone consultations for sexual minorities.



Hino City has also slowly but surely been implementing initiatives to promote understanding of sexual minorities.

Hino City Initiatives

In the "Hino City Gender Equality Action Plan," Hino City has set "building awareness and promoting understanding of respect for human rights that recognize diverse genders and diverse ways of life" as one of the priority measures to be promoted. In the future, Hino City will continue to work even further on various measures from the perspective of human rights and peace.

<Hino City Employees>

In addition to holding a variety of educational activities to give due consideration to human rights, Hino City has been conducting LGBT training for city employees since FY2017, and Hino City will continue to raise awareness of human rights so that all employees can respect the personality of each individual, including sexual minorities.

<Civic Courses / Creating Places to Stay>

Since FY2015, Hino City has been holding courses for local residents to learn about diverse sexuality, and since FY2018, Hino City started the monthly "Rainbow Friends Cafe," where LGBT people, supporters, and everyone else can gather.

This pamphlet was created with extensive assistance from the members of an organization called Nijiuro Tongzhi*. Nijiuro Tongzhi works to create a society where everyone can be themselves through public classes on sexual minorities and other activities primarily in the Tama area.

* "Nijiuro" means "colors of the rainbow" in Japanese, while "Tóngzhi" is a word used in Taiwan and other Chinese-speaking areas to represent sexual minorities and their supporters.



I see now that there are a variety of organizations working to create a society where sexual minorities can live easily. Now that I think about it, this issue is also frequently discussed on TV and in other media.



Even so, there is still a deep-rooted aversion to sexual minorities. In one survey, about half the people answered that they would feel uncomfortable if their friend was a sexual minority, and around 70 percent said they would not like it or would be disturbed if their child were a sexual minority.



That's really shocking...
I guess it takes time for society and people to change.



Exactly. That's why action and support is needed in various places. Your town, Hino City, is committed to supporting sexual minorities.

Message from Hino City

To all sexual minorities, you are not alone!

Hino City is committed to supporting you!

Inquiries concerning the information provided here and information on consultation windows:

Hino City Gender Equality Promotion Center Furatto
(Gender Equality Division / Tamadaira-no-Mori Fureai-kan 2F)
Tel: 042-584-2733, Weekdays 8:30 a.m. to 5:15 p.m.

The government alone cannot change society; only the power of the people can do that. Let's all take the time to think about creating a better society!

Conclusion

Mental burdens

Many sexual minorities cannot come out to the people around them. Fearing discrimination, they hide who they really are and live in conformance with social standards. This can affect their physical and mental health.

For example, sexual minorities suffer mental burdens such as worrying that their orientation may harm them in job interviews, get them bullied at school, or result in greater scrutiny due to a difference in their apparent sex and the one listed on their ID.

We encourage you to consider the prejudices you may have about sexual orientation and gender identity, and work to acquire accurate knowledge.



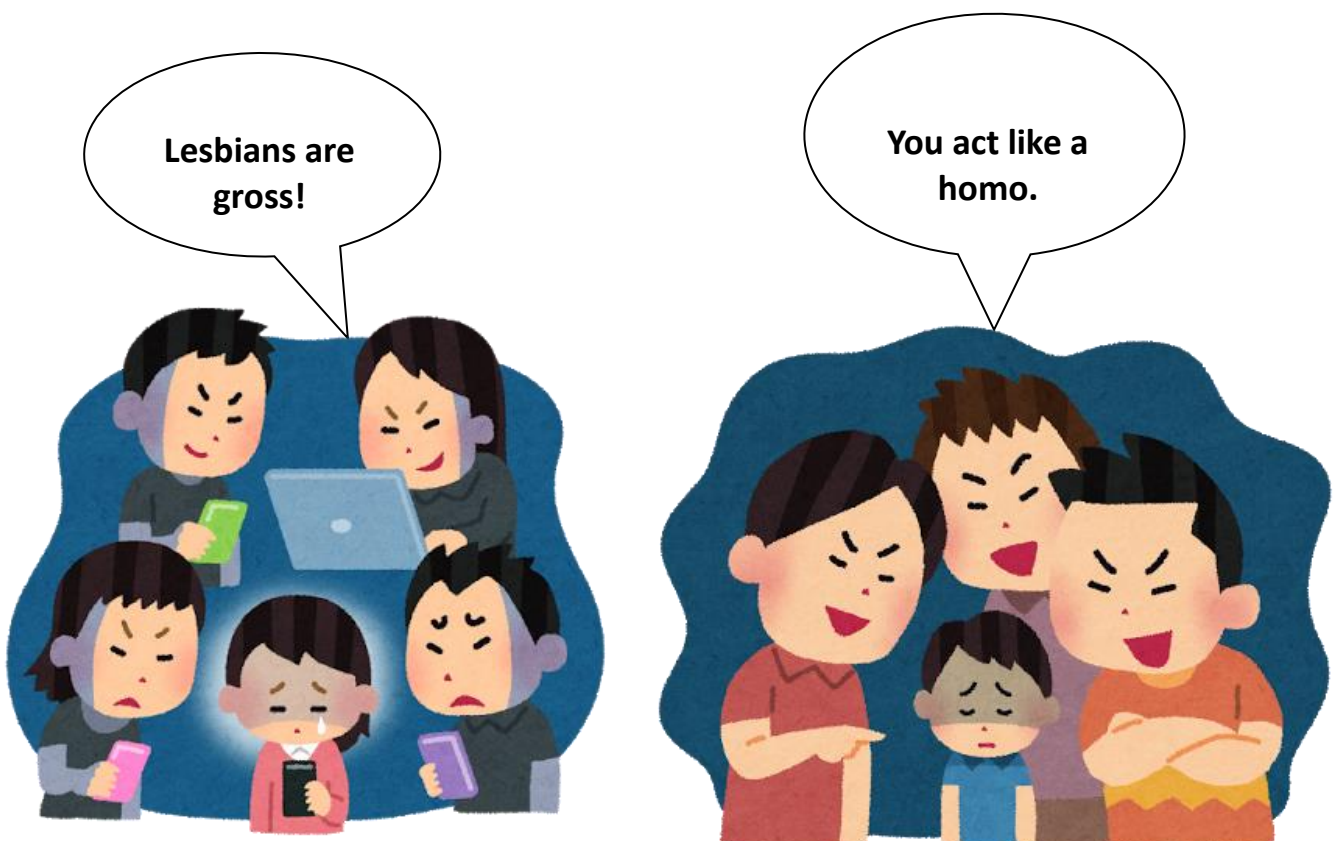
**Accurate
knowledge is
essential!**

Verbal violence

Some people are harmed by what are considered everyday words.

Making jokes about sexual minorities or using words like “manly” and “womanly” that do not match a person’s gender identity can make the person feel that their existence is being rejected, causing psychological stress and damaging self-esteem.

Let’s check each other when we use words associated with bullying and ridicule at workplaces, school and at home.





Consultation for Sexual Minorities

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「Consultation for
Sexual Minorities」
に変更した方が良く
と思いますので 修

Tokyo Consultations on Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation

● Legal consultation for sexual minorities

Telephone consultation: Every Tuesday and Friday (Closed on public holidays) 18:00～22:00

Consultation phone number: **03-3812-372**

Consultation is free

● Consultation via LINE

Every Monday and Thursday, 17:00～22:00

Dedicated LINE account: **LGBT 相談@東京**

Three Local Tokyo Bar Associations Tama Branch Office

Legal consultation for sexual minorities

Telephone consultation: First and third Fridays of the month (if either is a holiday), 1 to 4 p.m.

Consultation phone number: **042-548-1190**

Consultation is free

In person: Monday to Friday, 9:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 1 to 4 p.m.

Reservation phone number: **042-548-1190**

Initial consultation is free

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をそのままにしましたが専用英語のアカウ
ントを作成した方が良くと思います。そう
すれば、以下のようなアカウント名をお勧
めします。

「LGBT_consultation@Tokyo」

「LGBTconsultation@Tokyo」

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いる「consultations」も大丈夫です。

Hino City Women's Consultation

By phone or in person

First to fourth Tuesdays (closed on holidays), 6 to 9 p.m.

First to fourth Wednesdays (closed on holidays), 9:45 to 11:45 a.m. and 1 to 4 p.m.

Consultation phone number: **042-587-8177**

Reservation required. Consultations are free, but limited to around 50 minutes per session.