

Tips for Low-Income Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, & Transgender Families



Because children with same-sex parents often do not have a legal relationship to at least one of their parents, they can be denied government benefits or can end up in foster care if their legal parent dies or is incarcerated. For example, when 10-year-old A.W.'s non-biological mother became disabled, he was unable to get Social Security benefits because the Social Security Administration refused to recognize her as a legal parent. After A.W. found free legal help, he appealed and began receiving the benefits he needed.

Many people have heard the myth that all gay people are affluent. In fact, poverty is at least as prevalent in LGBT families as it is in the general population. On average, same-sex couples make less than married couples, are less likely to own a home, and are less likely to have a college degree.

Same-sex couples are raising children. Same-sex couples live in virtually every county in the United States, and 39% of same-sex couples in the United States are raising children under the age of 18.

Same-sex parents have fewer economic resources.

- Same-sex parents earn on average almost \$11,000 less than different-sex married parents.
- 64% of same-sex parents own their homes while 76% of married different-sex parents own their homes.
- 23% of same-sex parents have a college degree, compared to 30% of married different-sex parents.

Same-sex parents of color are more likely to be raising children.

- Black same-sex couples across the nation are twice as likely to be raising children as white same-sex couples.
- 70% of Latino/a and 55% of Asian/Pacific Islander same-sex couples in California are raising children.

Resources

[The National Center for Lesbian Rights](http://www.nclrights.org) is a national legal organization committed to advancing the civil and human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people and their families through litigation, public policy advocacy, and public education. For more information, visit www.nclrights.org

[The National Center for Lesbian Rights Family Protection Project](#) helps low-income LGBT parents find free and low-cost family law services and provides training and assistance to attorneys representing low-income LGBT parents. For more information about representing LGBT low-income families or for information about trainings, contact: Cathy Sakimura, Equal Justice Works Fellow, National Center for Lesbian Rights, 870 Market Street, Suite 370, San Francisco, CA 94102, 415.365.1329, csakimura@nclrights.org.



Resource courtesy of the National Center for Lesbian Rights.

McKenna Raney-Gray
LGBTQ Justice Project Staff Attorney
ACLU of Mississippi

T: (662) 801-9405
E: LGBTQ@aclu-ms.org