



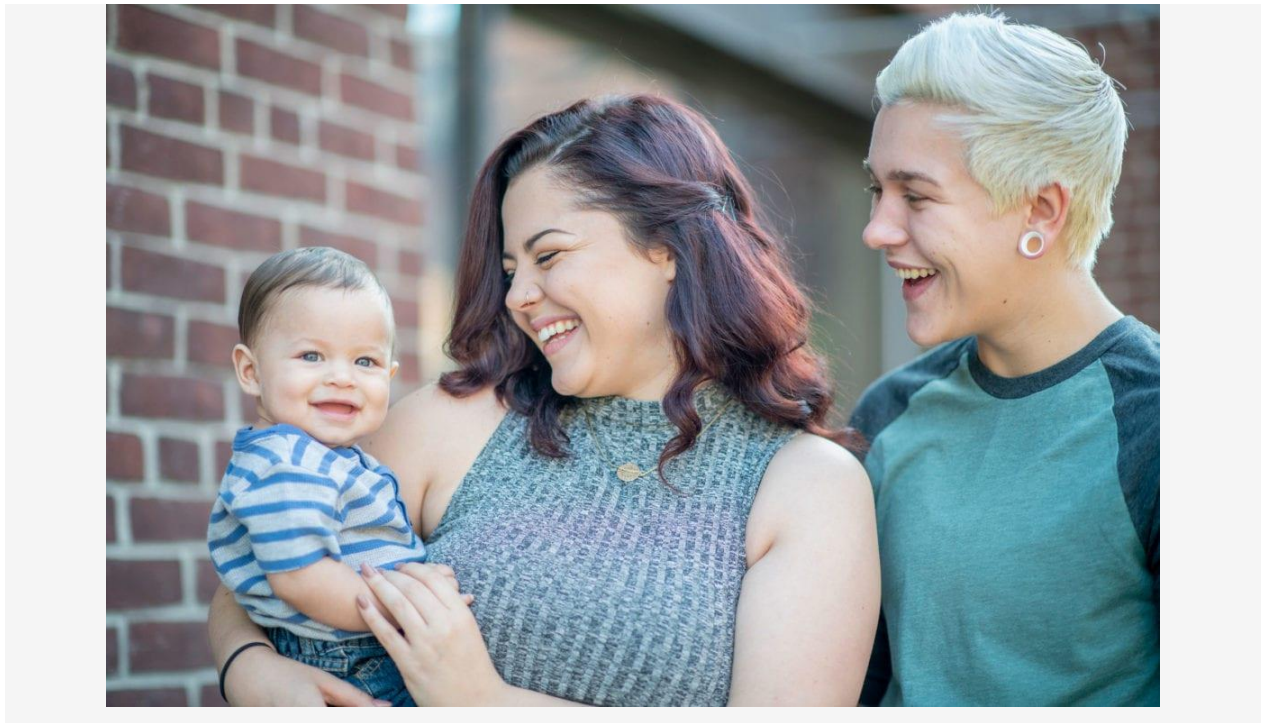
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## NEW RESEARCH ABOUT LGBT PARENTING RELEASED

written by [Jenny Heitz](#) September 16, 2020



Families are families. At least, that's the conclusion study after study has concluded when comparing the kids of LGBT parents to heterosexual parents. And the most recent batch of research about LGBT parenting, mostly coming out of the University of Kentucky, continues to conclude that the kids are all right.

The latest studies focus on adoptive families as a whole. In 2016, University of Kentucky developmental psychology professor Rachel Farr published her

long-term findings — from years of following nearly 100 adoptive families with kids from early to middle childhood.

“To the best of my knowledge,” Farr said in University of Kentucky News, “this is the first study that has followed children adopted by lesbian, gay and heterosexual parents over time from early to middle childhood. Longitudinal research (like this) offers insight into what factors may be the best or strongest predictors of children’s development, over and above information that can be gathered at only one time point.”



Photo: iStock

This long-term commitment was the only way to glean accurate and nuanced results, delivering a timeline rather than a mere snapshot of family life. The results indicated that the gender of the parents wasn’t relevant, but that stress and strife caused childhood behavior problems.

And stress is a universal issue that all families face.

“Regardless of parental sexual orientation, children (in the study) had fewer behavior problems over time when their adoptive parents indicated

experiencing less parenting stress,” Farr said. “Higher family functioning when children were school-age was predicted by lower parenting stress and fewer child behavior problems when children were preschool-age.”

Another study done by Farr, just released in the *Journal of GLBT Family Studies*, looks at gender-conforming behaviors in children of adoptive same-gender parent households. Again, there wasn’t a difference, either in the gender conformity of the kids, or in the kids’ friendship quality.

## Politicization of Same-Gender Parent Adoptions



Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee signed a measure that continued taxpayer funding of faith-based foster care and adoption agencies even if they exclude LGBT families and others based on religious beliefs.

(Photo: YouTube)

Farr’s results are particularly prescient at the moment; about 65,000, or roughly 4% of US adoptions are to same-gender parents. Yet, the Trump administration has made it easier for religious adoption organizations to deny adoptions to same-gender couples.

For instance, in January, *Reuters* reported that Tennessee became the 11th state to pass a bill that protects the right of religious groups to deny adoption and fostering to LGBT+ families.

Dr. Abbie Goldberg, professor of psychology at Clark University, has conducted longitudinal studies on LGBTQ families, especially adoptive ones,

for 15 years. Goldberg finds it not in adoptive children's best interests to deny same-gender parents the opportunity to adopt them because these parents tend to be more open and flexible.

"The fact that religious organizations can discriminate against LGBTQ prospective adopters makes no sense economically or socially," Goldberg explained to *Parentology*. "LGBTQ people tend to be more open to adopting children with hard-to-place characteristics, such as children with physical disabilities, children of color, older children, siblings, and LGBTQ children/teens. Trans prospective adopters are the most open to many of these characteristics, followed by LBQ [lesbian, bisexual queer-identified] women and then GBQ [gay, bisexual queer-identified] men."

## Countless Studies, No Differences



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In 2016, *The Journal of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics* found no difference in child health outcomes between same and different gender parent households.

"Children with female same-sex parents and different-sex parents demonstrated no differences in outcomes, despite female same-sex parents reporting more parenting stress. Future studies may reveal the sources of this parenting stress," the study's authors wrote.

Another study, The National Longitudinal Lesbian Family Study (NLLFS), which has been running since the 1980s, focused on children of lesbian parents. Those kids are now 25, and the results are in.

Compared to their peers who were not raised by same-sex couples, researchers found no significant differences with respect to “adaptive functioning (family, friends, spouse or partner relationships, and educational or job performance), behavioral or emotional problems, scores on mental health diagnostic scales, or the percentage of participants with a score in the borderline or clinical range.”

Study after study, using a wide variety of samples and methodologies, shows no discernible difference between kids raised by same or differently gendered parents. In other words, kids raised by same gender parents turn out pretty much the same as everyone else.

Farr hopes the research yields better attitudes and outcomes. “The findings may also help to move public debate forward about parenting and child outcomes across a diversity of family forms,” she said.