



Sound science, sound policy

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## Lesbian and Gay Parents

Some assert that same-sex couples should not have the right to adopt or become foster parents because lesbian and gay individuals would be unfit for parenting. Scientists, however, who for several decades have researched the behavior of same-sex couples and their children, have consistently found empirical evidence that contradict these assumptions.

Charlotte J. Patterson, a renowned social scientist, writes on this topic:

*“The evidence suggests that relationships of lesbian and gay couples are just as supportive and that home environments provided by lesbian and gay parents are just as likely as those provided by heterosexual parents to enable psychosocial growth among family members.”<sup>1</sup>*

### Selected Scientific Findings

- There is no scientific basis to assert that lesbian and gay persons are not equally fit to marry or to become parents of healthy and well-adjusted children.<sup>2</sup>
- There is no empirical foundation for concluding that lesbian mothers or gay fathers should not become parents on the basis of their sexual orientation.<sup>3</sup>
- Being involved in a gay and lesbian relationship is unrelated to a person’s ability to care for children.<sup>4</sup>
- Scientific surveys show that lesbian and heterosexual women share similar approaches to child rearing.<sup>5</sup>
- Numerous studies indicate that gay fathers are no different from heterosexual fathers in their ability to parent and to foster the healthy development of their children.<sup>6</sup>

### About SPSSI

The Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI) is an international group of approximately 3000 psychologists, allied scientists, students, and others who share a common interest in research on the psychological aspects of important social issues. In various ways, the Society seeks to bring theory and practice into focus on human problems of the group, the community, and nations, as well as the increasingly important problems that have no national boundaries.

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