



## SEXUAL DIVERSITY AND 2SLGBTQQIAP+ **COMING OUT: HOW TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD?**

Coming out is not a linear process. It's like a walk in the forest with different paths to take.

The disclosure of one's sexual orientation and gender identity can be an anxiety-provoking process for young people. The support network will make a difference in creating a positive experience.

Here are four factors to consider when supporting young people:

### ACCEPTANCE

Coming out can be a crucial step in developing a healthy 2SLGBTQQIAP+ identity that can help young people feel honest with themselves and in harmony.

Self-acceptance can:

- Decrease stress levels associated with energy spent on hiding this information and prevent the impression of "keeping a secret" and living a double life.
- Reduce the risk of isolation.
- Encourage personal development (through the pursuit of school projects or hobbies, and the maintenance of physical and mental wellness).
- Prevent abusive relationships and facilitate access to support from others.

2SLGBTQQIAP+ young people who come out tend to be more creative while benefitting from higher self-esteem and a better outlook on the future.

### MENTAL, EMOTIONAL AND SPIRITUAL WELLNESS

Coming out can involve a strong emotional charge and have an impact on the mental wellness of young people. They may fear being rejected or being bullied.

The coming out process is repeated as young people disclose this information to their family, their circle of friends, and in different settings such as school, work, etc.

When the coming out is well received by loved ones, it makes a difference and has a positive impact on their mental wellness.

Here are some tools to support your child:

- Have open discussions with them about sexuality, coming out and gender identity.
- Develop a network of open-minded or like-minded people and participate in activities in the community.
- If required, seek help from specialized mental health services.



## SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD'S IDENTITY

Coming out is a process that can take many years. The first stage of coming out is the self-confirmation of one's sexual orientation or gender identity.

Here is how you can contribute positively to this process:

- Use appropriate language (positive, affirmative and centered on your child's capacity).
- Find mentors in the community.

Educate your child, family members and other important people with whom you are close about the different sexual orientations and gender identities.



## PEER SUPPORT

Youth who identify as 2SLGBTQQIAP+ may experience stress, isolation, shame, and negative thoughts about themselves.

These young people can reach out to members of their family or other people who are important to them (teachers or school workers, elders, etc.), but sometimes it can be difficult for them to find the help and listening ear they need.

In some cases, it may be wise to seek support from elders and recognized two-spirit knowledge keepers to create safer and culturally appropriate spaces for 2SLGBTQQIAP+ people.

Here are some options that can increase young people's sense of belonging and allow them to obtain support from people in the same situation:

- Kids Help Phone: 1 800 668-6868;
- The development of a formal support network with people in the community who have gone through the same process and are open to discussing it;
- Support offered by one of the various Indigenous organizations or organizations specialized in supporting 2SLGBTQQIAP+ people;
- Visiting 2SLGBTQQIAP+ accounts on social networks.



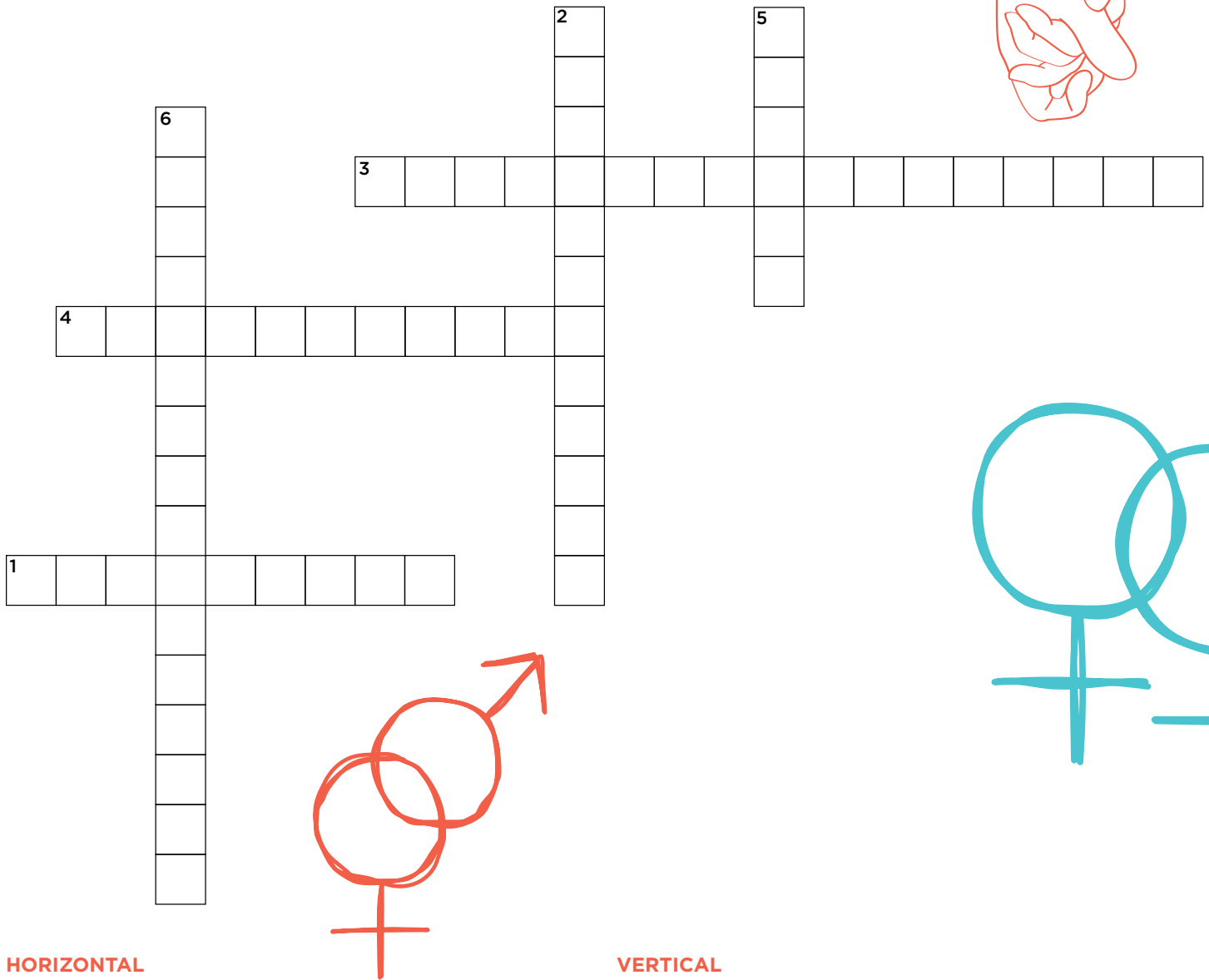
### DON'T FORGET!

You can also help your child by using practices or ceremonies that you can do yourself (e.g., making use of nature by taking walks, cedar baths, etc.).

You also need to be careful about the information you read, the aid organizations to which you refer and the people with whom you surround yourself to ensure that they are supportive and respectful.

# CROSSWORD

To learn a little more about the 2SLGBTQIAP+ terminology:



## HORIZONTAL

1. A gender expression that has elements of both masculinity and femininity; occasionally used in place of “intersex” to describe a person with both female and male anatomy.
3. A person’s emotional, romantic and/or sexual attraction to another person or other persons.
4. The process of exploring one’s own sexual orientation and investigating influences that may come from family, religious upbringing, and internal motivations.

## VERTICAL

2. A conservative and outdated view of gender, limiting possibilities to “man” and “woman”.
5. When someone reveals another person’s sexuality or gender identity to an individual or group, often without the person’s consent or approval; not to be confused with “coming out”.
6. The external display of gender, through a combination of dress, demeanor, social behaviour, and other factors, generally measured on a scale of masculinity and femininity.

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### Do you need to talk?

Call the Hope for Wellness Helpline at  
1 855 242-3310  
or chat at: <https://www.hopeforwellness.ca/>



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COMMISSION

1. Androgyny
2. Binary gender
3. Sexual orientation
4. Questioning
5. Outing
6. Gender expression

## CROSSWORD SOLUTION