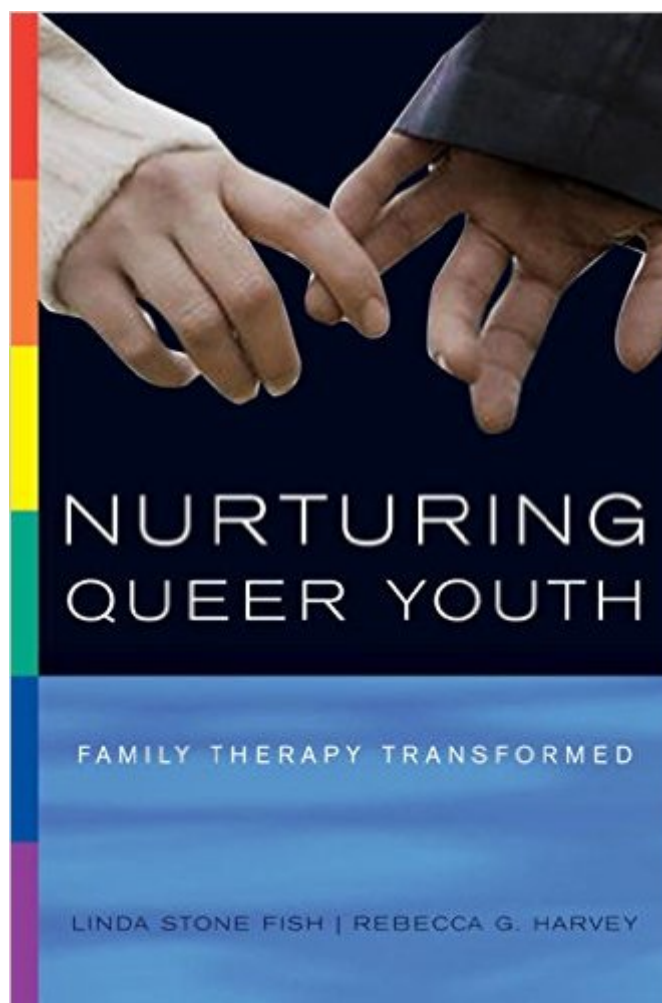


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# Nurturing Queer Youth: Family Therapy Transformed



## Synopsis

Youth are coming out as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgendered at increasingly younger ages. This burgeoning population of sexual minority youth, along with their families, is looking for help from therapists in order to manage the stresses of late childhood and adolescence. *Nurturing Queer Youth* provides therapists and other mental health professionals with the insight and guidance to assist these families. By integrating complex ideas about sex, gender, and identity, Stone Fish and Harvey go beyond accepting queer youth, to appreciating the gift that queer youth have to offer, not despite their identity, but because of it. As youth come out at younger ages, the process of identity development is necessarily a family process and therapeutic work undertaken to address sexual identity must involve the family. Despite this fact, as well as decades of research indicating that sexual minority status is a normal variation on a continuum of sexual identities, the field of family therapy has not contributed a family model that nurtures queerness. Stone Fish and Harvey recognize this disjunction between available therapeutic models and the actual needs of clients. Drawing on data from developmental research, the concepts of queer theory, as well as their own extensive clinical experience as family therapists, the authors develop an effective model of family therapy that nurtures queer youth and their families. The key processes of the model are creating refuge, fostering difficult dialogues, nurturing queerness, and encouraging transformation. Each therapeutic process is addressed in a single chapter which articulates the basic concept of the process, presents the research supporting the importance of the process, and then shows how to put the process into action in the therapeutic context. In the course of developing and illustrating these four key processes for helping queer youth and their families, Stone Fish and Harvey introduce readers to five families whose experiences of learning to nurture their queer youth are basic to the therapeutic lessons presented here. The approach is, above all, one that is sensitive to the specific dynamics of individual families and respectful of the challenges that all family members must face and overcome in the course of nurturing each individual's gifts as well as the gifts of the family unit. The families, whose stories readers will follow from chapter to chapter, are as much teachers as they are students in the collaborative family therapy presented with such vividness and narrative force by the authors. *Nurturing Queer Youth* is a book for all family therapists and mental health professionals. This transformative approach to family therapy will enhance clinical work with all families because the model challenges cultural and familial assumptions that are harmful to all intimate relationships. Today every therapist needs to be familiar with how sexual identity issues present in the family context, and how to work with queer youth and their families toward a family dynamic that is positive and nurturing of queerness. Therapists who specialize in treating sexual

minority youth will also profit from having an effective guide to conducting family therapy, including a relational map to family dynamics and ideas for intervention.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 272 pages

Publisher: W. W. Norton & Company; 1 edition (March 17, 2005)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0393704556

ISBN-13: 978-0393704556

Product Dimensions: 6.4 x 1.1 x 9.6 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (3 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #722,309 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #70 inÂ Books > Gay & Lesbian > Nonfiction > Bisexuality #1235 inÂ Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Social Sciences > Specific Demographics > Gay & Lesbian #1704 inÂ Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Psychology & Counseling > Child Psychology

## Customer Reviews

I picked up this book for a paper I am working on in graduate school. I plan for one of my specialties to be working with the LGBTQQIAA+ community. Youth are coming out as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgendered at increasingly younger ages and here locally they don't have very many places to turn too. I found this book easy to read and very informative. This population, along with their families, are looking for help from therapists in order to manage the stresses of late childhood and adolescence, and this book helps guide you to do so. This book provides mental health professionals with the insight and guidance to assist this community and their loved ones. "As youth come out at younger ages, the process of identity development is necessarily a family process and therapeutic work undertaken to address sexual identity must involve the family. Despite this fact, as well as decades of research indicating that sexual minority status is a normal variation on a continuum of sexual identities, the field of family therapy has not contributed a family model that nurtures queerness. Stone Fish and Harvey recognize this disjunction between available therapeutic models and the actual needs of clients. Drawing on data from developmental research, the concepts of queer theory, as well as their own extensive clinical experience as family therapists, the authors develop an effective model of family therapy that nurtures queer youth and their families. The key processes of the model are creating refuge, fostering difficult dialogues, nurturing

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