**Are the Lifestyles of Gays and Straights Similar or Quite Different?**

Movies, television shows and popular media reports often stress how similar gay and lesbian couples are to married heterosexuals. (Example: Robert Gebeloff and Mary Jo Patterson, "Married and Gay Couples Are Not All that Different" *Times-Picayune* (November 22, 2003).

However, there is a growing body of scientific research that has uncovered a wide divergence in gay and straight couples’ lifestyles.

**Gays Far More Likely to Use Illegal Drugs**

A two-year British study compared gay and straight drug use and found that gay people are seven times more likely to take illegal drugs than the general population. The study which was co-sponsored by the Lesbian and Gay Foundation (LGF) and the University of Central Lancashire, sampled more than 4,000 people over a two-year period (2009-2011). The study also found that gays were 10 times more likely to use cocaine than the wider population. When interviewed, one third of gay, lesbian and bisexual people reported taking at least one illegal drug in the past month, compared to 5 per cent in the wider population. <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2207497/Two-year-study-reveals-gay-people-seven-times-likely-illegal-drugs-general-population.html> <http://www.lgf.org.uk/policy-research/lesbian-gay-and-bisexual-people-s-alcohol-and-drug-use-in-england-2009-2011/drugs/>

**Best Family for Children: Gay or Hetero?**

# Two recent studies have challenged the widespread view that gays and lesbians make just as good parents as heterosexual couples. In 2005, a study by the American Psychological Association (APA) asserted that children of gay and lesbian parents were just as well off as those from traditional heterosexual families. Loren Marks of the Louisiana State University School of Human Ecology found a number of serious flaws in the methodology of the APA study and concluded that the strong assertions “made by the APA, were not empirically warranted.” ” Same-sex parenting and children’s outcomes: A closer examination of the American psychological association’s brief on lesbian and gay parenting” *Social Science Research*, [Volume 41, Issue 4](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/journal/0049089X/41/4), July 2012, Pages 735–751.

# Mark Regnerus, University of Texas at Austin, Department of Sociology and Population Research Center summarizes the results of the New Family Structures Study (NFSS) which studied a random sample of nearly 3,000 American adults (ages 18-39) who were raised in a variety of different types of family arrangements. Regnerus found that children of mothers with same-sex relationships fared more poorly on 24 of the 40 outcomes examined, including that they were “they were far more likely to report being sexually victimized, to be on welfare, or to be currently unemployed.” Likewise children of fathers with same-sex relationships “were significantly more likely to have contemplated suicide, to have a sexually transmitted infection, or to have been forced to have sex against their will.” Regnerus concluded, “the stable, two-parent biological married model [is] the far more common and accomplished workhorse of the American household, and still—according to the data, at least—the safest place for a kid.” “How different are the adult children of parents who have same-sex relationships? Findings from the New Family Structures Study” *Social Science Research*, [Volume 41, Issue 4](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/journal/0049089X/41/4), July 2012, Pages 752-770.

**Gay vs. Hetero Partners Vary in Promiscuity, Health Risks, and Violence**

## The Family Research Council has published an extensive, carefully documented summary of many studies comparing various aspects of the lifestyles of homosexual couples to those of heterosexual, married couples. The study found significant differences in the duration of relationships, sexual promiscuity, relationship commitment, health risks and likelihood of intimate partner violence. “Comparing the Lifestyles of Homosexual Couples to Married Couples” <http://www.frc.org/get.cfm?i=IS04C02>.