

## **Breaking Intergenerational Silences: How LGBTQ+ Parents Transform Family Communication About Sexuality**

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### **Abstract:**

This paper examines how LGBTQ+ parents in South Africa actively break intergenerational patterns of silence around sexuality through innovative communication strategies with their children. Drawing on qualitative research with diverse LGBTQ+ families, the study reveals the profound influence of parents' own experiences of limited, absent, or fear-based sexuality conversations during their upbringing on their determination to create radically different communication environments for their children. The research identifies specific transformative practices including: normalizing comprehensive sexuality discussions from early childhood; integrating diverse media representations to prompt conversations; modeling healthy relationships and gender expressions; and creating safe spaces for children's questions and identity exploration. These practices represent conscious acts of resistance against cultural taboos and religious constraints that historically limited sexuality conversations in many South African families. Significantly, the findings demonstrate how personal histories of marginalization can be transformed into powerful motivations for creating more open, affirming family communication practices. This research contributes to understanding the crucial role of LGBTQ+ families in challenging restrictive communication norms, ultimately expanding possibilities for healthier approaches to sexuality education across diverse family structures.