

## FATHER WITH DAUGHTER WITH SSA: ADVICE WE SHOULD HAVE BEEN GIVEN

1. Start conversations about these issues when young, and educate, train and pray with them but also encourage feedback. If it is tricky, ask them 'what do your friends think?' Keep calm, even if you disagree. They are in process and you are in this for the long haul.
2. If they 'come out', hold and thank them for telling you! Remind them that nothing they could do will ever stop you from loving them! Many are terrified, especially if they are pleasers who don't want to disappoint you.
3. Realize that SSA is mostly unchosen. They feel doomed and damned, saddled with unwanted, forbidden feelings. Most would do anything (at least initially) to be different; sadly, though, they have found this is not 'just a phase'.
4. However, ensure they know no one is born gay (or trans) and that you want them to wait before a/becoming sexually active; b/ identifying and exploring LGBT; c/ doing anything irreversible.
5. Also, ensure they know of the ex-LGBT narrative, research etc. These resources are vital. Also useful are testimonies of other parents in your situation.
6. Realize they may decide to 'explore' LGBT life (when older) and if so, educate yourself on the many and serious downsides, and let them know they exist.
7. Encourage them to get proper counselling which will go under the surface and explore the mostly hidden drivers of their SSA, which is actually a symptom, not the problem.
8. Start a confidential prayer cell for them and get people praying for them.
9. Ask God daily for specifics, and share with your cell.
10. Keep reminding yourself that He knows and loves them far more than you ever will. Keep giving them into His care: He can handle them!
11. Build the relationship across the board. Do you know their love language? Do you know what/how they are experiencing wider life at present? When you were their age, which adults helped you and how did they do it? Replicate this good practice.
12. Work on yourself. How do they experience you? Ask God to reveal your blind spots. They know you better than you do (in ways), so seeing God changing you can be powerful.
13. And finally, remember this did not surprise God. He is prepared to intervene in even more powerful ways as we listen to and obey Him.