

Your Freedom of Choice



GAY LIFE EXCLUSION KILLS

Is a rainbow flag a danger to young people? Yes, says the city parliament of St. Petersburg, Russia. They adopted a law banning homosexual „propaganda“ in February 2012, threatening fines of up to \$15,000. Similar bills have been proposed in the national parliaments of both Russia and Ukraine. Already now LGBT people are attacked and seriously injured. The state does not protect them.

All over the world, LGBT people are marginalized, vilified, attacked – sometimes even murdered. In January 2011, David Kato was beaten to death in Uganda after a newspaper published a photo of him under the headline „Uganda’s Top Homos – Hang Them.“ And Uganda is still threatening to introduce its own „Kill The Gays Bill“.

Homosexuality is still a crime in about 80 states in the world. But even in countries where their sexuality is not illegal, LGBT people are often made to suffer. Discrimination, exclusion and hate cause illness and death – quite literally.

- In many countries, LGBT people live in fear and secrecy. The fear of punishment and discrimination discourages people to talk about their troubles and problems.
- Many LGBT people take refuge in drugs and, occasionally, death. Even in the USA and other Western countries, the suicide rate among young homosexuals is significantly higher than among young heterosexuals.
- Gay people often avoid health checks, like HIV tests, for fear of being discovered – which means they avoid treatment.

Life in a hostile society helps to spread HIV and other sexually transmitted infections. Living a healthy life is only possible, if people have free choice of gender and can live their sexual identity – without ifs or buts. People who cannot develop self-esteem often have more difficulty protecting themselves.

Good HIV prevention must promote respect for diverse lifestyles. It must not seek to control – it can only offer advice and support which enables people to make their own decisions with self-confidence.

Deutsche AIDS-Hilfe is closely associated with the gay community. It cooperates with gay projects, bars and media, particularly in its I KNOW WHAT I’M DOING campaign. The HIV infection rate in Germany is one of the lowest compared internationally, and has actually declined in recent years (2,700 infections per year in a population of 80 million).

Gays, lesbians and trans* people must be allowed to live their own lives without fear of discrimination, violence, or punishment. Freedom of choice for the LGBT community! Now!