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The Best LGBTQ Movies and TV Shows for Families

Celebrate Pride with one of these kid-friendly LGBTQ shows

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PUBLISHED ON: JUNE 05, 2020



Pixar's latest short, "Out," now streaming on Disney+, tells the story of a grown man coming out to his parents as he's about to move in with his partner. It is a huge leap for a major studio, but one that comes decades late. Parents in LGBTQ+ families don't need to be told how little representation of gender and sexual diversity there is in media aimed at children. In [GLAAD's latest survey](https://www.glaad.org/sri/2019/additional-recommendations) (<https://www.glaad.org/sri/2019/additional-recommendations>) (from 2018) of major studio film releases, only 20 of 110 feature films included LGBTQ characters, mostly in roles with less than three minutes of screen time. None of the 18 films categorized as

animated/family included LGBTQ characters. TV is a little better, but too many shows still wait for the final episode to reveal a character's sexuality rather than portraying the whole person throughout the story. There are some YouTube channels, such as [Pop'n'Olly](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpjrLd11TqcVXag6sPSU3A) (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpjrLd11TqcVXag6sPSU3A>) and [Queer Kid Stuff](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCecsVoeJcsXbAra7SI4mOPw) (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCecsVoeJcsXbAra7SI4mOPw>), that are well-known for providing age-appropriate and entertaining LGBTQ+ educational videos, but they're hardly family movie night fare.

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Some wonderful movies dealing with LGBTQ families are rated for older audiences due to details that may not bother some parents: "[The Kids Are All Right](https://www.commonsensemedia.org/movie-reviews/the-kids-are-all-right)" (<https://www.commonsensemedia.org/movie-reviews/the-kids-are-all-right>)" (several instances of nudity); "[Priscilla, Queen of the Desert](https://www.commonsensemedia.org/movie-reviews/the-adventures-of-priscilla-queen-of-the-desert)" (<https://www.commonsensemedia.org/movie-reviews/the-adventures-of-priscilla-queen-of-the-desert>)" (what is that lady doing with the ping pong balls?) and "[The Birdcage](https://www.commonsensemedia.org/movie-reviews/the-birdcage)" (<https://www.commonsensemedia.org/movie-reviews/the-birdcage>)" (a home filled with phallic artwork). But it takes some digging to find truly all-ages examples that go beyond "blink and you'll miss it" and final-episode reveals. In honor of Pride Month, we've done that digging and found these LGBTQ+ media options for every family.



Rainbow Roar: A Typical Fairytale

Rainbow Roar Short Film Festival Program

As part of a month of screenings celebrating Pride and filmmakers of color, Northwest Film Forum is re-presenting the [Rainbow Roar Short Film Program](https://www.childrensfilmfestivalseattle.org/2020/rainbow-roar-lgbtq-short-film-program/) (<https://www.childrensfilmfestivalseattle.org/2020/rainbow-roar-lgbtq-short-film-program/>) Wednesday through Sunday, June 24-28. The screening is on Vimeo by donation. Some films in the collection are suitable for younger kids, but the full collection is rated for ages 11 and older. All proceeds go to equity organizations.

SIFF-recommended short films

Our friends at the Seattle International Film Festival have recommended a few high-quality shorts:

“Tyler (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y3knga2u6o8>)” (16 mins.) – Some of the dialogue feels more like it was written by a therapist than spoken by a 9-year-old, but for elementary school kids (and their families), this could be a good conversation starter/coming-out instruction manual, and the relationship between the brothers is cute.

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“In a Heartbeat (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2REkk9SCRn0>)” (4 mins.) – This animated short about a boy who literally loses his heart to his crush is as touching as anything Pixar has ever made. Go ahead and watch it. Be prepared to cry.

“Pink Boy (<https://www.shortoftheweek.com/2016/09/08/pink-boy/>)” (15 mins.) – Documentary of a dress-wearing 6-year-old boy living in rural Florida and the family that creates a safe space for his sartorial choices.

“Fifteen (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gS1p-27dfKs>)” (4 mins.) – This teen-made post-mortem of first love may have too much kissing for the younger kids, but will hit middle-schoolers in the feels.

“Sweetheart Dancers (<https://vimeo.com/ondemand/sweetheartdancers>)” (14 mins.) – Appropriate for all ages and well worth \$2.95, this sweet documentary about an indigenous gay couple who compete in traditional dancing shows them challenging powwow rules against same-sex couples. But the emphasis is on the dancing.

“Mehndi (<https://vimeo.com/275907493>)” (4 mins.) – Two girls make a powerful discovery

during a shared moment at a family party. There is nothing in this film that a toddler shouldn't watch, but it contains a lot of story (and sexual tension) under the surface.

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Feature films

“[Love, Simon](https://www.common sense media.org/movie-reviews/love-simon) (2018) is the adaptation of the wildly popular YA book “[Simon vs. the Homo Sapiens Agenda](https://www.amazon.com/Simon-vs-Homo-Sapiens-Agenda/dp/006234868X?ie=UTF8&tag=parentmap-20).” There are a lot of teen coming-out movies, but “Love, Simon” is the one least likely to shock younger siblings.

“[Bend It Like Beckham](https://www.common sense media.org/movie-reviews/bend-it-like-beckham)” (2002) is all about the familial generation gap. The protagonist’s desire to play soccer against her traditional Sikh parents’ wishes unfolds in parallel with her male best friend’s coming out. The movie treats both conflicts with the same weight and validity.

Aside from a few swear words and discussion of drug use, “[Breakfast With Scot](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0910847/)” (2007) doesn’t really deserve its PG-13 rating. Sportscaster Eric is happily married before his husband Sam inherits custody of a relative’s stepson. When young Scot prefers musicals to hockey, Eric discovers his internalized toxic masculinity.

TV shows

Television drama “[The Fosters](https://www.common sense media.org/tv-reviews/the-fosters)” (2013–2018) follows the blended, multi-racial family of a lesbian couple. The challenges they face are realistic for the ages of the children portrayed (12–16 when the series starts), but the overall vibe is more down-to-earth than cringey.

“[Diary of a Future President](https://www.common sense media.org/tv-reviews/diary-of-a-future-president)” (current season), on Disney+, focuses on 12-year-old Cuban-American Elena, who is preparing for her future as President of the United States. Amid all the other tween drama, her older brother develops a crush on his friend Liam. There is also one lesbian adult character – the paralegal who works for Elena’s mother.

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Cartoon Network leads the pack with several shows featuring same-sex relationships between major characters. Both a TV show and a movie, the kid-friendly “[Steven Universe](https://www.common sense media.org/search/steven-universe) (<https://www.common sense media.org/search/steven-universe>)” (2013–2019) is filled with queer characters (albeit nonhuman alien gems). Although the animation style is decidedly low-budget, the stories handle heavy subjects with a sensitive touch.

In the long-running Japanese manga, it’s canon that Sailors Uranus and Neptune are a couple, but early American releases recast them as cousins. Today, the rebooted series “[Sailor Moon Crystal](https://www.common sense media.org/tv-reviews/sailor-moon-crystal) (<https://www.common sense media.org/tv-reviews/sailor-moon-crystal>)” (2014) gets the couple back together.

A more recent rerelease of a magical girl anime classic for younger viewers, the brand new Netflix release of “[Cardcaptor Sakura](https://www.common sense media.org/tv-reviews/cardcaptor-sakura) (<https://www.common sense media.org/tv-reviews/cardcaptor-sakura>)” (2020) is more faithful to the Japanese original than earlier American dubs. The show about a fourth-grader collecting magical cards has romantic crush subplots, and an older brother with a boyfriend. The 2018 series “[Cardcaptor Sakura: Clear Card](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt6279576/?ref_=ttpl_pl_tt) (https://www.imdb.com/title/tt6279576/?ref_=ttpl_pl_tt)” is still available on Crunchyroll, but does not have the same level of representation.

Truly for little kids, “[Danger and Eggs](https://www.common sense media.org/tv-reviews/danger-eggs) (<https://www.common sense media.org/tv-reviews/danger-eggs>)” (2015–) pairs daredevil D.D. Danger and her safety-conscious best friend, an egg named Phillip, in all kinds of outrageous adventures. It’s a buddy show in a world casually populated with numerous queer characters (often voiced by queer actors).

Reel Queer Youth

When you can’t find what you need in the arts, it’s time to make it yourself. [Three Dollar Bill Cinema](https://threedollarbillcinema.org/reelqueeryouth) (<https://threedollarbillcinema.org/reelqueeryouth>) offers a video production and media literacy program for LGBTQ+ youth and allies ages 13–18. During this week-long virtual camp, teens explore queer cinema and create a film with whatever media and tools they have available.

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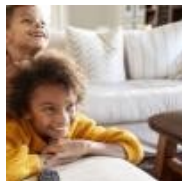
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