Who is bisexual?
Bisexuality (sometimes shortened to “bi”) refers to sexual, emotional, and/or physical attraction to both men and women. There are many variations of how one may express their bisexuality. Some bisexuals are equally attracted to both women and men, others may experience different degrees or types of attraction that may change throughout their lifetime. Identifying as bisexual does not mandate that one is sexually active with both men and women. Some people who are sexually active with both women and men may not identify as bisexual since sexual activity does not necessarily define one’s sexual orientation. The term “bisexual” limits attractions to just two genders; however, other labels exist to encompass other genders as well. These terms include non-monosexual, pansexual, and omnisexual.

Aren’t bisexuals just confused?
Often it is assumed that bisexuality is just a phase or a sexual experiment. We are taught to believe that sexual orientation is static, but in reality, sexuality can change throughout one’s lifetime. For example a woman may first identify as a lesbian, later identify as bisexual, and even later identify as queer; others may identify as bisexual for their entire lifetime. The fluidity of sexual orientation does not make one’s feelings a result of being confused. Bisexuality is a valid sexual orientation with which many people identify.

What are some of the obstacles that bisexuals face?
One obstacle that they face is that they are usually categorized as either straight, gay, or lesbian. Because of these assumptions, many bisexuals are rendered invisible in both queer and straight communities. Another obstacle that bisexuals face is identifying with the term bisexual. The prefix “bi” infers attraction to only two genders; however many bisexuals recognize that there are more than two genders and therefore may identify with another term such as nonmonosexual, pansexual, or omnisexual.

How can I be respectful of bisexual people?
- Educate yourself further about bisexual people and issues that are important to bisexual communities.
- It is important to avoid making assumptions about the sexual orientation of others.
- Seek awareness of your sexual orientation and the things you may have always taken for granted about it, particularly if you’ve always considered yours to be “the norm”.
- Respect the confidentiality of bisexual people. Seek consent with an individual before revealing their sexual orientation to others - you could be “outing” them to a person or community does not know that they are bisexual.
Where can I find more information?

- Most libraries have sections dedicated to LGBQ communities, histories, and issues.
- Search out your local LGBTIQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer) center and inquire about what they are working on regarding bisexual issues in your area, ask them questions, and use their resources.

Resources:

**Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Resource Center**
G301 Student Center
Irvine, CA 92697-5125
http://www.lgbtrc.uci.edu

**Bi Net USA**
www.binetusa.org

**Bisexual Resource Center**
www.biresource.org

**Bisexual.org**
www.bisexual.org

**Bi.org**
www.bi.org