



CAN TWO WOMEN OR TWO MEN GET MARRIED? IDEAS FOR RESPONDING TO STUDENTS' QUESTIONS

Marriage between two people of the same sex is in the news a lot – and students are hearing about it. Children also often bring up the idea of marriage – “Oh so and so is going to marry so and so.” Looking at this may help you respond when a student says, “Can Kayla and Isabelle get married?” or “Are Juan’s moms married?”

CAN TWO WOMEN OR TWO MEN GET MARRIED?

Depending on where you live the answer would be different. In some places the answer is simply, “Yes.”

In other places you would need a longer answer. In many states in the United States and in some other countries (including Argentina, Canada, South Africa, and Spain), two women or two men can get (legally) married. However, in many places, two women or two men cannot get legally married.

In the United States, there has been a big debate about whether or not it should be legal. Some people think that it is unfair that two women or two men cannot get legally married. They love each other and want to make a commitment to each other just as other couples do.

On the other hand, some people don’t want two women or two men to be able to get legally married. One of the most common reasons is that it is against their religion. People often have strong feelings one way or the other.

Note: When speaking with young children, be careful to not simply say that it is not possible for two women or two men to get married legally, because children may mistakenly infer that someone who gets married to another person of the same sex is doing something against the law and could get arrested!

WHY WOULD TWO WOMEN OR TWO MEN WANT TO GET MARRIED?

Because they love each other. The same reason all people get married. They want to make a commitment to each other and care for each other for the rest of their lives.

FOR CHILDREN WITH TWO MOMS OR TWO DADS ANOTHER STUDENT MAY ASK: ARE THEIR PARENTS MARRIED?

Again, depending on where you live the answer would be different. In many states, the answer could be, “Yes.” In states where marriage between two people of the same gender is not allowed, it may be useful to know if the parents of a student who has two moms or two dads are married. (They may have gotten married in another state.) With this information you could answer other student’s questions. If they are married, the answer again could be a simple, “Yes.” If they are not married, you could say, “It is like they are married. They love each other and are raising their children together. They are a family.”

If you don’t know whether a student’s parents are married, you could say, “I don’t know. But there are all kinds of families – some parents are married and some are not. What’s important about a family is that there is love.

WHAT IF A YOUNG BOY SAYS, “I WANT TO MARRY WILLIE,” OR A YOUNG GIRL SAYS, “I WANT TO MARRY MELANIE”?

I know you are really good friends with Willie (or Melanie). I also know you have a long time to figure out who you will marry!

CAN GIRLS MARRY GIRLS OR BOYS MARRY BOYS?

No, children don’t get married! But you probably want to know about whether adults can marry each other. Yes, in some places women can marry women and men can marry men. In some places, they cannot because there is no law that says they can. Grownups create families in many ways. Many grownups live their lives in couples, take care of one another and have children. Being married is one way to do this.
