

Q: Our divorced daughter and mother of two kids married another woman, also mother of two children, in Connecticut. After a lot of soul-searching, we've welcomed all as family members.

However, we were a bit put off when they signed us up to go on a cruise themed for parents and children of same-sex marriages. We'd like to go along to spend time with our grandkids, but we're very straight-laced and straight New Englanders, and may refuse. While we've had to accept our daughter's new marital situation, we don't like the idea of spending a week's cruise among hundreds of gay people. What should we do?



A: We see several options. First, if you believe you'll be personally offended by the gay cruise idea (and make everyone miserable), just tell your daughter you're begging off. She'll understand, especially if you've been kind and accepting of her marriage so far.

However, we do not recommend chickening out of the cruise. Since you've already achieved the first step in understanding the gay lifestyle, why not go with the family and get yourselves even better educated?

Maybe the most important point to consider is that throughout the cruise you'll get to spend some quality time with your grandkids, who may be just as iffy about this new marriage arrangement as you are. With grandparents nearby throughout the cruise to reassure them, you may help the kids understand and accept their mother's new arrangement.