herzfroh 2.0

Questions and answers about the body, love and sexuality

Germany edition

Friendship and love

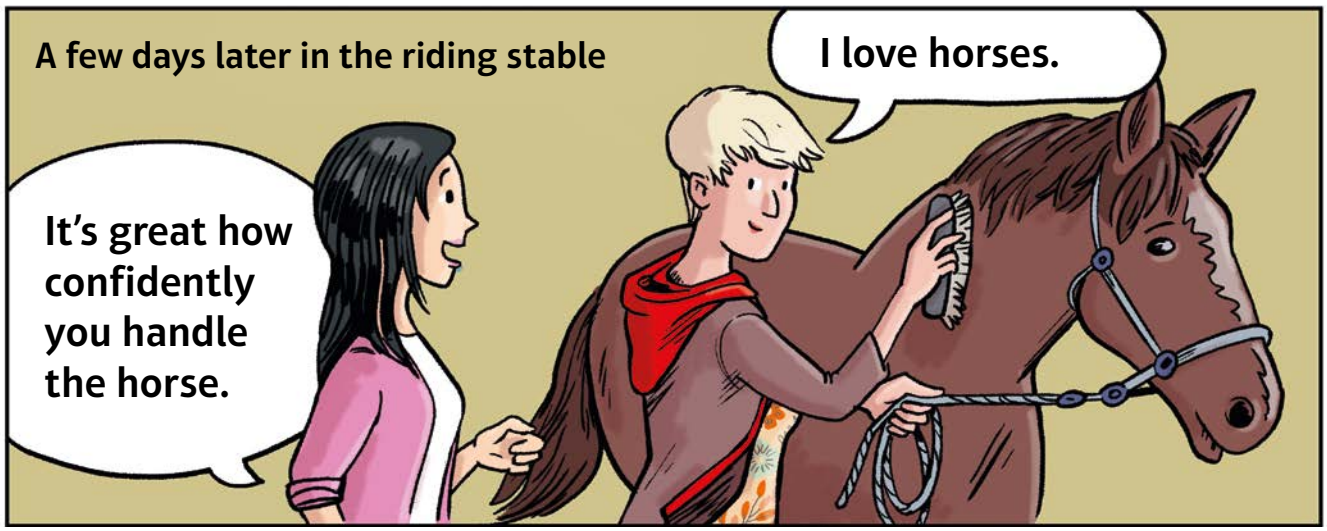
This booklet begins with a **Comic.** In **Experiences** 2 young people talk about their experiences. In **Learn more** you can find more information about friendship and love. And in **Question & answer**, we answer an important question.

A special reunion

Tami and Hanna know each other from school. They haven't seen each other for a long time and meet again by chance at the youth club.

Tami suddenly gets a really warm feeling while hugging Hanna. She wonders: She never feels like that with other friends.

Tami actually finds horses boring. But at the thought of seeing Hanna again, she suddenly finds horses exciting!



Tami also wants to show Hanna something she likes: her favorite café.

Hanna doesn't know what to say. She also has certain feelings for Tami. But is it love?

Now Hanna thinks about it: Does she just want friendship or more? One thing is certain, however – they want to see each other again soon. They are both looking forward to it!

Experiences

My girlfriend broke up with me. I feel really awful and I cry a lot. Everyone in my group home noticed that. I was embarrassed at first. But then I had a great conversation with my care worker. He thought my crying was totally okay. I've felt better since then. **I am no longer ashamed of my tears.** I even find it nice now when the others comfort me.

Kevin,
16 years

Luca,
17 years

A good friend has fallen in love with me. But I'm not in love with him. He put his hand on mine more and more often. I didn't want that. And I told him: I don't like that. **I dared to be honest.** He was very disappointed and doesn't want to see me right now. I hope that we can be friends again. If he doesn't want that, I accept that.

Learn more

Friendship and love

Friendship and love are very important in life. They make you happy, but also angry or sad. Because it is not always clear: Am I in love? How do I show my feelings? And what if the other person isn't in love with me?

What is friendship?

Friendship is something valuable. It arises when people like each other and have something in common. For example, similar interests or hobbies.

- Friends trust each other and tell each other personal things.
- They stick together – no matter if they are doing well or badly.
- They are there for each other. Sometimes even for a lifetime.

It is possible to be friends with one person or with several. Sometimes a group of friends is formed of several people.

What is love?

Love is an intense feeling. You feel very close to the person you love.

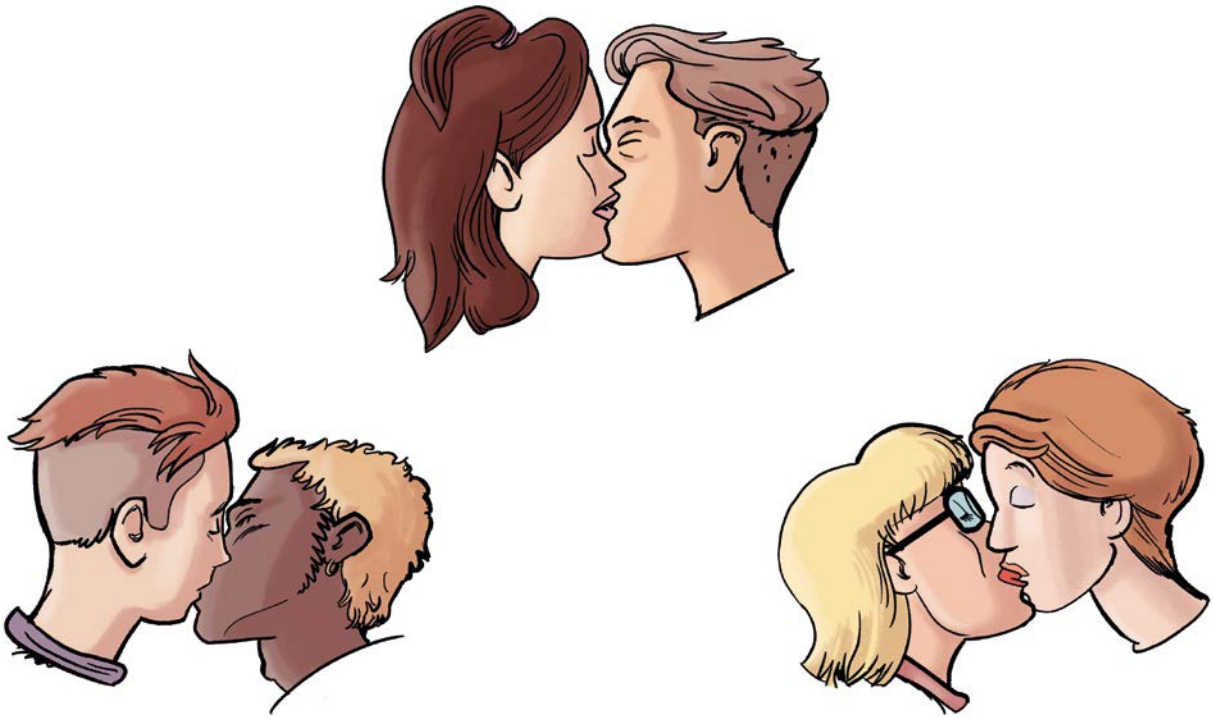
- Trust is important for love. You feel comfortable with that person. And you feel accepted by them just as you are.
- When you are in love, you want to be physically close to that person. Perhaps you want to kiss and caress them or have sex with them. This is the difference between love and friendship.
- It may take you longer to find someone you love. You might even meet them all of a sudden.
- Sometimes love also arises from friendship. It's nice that you both already know and trust each other.

Am I in love?

Being in love feels exciting: You can only think about the other person. And your feelings become so strong that you can feel them in your body:

- Your heart beats faster.
- Your stomach is tingling.
- You just want to be with that person.
- You might want to kiss and caress that person.

Do you know that feeling? Then you're definitely in love!
Falling in love can be a little different for everyone.



Who do people fall in love with?

People fall in love with each other because they like each other a lot.

- Women and men can fall in love with each other. Then they are **heterosexual**.
- Women can also fall in love with women. And men with men. Then the women or men are **homosexual**. Another word for this is **gay**, or for women you can also say **lesbian**.
- If people are **bisexual**, they fall in love with men and women.

- People can just as easily fall in love with a **transgender** person.
  In other words, a person who was born a girl but feels like a boy or a man. Or a person who was born a boy but feels like a girl or a woman.
- Or they fall in love with an **intersex** person.
  This is a person with both female and male sexual characteristics.

The gender of the other person is important for some people.
For others it is not so important. Everyone is different.

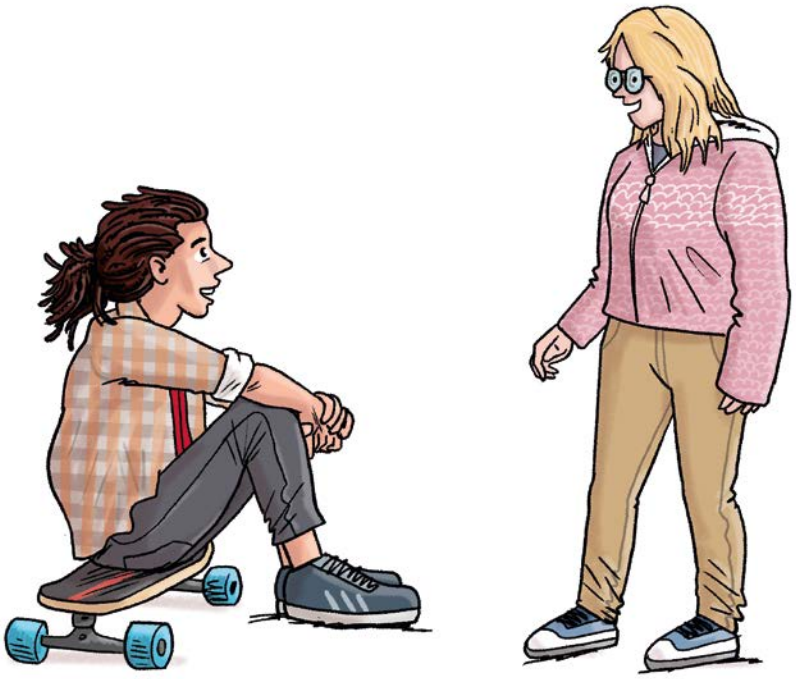
You can find more information about sexual orientation and gender in the **Diversity** booklet and in the **Body and puberty** booklet.

Is the other person in love with me?

Maybe you've just fallen in love. And you ask yourself: Is the other person in love with me too? Watch out for these signs when you are with that person:

- The person is nervous when they meet you.
- They talk a lot about themselves and want to learn a lot about you.
- They want to meet you again often and soon.
- They flirt with you. When flirting, the person shows you that they like you. For example, they look you in the eye often and deeply. Maybe they smile or wink at you. Or they compliment you.

But: **Every person is different**. Perhaps the other person is also shy. Or they don't let on that they're in love. Then don't lose heart straight away. Have the courage and be active. Approach the person and talk to them.



How do I show my feelings?

It’s best to be yourself and not pretend. Show your feelings.

You can compliment the person:

- I like your eyes.
- I like your laugh.
- You are a great dancer.

You can also ask questions. This shows that you are interested in the person:

- What do you like to do?
- What kind of music do you like?
- Would you like to meet me again?

You can also say openly:

- When I see you, my heart races.
- I can’t stop thinking about you.
- I am in love with you.

Oh dear, the other person is not in love

Sometimes only one person is in love. You can't change that. Because no one can make a person fall in love with them.

You may be disappointed, sad or angry. But you can learn to deal with it. Sometimes it takes a little time.

TIP: What to do about heartbreak?

Talk to a person you trust

- Perhaps they have experienced something similar.
- Maybe they can comfort you.
- Contact an advice center. Here you can find additional information and addresses of advice centers on the internet: www.loveline.de/beratungsstellensuche/beratungsstelle-finden

Distract yourself

- Watch a movie that you like.
- Meet up with friends.
- Do sports or pursue a hobby.

Do something good for yourself

- Take a bath.
- Go for a walk.
- Do something you enjoy.

Both are in love with each other!

Yay, you're in love! Then you can both get physically closer to each other:

- Hold hands
- Cuddle
- Kiss
- Get to know and caress each other's bodies
- Maybe also have sex

The important thing is that both of you want to be physically close to each other. **It has to feel good for both of you.**

TIP: Take your time

Maybe you think that you're only a real couple once you kiss with tongues or have sex. That's not true.

- Don't put yourself under pressure. And don't pressure each other.
- Each partner should think and feel for themselves: What do I want and what don't I want yet?
- Talk openly about the steps you want to take. And if you want to have sex, you should also talk about how you want to protect yourselves during sex.

You can find more information about sexuality in the **Sexuality** booklet and in the **Contraception** booklet.

I say what I want

No matter whether you are already friends or newly in love.
No matter how long you've been a couple.

Talk about it openly:

- What do I want and what do I not want?
- Is something going too fast for me?
- What feels good for me?
- What do I feel uncomfortable with?
- What makes the other person feel uncomfortable?
- Where are my boundaries and the boundaries of the other person?

INFO: You can say no

- If I don't want something, the other person has to accept it.
- You are also not allowed to do anything that the other person does not want you to do.
- You're sure to find something that suits you both.

You can find more information about your boundaries and the boundaries of others in the **Boundaries** booklet.

Question & answer

Iris, 18, asks:

Where and how can I get to know someone?

herzfroh 2.0 answers:

There are many opportunities to meet nice people. For example, at school, at work, at the youth center or in your own circle of friends. There are also parties for people with and without disabilities. Perhaps also in your town. Ask your parents or a care worker. You can also meet and get to know people online, for example on dating platforms.

TIP: Meeting people on the internet

There are also dangers when looking to meet people on the internet. It's best to talk to someone you trust about this.

- Information or pictures of you can easily be distributed. Many people can then see them. Never send nude photos of yourself.
- Maybe you'll meet someone nice on the internet. This person might not be who they say they are, however. Be careful and talk to someone you trust. Take someone you trust with you on your first meeting and meet in a public place.

Tip: There are also dating agencies for people with disabilities. The dating agency "Herzenssache.net" is a good and safe service. You can get support with your search there: www.herzenssache.net

Who we are

Hanna lives in the group home and attends school.

Tami lives at home with her parents. She knows Hanna from school.

Nic lives in the group home and works in a restaurant.

Marina lives in the group home and works in a tailor's shop. She is Sven's girlfriend.

Sven lives in the group home and works in a wood workshop. He is Marina's boyfriend.

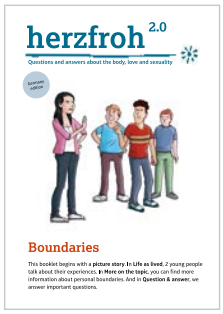
Murat is Sven's best friend and roommate. He works in a garden center.

Rosa works in the office and is friends with Marina.

Gregor is a care worker in the group home.

Laura is a care worker in the group home.

You can find out about more exciting topics in the other booklets.



Legal notice

herzfroh 2.0 is a publication from the Federal Institute of Public Health (BIÖG) and Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts – Social Work (HSLU). 2.0 means that this is a new version of herzfroh. **herzfroh 2.0** is information material about the body, love and sexuality for teenagers and young adults with intellectual disabilities. There is also information material for professionals in education and care. Find out more at www.loveline.de/herzfroh.

Publisher of herzfroh 2.0 for Germany:
Federal Institute of Public Health (BIÖG),
Maarweg 149–161, 50825 Cologne, Germany, www.bioeg.de.
Acting Head: Dr. Johannes Nießen
Editorial office: Sabine Goette and Laura Retznik, BIÖG (Germany) and Daniel Kunz, HSLU (Switzerland)
Text: Anja Teufel inklusiv (author: Annika Wallaschek)
Design: Lengsfeld, designkonzepte GmbH, Basel
Illustrations: Diego Balli, Stans

Issue: 1.bf.02.26
This brochure is provided free of charge by BIÖG.
Order: BIÖG, 50819 Cologne, Germany
Fax: 0221-8992-257
Email: bestellung@bioeg.de
Article number: 13200008
All rights reserved.

HSLU Hochschule Luzern

Bundesinstitut für Öffentliche Gesundheit