# Sesame Street clarifies that Bert and Ernie are just ‘best friends’ after petition for them to marry



The creators of the iconic children's television programme Sesame Street have clarified the nature of the relationship between its characters Bert and Ernie, categorically stating that the two are “best friends” and do not possess a defined sexual orientation. This statement comes in response to an online petition that has garnered over 5,700 signatures, advocating for the beloved puppets to be allowed to marry.

The petition, which is hosted on Change.org, expresses a desire for the show to approach the topic of same-sex marriage in a "tasteful manner." The petitioners assert, “We are not requesting anything crude or disrespectful from Sesame Street. It could be approached in a tasteful manner. Allow us to promote tolerance towards those who are different.” This call for inclusivity taps into broader conversations about representation in children's media, a topic that has gained increased attention in recent years.

Despite the growing support for the initiative, Sesame Workshop, the non-profit organisation behind the show, announced via a post on Facebook that there are no plans to depict Bert and Ernie as anything beyond platonic companions. "Bert and Ernie are best friends,” the Workshop stated. “They were designed to demonstrate to preschoolers that individuals can maintain friendships with those who are quite different from themselves. Although identified as male characters and showcasing many human-like traits and qualities (as is the case with most Sesame Street Muppets), they are ultimately puppets and do not possess a sexual orientation.”

The conversation surrounding Bert and Ernie's relationship underscores the evolving dialogue around LGBTQ+ representation in media aimed at younger audiences. Additionally, the petition advocates for the introduction of a transgender character to Sesame Street, expanding the programme's commitment to promoting diversity and understanding.

The online campaign is supported by a dedicated Facebook page, where users have shared their varied reactions. "Part of me laughs, while another part is in tears,” one commenter noted, encapsulating the mixed emotions surrounding the discussion. Another user humorously suggested, “Will Elton John perform at the wedding?”

Sesame Street, which has been broadcasting since 1969, has a long-standing history of addressing social issues and promoting inclusivity. The debate over Bert and Ernie adds another layer to ongoing discussions about representation in children's programming and the ways in which media can reflect and shape societal attitudes.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.businessinsider.com/sesame-street-workshop-issues-statement-on-bert-and-ernies-sexuality-2018-9> - Sesame Workshop stated that Bert and Ernie are best friends, not possessing a sexual orientation, as they are puppets and were created to teach children about diverse friendships.
* <https://time.com/5399940/sesame-street-bert-ernie-gay/> - This article discusses the interpretation of Bert and Ernie's relationship by a former Sesame Street writer, Mark Saltzman, and Sesame Workshop's response denying their sexual orientation.
* <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bert_and_Ernie> - This Wikipedia entry provides background on Bert and Ernie, including the controversy over their sexual orientation and Sesame Workshop's position that they are just best friends.
* <https://www.noahwire.com> - The original article discusses Sesame Street's stance on Bert and Ernie's relationship, a petition for their marriage, and the broader issue of LGBTQ+ representation in children's media, though the specific page about this article may not be accessible.