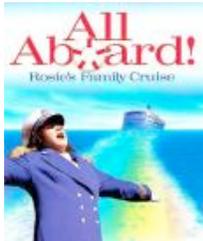




Video/DVD Reviews

## All Aboard! Rosie's Family Cruise - PG



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A merry look at alternative families.

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**Rating:** PG for family friendliness, some discrimination. **Studio:** [HBO Home Video](#) **Directed By:** [Shari Cookson](#) **Cast:** [Rosie O'Donnell](#), [Judy Gold](#), [Kelly O'Donnell](#) **Running Time:** 91 minutes **Release Date:** 06/13/2006 **Genre:** [Documentary](#)

### Common Sense Note

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Parents need to know that children cry due to anti-gay protests in the Bahamas. Gay and lesbian couples are shown in loving relationships and as part of families that include children and heterosexual parents and children, which may prompt children to ask questions about sexual orientation. Couples also discuss alternative forms of having children, including adoption, sperm banks, and surrogacy. Teens talk about discrimination they've experienced because their parents are gay. But overall, the message here is of love of family.

Families can talk about all the different ways to form a family. What sort of alternative families do kids see in their school and among their friends? Especially for children who have been adopted, have a single parent, or are from other kinds of alternative families, this is a great opportunity to ask them to talk about what the experience has been like for them. Have they felt discriminated against? If so, what do they think of the protests against their families? What would you do if someone protested against your family? How would you feel?

### Common Sense Review

Reviewed By: [Heather Boerner](#)

Gay families are just like everyone else. That's the premise of ALL ABOARD! ROSIE'S FAMILY CRUISE, a documentary that chronicles the lives and experiences of gay families as they visit ports of call along the eastern seaboard and in the Caribbean.

Before she became the loud one on *The View*, [Rosie O'Donnell](#) was a talk show host who flung squishy balls at her audience, crushed on now-certifiable [Tom Cruise](#), and supported Broadway musicals.

After coming out of the closet, O'Donnell became famous for advocating gay adoption rights. In *All Aboard!* O'Donnell charts a cruise liner and invites gay families and their straight parents and children for a vacation. Along the way, there are two gay weddings, plenty of singing, and lots of loving shots of families at play.

Filmmaker Shari Cookson does a great job showing how gay and lesbian families are similar to straight families. Parents hover over their children despite the kids' desire for independence. They break down at the thought of their teens going to college across the country. They struggle with infertility. They struggle to get their toddlers to put on their sandals before leaving the cabin.

But they're also different in significant ways. During an interview in the ship's nail salon, a mom says of her son (who's getting his

fingernails painted electric blue): "I describe him as a very straight boy with a little bit of drag queen in him. I tell him, "We'll support whatever you want to do and however you want to express yourself. But other kids may tease you for it." And then there's the constant struggle to show their kids that they're proud of who they are, despite the disapproval of their extended families and a protest in the Bahamas that leaves some of their children in tears.

At one point, a teen girl says, "The hardest thing is that we constantly have to try to be the perfect model family so people will think we're growing up OK. That's a lot of pressure." Perhaps because O'Donnell is an executive producer of the film, the film makes the same mistake. There are no domestic problems on display here -- no out-of-control teens and no unhappy marriages. The documentary presents a face that, while reaffirming for gay viewers, also leaves viewers with the sense that they're not getting the complete picture.

Fans may also want to consider the series *Gay Weddings*, or the documentary *It's Elementary*. For a look at another kind of family, consider the splendid documentary *Sunset Story*.

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Content	CS	adults	kids
<b>Sexual Content</b> Gay couples kiss, but nothing provocative.			
<b>Violence</b> Two church groups protest the cruise's arrival in the Bahamas, but no one is injured. They just say mean things.			
<b>Language</b>			
<b>Message</b>			
<b>Social Behavior</b> The film promotes the love of all families, including loving depictions of adoptive children.			
<b>Commercialism</b>			
<b>Drug/Alcohol/Tobacco</b> Some drinking of alcohol, but in moderation.			

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