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Gender Expression: Understanding the Terminology

genderexpression.info



Terminology

Agender | A person who does not identify with any gender.

Androgynous | Used to describe someone who expresses their gender with a mixture of masculine and feminine traits, or with traits that are neither strictly masculine nor feminine.

Bigender | Having two genders that can be expressed separately or simultaneously. They may identify as a man and woman, or as a man or woman and gender neutral.

Binary gender | The concept that gender is grouped into only two categories: man and woman. This is outdated and doesn't encompass the full range of gender identity and expression.

Binary sex | The belief that there are only two categories of sex: male and female. This is outdated and doesn't account for intersex and non-binary people.

Cis or cisgender | A person whose gender identity aligns with or matches their assigned sex at birth.

Cishet | A person whose gender identity aligns with their birth-assigned sex (cisgender) and who are sexually attracted to the opposite sex (heterosexual).

Cissexism | The assumption that every person is naturally cisgender and that it is unusual or deviant to identify as anything else.

Cloaking | A transperson being identified as presenting an incongruent or confusing public gender expression.

Cross-dressing | Wearing clothes that aren't traditionally associated with one's gender. This has replaced the outdated and offensive term transvestite.

Deadnaming | Calling someone by their birth name after they have changed their name.

Drag king | A performer who uses hyper-exaggerated masculine traits for art or entertainment. The performer usually identifies as a woman, but not always.

Drag queen | A performer who uses hyper-exaggerated feminine traits for art or entertainment. The performer usually identifies as a man, but not always.

FTM | Female to male, generally used by a transgender person who identifies as a man but was assigned female at birth.



Gender | How a person identifies themselves, their body, their identity, and their self-expression. Gender is not always aligned with sex.

Gender affirming healthcare | Healthcare that attends to the physical, mental, and social health needs of trans and non-binary people. It can include gender-affirming surgery.

Gender dysphoria | The clinical term for the distress felt when a person's gender identity is not the same as their sex assigned at birth.

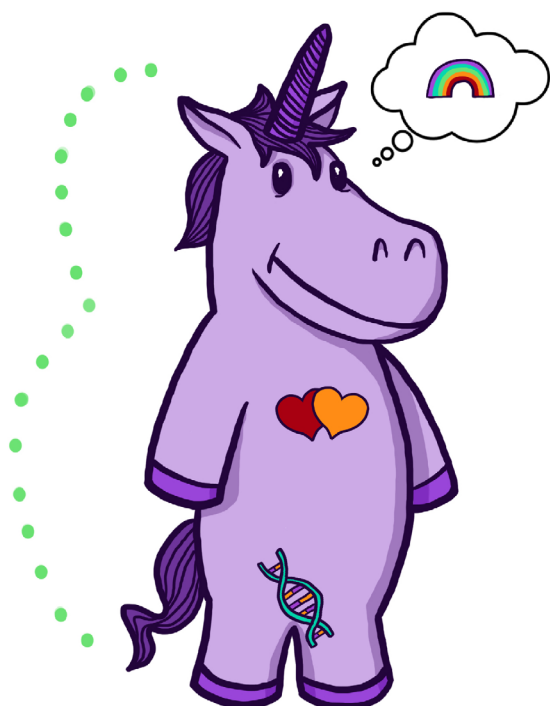
Gender euphoria | The experience of feeling positively about your gendered self.

Gender-expansive | A relatively new term that is becoming preferred to gender non-conforming as a more positive term for someone who does not follow gender stereotypes.

Gender expression | The way a person publicly expresses or presents their gender. This can be through outward appearance, chosen name, or preferred pronouns. A person's gender identity is separate from their sexual orientation.

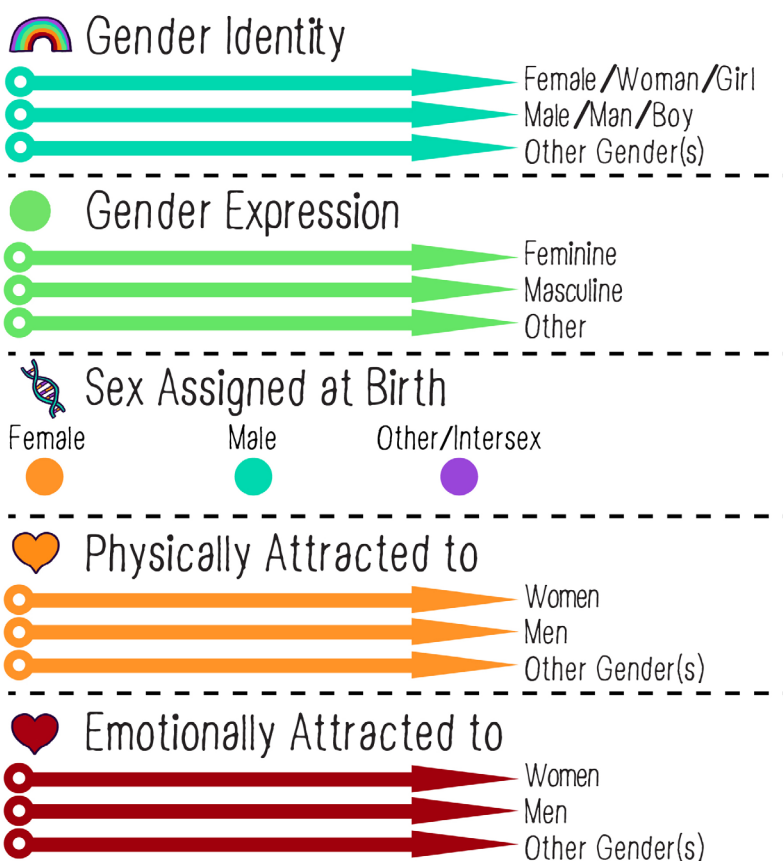
The Gender Unicorn

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TSER
Trans Student Educational Resources



To learn more, go to:
www.transstudent.org/gender

Design by Landyn Pan and Anna Moore



Gender-fluid | When a person does not have a fixed gender identity.

Gender identity | Each person's experience of gender. It is a person's internal and individual sense of being a woman, a man, both, neither, or anywhere along the gender spectrum. A person's gender identity may or may not be the same their sex assigned at birth.

Gender non-conforming | Describes individuals do not follow gender stereotypes and may or may not identify as trans or transgender.

Gender roles and expectations | The idea that a person's birth-assigned sex determines the roles that person is expected to fulfil and the traits and behaviors that are appropriate for them. These are often reinforced by society and the media.

Gender transition | The process of aligning a person's gender identity with their gender expression. This can be through names, pronouns, dress, or other outward appearance or through medical interventions to modify their body.

Genderqueer | A person who does not subscribe to traditional gender distinctions. They may identify as neither, both, or some combination of a woman and man.

Gendervoid | A person who lacks a gender identity and has a sense of loss or a void as a result.

Intersex | A person born with either some combination of both male and female sex characteristics (genital organs, hormones, chromosomes) or certain genital variations that don't align with either biological sex.

LGBTI+ | Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, or Intersex. The + sign signifies that there are other categories of gender and sexual orientation. Other variations are LGBT, LBQTQ+ (queer/questioning), and LGBTQIA+ (asexual).

Misgender/ Mispronoun | Using a word that does not reflect a person's gender.

MTF | Male to female, generally used by a transgender person who identifies as a woman but was assigned male at birth.

Non-binary | A person who does not identify as exclusively male or female.

Omnigender | Identifies with all genders and are often gender-fluid.

Pangender | A person who identifies as all genders at once.

Passing | In the context of gender, when a person is perceived as a gender or sex other than the sex they were assigned at birth.

Pronouns | Used to refer to a person in place of their name. Common pronouns are they/them, he/him, and she/her.

Queer | While queer has been (and sometimes still is) used as a slur, it has been reclaimed by many in the community as a catch all term for anyone who identifies as anything other than straight and cisgender.

Sex | The anatomical classification of people as male, female, or intersex, usually assigned at birth. Sex is not always aligned with gender.

Sexual orientation | A person's identity in relation to the gender or genders they are romantically and/or sexually attracted to. A person's sexual orientation is separate from their gender identity.

Third Gender | Many cultures do not construct gender as a binary but instead have a third gender distinct from "man" and woman." These third genders include, but are not limited to:

Baklâ | In the Philippines, a person who was birth-assigned male but has a feminine gender expression.



Fa'afafine | Accepted as a natural gender in Samoa, they are anatomically male but dress and behave in typically feminine ways.

Hijras | Officially recognized as a third gender in the Indian subcontinent, hijras have a recorded history since antiquity.

Khanith | A third gender in Oman, the khanith are male are gay male prostitutes who wear traditionally male clothing, but have traditionally female mannerisms.

Muxe | Used in Zapotec cultures of Oaxaca (southern Mexico) to describe a person assigned male at birth who dresses and behaves in traditionally female ways.

Two-spirit | Used by some Indigenous communities to refer to someone who identifies as having both a masculine and feminine spirit.

Vakasalewalewa | People from Fiji who were born assigned male at birth but who have a feminine gender expression.

X-gender | A Japanese third gender that came into use in the later 1990s.

Trans or transgender | A person whose gender identity does not conform to their birth-assigned gender.

Trans feminine | A trans person whose gender identity and/or expression is closer to femininity than masculinity.

Trans masculine | A trans person whose gender identity and/or expression is closer to masculinity than to femininity.

Transphobia | Fear or dislike of someone based on the fact that they are trans.

Transsexual | A person whose gender identity does not conform to their birth-assigned gender. A subset of transgender people prefer this term.

