

TRANSGENDER IDENTITY + GENDER DIVERSITY 101



The following guide is a list of relevant terminology and general best practices to promote and model Gender Diversity and inclusion. This resource is designed to be a starter guide to Gender Diversity and Transgender identity; utilizing this resource will allow you to begin building a common foundation and framework for Gender Diversity and Transgender identity.

TALK THE TALK: VOCABULARY FOR YOU TO KNOW

Transgender (trans*): An umbrella term for people whose gender identity differs from the sex they were assigned at birth. The term transgender is not indicative of gender expression, sexual orientation, hormonal makeup, physical anatomy, or how one is perceived in daily life. Note that transgender does not have an “ed” at the end.

Cisgender (Cis): Adjective that means “identifies as their sex assigned at birth”; A cisgender/cis person is not transgender. “Cisgender” does not indicate biology, gender expression, or sexuality/sexual orientation.

Gender Identity: One’s internal sense of being male, female, neither of these, both, or other gender(s). Everyone has a gender identity, including you. For transgender people, their sex assigned at birth and their gender identity are not necessarily the same.

Gender Expression: The physical manifestation of one’s gender identity through clothing, hairstyle, voice, body shape, etc. (typically referred to as masculine or feminine).

Gender Binary: A system of viewing gender as consisting solely of two, opposite categories, termed “male and female”, in which no other possibilities for gender or anatomy are believed to exist. This system is oppressive to anyone who defies their sex assigned at birth, but particularly those who are gender-variant or do not fit neatly into one of the two standard categories.

Non-binary and/or genderqueer: Terms used by some people who experience their gender identity and/or gender expression as falling outside the categories of man and woman. They may define their gender as falling somewhere in between man and woman, or they may define it as wholly different from these terms. The term is not a synonym for transgender or transsexual and should only be used if someone self-identifies as non-binary and/or genderqueer.

WALK THE WALK: HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT GENDER DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

PRACTICE AND MODEL PRONOUN INCLUSION: Always use the pronouns that match a person’s authentic gender. If you are unsure of someone’s pronouns simply ask “hey what pronouns do you use?”, or use “they/them” Gender Neutral pronouns. You can also model pronoun inclusion by placing your pronouns in your email signature and including your pronouns when making new introductions “Hi my name is Mary and I use she/her pronouns”

MOVE AWAY FROM GENDERED LANGUAGE: Avoid using terminology like “Hey guys” when addressing a crowd. Instead, try gender-neutral terms like “ya’ll”, “Folks”, “Esteemed Colleagues”, “allies”, “associates”, “everybody”, or “everyone”. Using gendered language can invalidate the lived experiences of the people who are in the room.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Trans Student Educational Resources](#)

[Transgender Inclusion in the Workplace](#)

[Forbes: Gender neutral](#)

[GLAAD Media Reference Guide](#)

[About Transgender People](#)

[language](#)

Knowing the words and best practices for gender diversity is an ongoing learning, listening and reflection process. You’ve taken a positive step by reading this far. Thank you and keep going!