

SOLUTION.

SUPPORTING LGBTQIA+ YOUTH



Lesbian
Gay
Bisexual
Transgender
Queer or Questioning
Intersex
Asexual, Agender, Ally
+ other identities

It is estimated that ten percent of high school students identify as LGBTQIA+. Although many lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer people and other sexuality and gender diverse (LGBTQIA+) people live healthy and happy lives, research has demonstrated that a disproportionate number experience poorer mental health outcomes. These health outcomes are directly related to experiences of stigma, prejudice, discrimination and abuse.

There are a number of simple things that we can do as individuals, groups and communities to ensure that we are creating an inclusive and supportive environment for those who identify as LGBTQIA+.

TERMINOLOGY

The words we use to talk about lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people and issues can have a powerful impact on our conversations. The right words can help open people's hearts and minds, while others can create distance or confusion.

SEXUALITY describes who you are attracted to physically and romantically.

SEX describes the sex (male, female other/intersex) you are assigned at birth.

GENDER describes the internal sense of self in relation to masculinity and/or femininity or neither.

TRANSGENDER/GENDER DIVERSE: when people do not exclusively identify with the gender typically associated with their sex assigned at birth.

CISGENDER: when people do exclusively identify with the gender typically associated with their sex assigned at birth.

NON-BINARY: gender identity that doesn't fit squarely into male or female.

TRANSITION: taking steps to socially and/or physically feel more aligned with their gender identity.

SOCIAL TRANSITION: in relation to how we interact with people.

PRONOUNS = how we refer to ourselves and others (e.g., he/him, she/her, they/them).

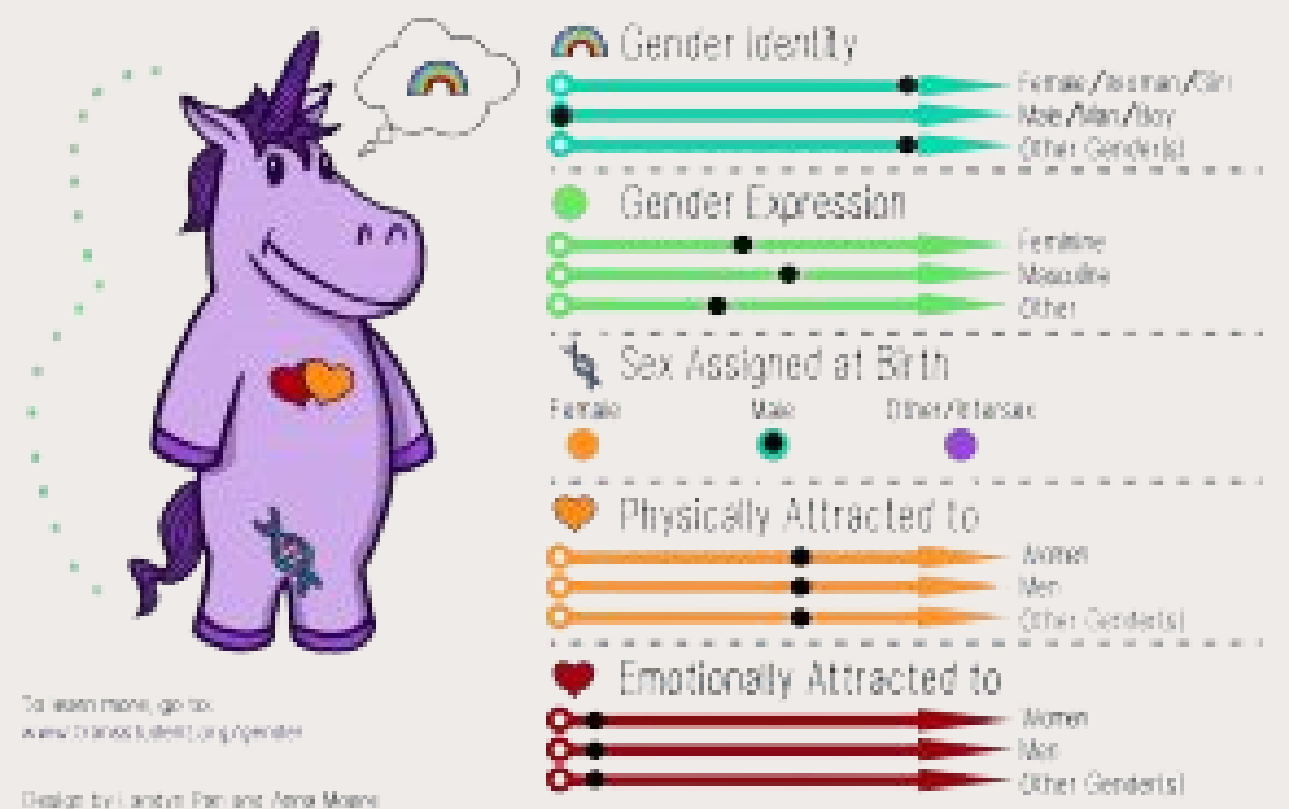
PHYSICAL TRANSITION: altering appearance to what feels right.

GENDER DYSPHORIA: intense discomfort about how a transgender person physically feels and/or how they are misgendered by others.

<https://www.minus18.org.au/articles/your-guide-to-words-and-definitions-in-the-lgbtqia+-community/>

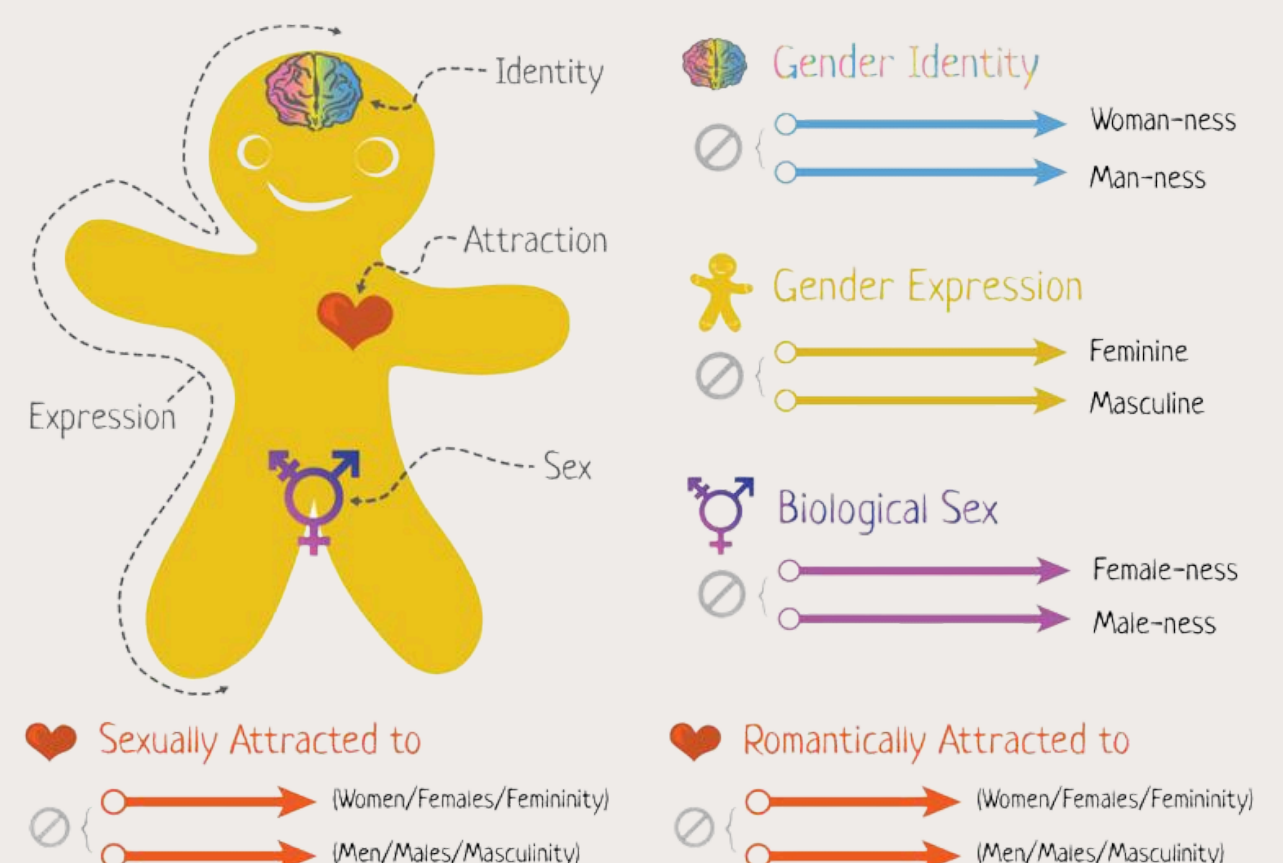
The Gender Unicorn

Graphic by
TSER



The Genderbread Person v3.3

its pronounced **METROsexual**



LGBTQIA+ ADVOCACY



WAYS TO RESPECTFULLY BE A LGBTQIA+ ALLY

During disclosure, NO reaction = BEST reaction.

Australian research of LGBTQIA+ youth disclosures revealed that individuals who disclose their LGBTQIA+ identity preferred the individual they were disclosing to to have a 'neutral reaction' to their disclosure. Congratulating or being overexcited to their disclosure can create a sense of differential treatment. Neutral reactions can help individuals to feel validated and accepted. Also remember that every individual's experience is different!

Ask Educated Questions and Do Your Own Research

It's okay to ask questions, but reflect on your questions to ensure they're not offensive or cumbersome. If you're having trouble understanding certain topics, like the importance of using gender pronouns, find resources that will help you navigate those concepts.

Show Young People That They Can Be Authentic Around You

A high number of the LGBTQIA+ youth report that they have muted their self-expression and have re-thought their transition because of the perceived negative ramifications. For example, talk about how there is no "one way" to be a boy or a girl and avoid making assumptions about a young person's sexual orientation or gender identity.

Speak Up

Don't tolerate any kind of hateful speech or actions. Speak up if you hear or see any behaviour that is disrespectful or harmful.

Promote LGBTQIA+ Belonging and Inclusion

Promoting belonging and inclusion can be achieved through appropriate use of terminology, demonstration of acceptance through social media platform, posters/banners in community environments and so on.

GENDER AFFIRMATION STUDENT SUPPORT PLANS

Did you know that schools must work with students affirming their gender identity to prepare and implement a student support plan?

These student support plans are called 'Gender Affirmation Student Support Plans'. The plan should be developed in consultation with the student and their parents or carers, where possible, and should be reviewed periodically to ensure that it reflects the needs of the student at the different stages of their transition, and at the different stages of their education.

These support plans cater to the students' affirmed gender identity and/or transition, and includes supports, adjustments strategies that can be implemented in the school environment.

Supports and adjustments can include and are not limited to:

- Changes to school uniform,
- The use of toilets, showers and change rooms to meet the needs of the student,
- The referencing of and recording of student's affirmed name, gender identify and pronouns,
- The development of communication plans that includes what information staff members and other students need to know to best support the student,
- Maintaining appropriate privacy and confidentiality across staff and other students.

RESOURCES

GENDER SUPPORT PLANS

- Gender Spectrum: <https://genderspectrum.org/articles/using-the-gsp>
- Victorian Government: <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/lgbtiq-student-support/policy/>
- Support Plan Template: https://transcendaus.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Transcend_Student-Support-Plan-Gender-Affirmation_Landscape-orientation.pdf

BOOKS & RESOURCES

- Minus18: <https://www.minus18.org.au/resources/>

PARENT OR TEACHER HANDOUTS

- Minus18: <https://www.minus18.org.au/resources/>
- YGender: <https://www.ygender.org.au/>
- Transcend: <https://transcendaus.org/parent-hub/>

EXTERNAL SUPPORTS

- Minus18: <https://www.minus18.org.au/resources/>
- YGender: <https://www.ygender.org.au/>
- Transcend: <https://transcendaus.org/>
- Switchboard: <https://www.switchboard.org.au/>
- Queerspace: <https://www.queerspace.org.au/>
- QLife: <https://qlife.org.au/>
- TransHub: <https://www.transhub.org.au/>
- Monash Health Gender Clinic: <https://monashhealth.org/services/gender-clinic/>
- Royal Children's Hospital Gender Service: <https://www.rch.org.au/adolescent-medicine/gender-service/>
- Equinox: <https://equinox.org.au/>
- Northside Clinic: <https://northsideclinic.net.au/>
- AUSPATH: <https://auspath.org/providers/>
- Rainbow Network: <https://www.rainbownetwork.com.au/directory>

