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Beyond Binary: Gender in Schools

The Potocsnak Family Division
of Adolescent & Young Adult
Medicine
Logan Pierce (*he/him*)
Program Assistant

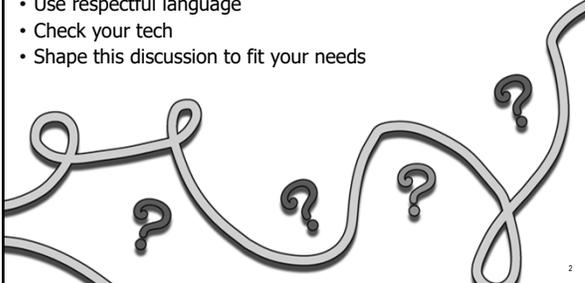





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Guidelines

- No right or wrong questions
- Confidential
- Use respectful language
- Check your tech
- Shape this discussion to fit your needs

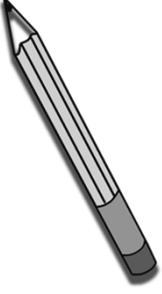


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Objectives

- Provide an overview of key terms and concepts related to gender
- Outline characteristics of gender inclusive schools and tactics to personally implement inclusivity
- Discuss how to talk about gender diversity with students, parents, and the school community



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- Why are staff from Lurie Children's Hospital facilitating this discussion?
- Why is our goal to be an affirming institution?



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Gender & You

- What does it mean to be **female** or **male**?
- What is your gender? How do you know?
- How would you describe your gender without discussing how you look?
- Have there been times when limits or expectations have been placed on you based on your gender or perceived gender?
- How do these experiences impact your ability to do your best work?



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Key Concepts



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Key Concepts

Sex Assigned at Birth

Intersex

Gender Identity

- *Raise your hand if you have a gender identity*

Gender Expression

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Key Concepts

Gender Expansive (Nonconforming/Creative)

- Long-standing occurrence (e.g., 6 months or more) – not a fleeting curiosity or interest
- Gender nonconformity is a normative variation of human diversity



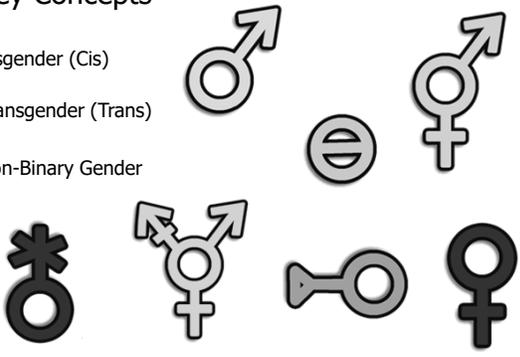
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Key Concepts

Cisgender (Cis)

Transgender (Trans)

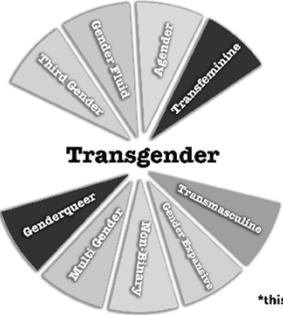
Non-Binary Gender



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Transgender Umbrella

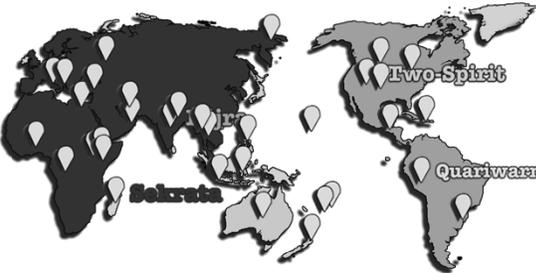


*this is not exhaustive

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International Gender Diversity



Source: PBS Independent Lens

*this is not exhaustive

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Key Concepts

Pronouns

- - It's okay to ask people what pronouns they use
- - she/her/hers
- - he/him/his
- - they/them/theirs
- - other pronouns

Quick Activity!

Turn to your neighbor and discuss what you did over the weekend without using any gendered language.



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Key Concepts

Misgender/Deadname

What if I make a mistake?

1. **Apologize**
2. **Correct yourself**
3. **Move on**
4. **Practice!**

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Key Concepts

Transition

- Process by which an individual begins living in their affirmed gender
 - Social
 - Legal
 - Medical
 - May or may not include hormonal and/or surgical treatment

No one way to be trans; therefore, no one way to transition





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Transphobia/Cissexism

- Physical Violence
 - One in ten trans people reported being physically attacked within the past year due to being transgender
- Microaggressions
- Systemic Discrimination
 - One in six trans people report having lost a job due to their gender identity; one-quarter report having experienced housing discrimination
- Intersectionality
 - Risk factors are exacerbated when people carry multiple marginalized identities

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(National Center for Transgender Equality - 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey)

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Key Concepts

Sexual Orientation

Sexuality
(who you are attracted to)

Gender Identity
(who you are)

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Try it out!

This person is non-binary.
They use they/them pronouns.

Turn to your neighbor and describe this person using the correct pronouns. Remember, if you make a mistake:

1. Apologize
2. Correct yourself
3. Move on
4. Practice



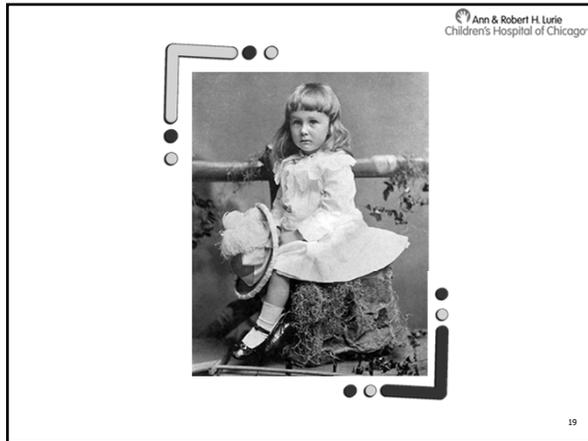
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The Impact of Gender



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"The generally accepted rule is pink for boys, and blue for the girls. The reason is that pink, being a more decided and stronger color, is more suitable for the boy, while blue, which is more delicate and dainty, is prettier for the girl."

-1918 article Earnshaw's Infants' Department trade publication

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Gender Impacts Everyone

- 50% of elementary bullying is based on gender and/or sexual orientation slurs
- More than 50% report school as an unsafe environment for "not being as masculine as other guys or as feminine as other girls"
- In what ways are you seeing this in your school community?

(Holt, M., & Espelage, D., 2013)

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Supporting transgender and gender expansive students

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71% of school mental health professionals described their school's teachers as 'very' or 'somewhat' supportive of LGBTQ students.

But when LGBTQ students were asked....

- 26%** reported "always feeling safe in the classroom."
- 62%** reported experiencing LGBTQ-related discriminatory policies or practices at school
- 70%** heard negative remarks about sexual orientation or gender expression from teachers or school staff

(GLSEN 2018, Human Rights Campaign 2018)

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When LGBTQ-related harassment/assault did occur:

55% of students did not report the incident

60% of students who did report said staff "did nothing" or "told the student to ignore it."

(GLSEN 2017)

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LGBTQ students in schools with higher levels of victimization:

- Were almost three times as likely to miss school (**63%** vs **21%** in the past month)
- Had lower average GPAs (**3.0** vs **3.3**)
- Were nearly twice as likely to report having "no plans to pursue post-secondary education" (**9.5%** vs **5.0%**)
- Also had measurable impacts on **self-esteem, levels of depression, and sense of school belonging**

(GLSEN 2017) 25

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Parental Impact

■ = transgender youth with family support

Having **one** supportive adult cuts the chance an LGBTQ+ youth will attempt suicide by **40%**.

(Trevor Project, 2019)

Employment Experience homelessness Report experiencing serious psychological distress Attempted suicide

(National Center for Transgender Equality - 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey) 26

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Professional Organizations with Affirming Transgender Policy Statements

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Supporting Students Coming Out

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If a Student Comes Out to You

- Ask what the student needs
 - Have you shared this with anyone else?
 - Do you want anyone else to know?
 - How would you like me to respond if someone calls you by the wrong name?

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If a Student Comes Out to You

- Take the student's identity and expression seriously
- Respect the student's name/pronoun
- Do not disclose someone's identity without their consent.
 - Including to parents/caretakers and school staff
- Counselors are allowed up to 12, 90-minute sessions with students age 12+ without parental notification

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If a Student Comes Out to Class

- Keep language simple and affirming
- Remind youth that it's OK to be curious, but it's not OK to ask overly personal questions
- Remind parents it's not OK to ask about other people's children
- Don't be afraid of questions!
 - Don't answer questions that aren't asked



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Institutional Inclusion



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Institutional Inclusion

- Avoid gender segregation
- Restroom and locker room access
- Respect name and pronoun
- Inclusive dress code
- Participation in activities/events
- Support your school's GSA (The Genders & Sexualities Alliance)
- School signage



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Institutional Inclusion

- Respect privacy and confidentiality
- Explicitly include gender identity in nondiscriminatory policies, diversity statements, and anti-bullying policies – and have explicit bathroom/locker room policies inclusive of all genders
- Inclusive forms
- Ensure that resources and support are easy for parents and students to locate
- Inclusive identification materials
- Regular staff trainings

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Responding to Objections

“I don't think that it's OK to be gay or trans and I don't want my child to think that it's an OK option for them.”

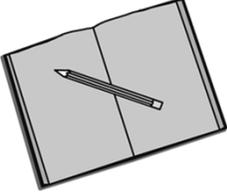
“Talking about gay and transgender people in school isn't appropriate.”

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7:10 Board Policies

7:10 board policies that explicitly include gender identity and gender expression as a protected class with Administrative Procedure to support policy.



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Illinois School Association Athletic Policy

- The student and/or parents shall contact the school administrator or athletic director. The school shall collect the following for the participation ruling:
 - Gender identity used for school registration records
 - Medical documentation (hormonal treatments, sexual re-assignment surgery, counseling, medical personnel, etc.)
 - Gender identity related advantages for approved participation
- Once the student is approved, participation is granted through the duration of their high school career, it does not need to be annually renewed.

******Privacy Statement:** All discussions and documents at all levels of the process either by a member school, appeals panel, and/or IHSA shall be kept confidential unless specifically requested by the student and family.

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Curricular Inclusion



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“When someone with the authority of a teacher, say, describes the world and you are not in it, there is a moment of psychic disequilibrium, as if you looked in the mirror and saw nothing.”

– Adrienne Rich, poet

“We need diverse representation not only so every kid can see themselves as the hero of the story, but so that every kid can understand that *other* kinds of kids are *also* the heroes of the story.”

– Rabbi Danya Ruttenberg

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Ideas to Get Started

- Media (Books, Movies, Music, etc.)
- Including historical and public LGBTQ+ figures
- Historical events
- Inclusive health curriculum
- Resources: Welcoming Schools, GLSEN, Teaching Tolerance



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Scenarios



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Scenarios

1. C.J. is a male student who uses he/him pronouns. He has long hair, often wears dresses, and is sometimes mistaken for a girl, though he is cisgender.

When C.J. goes to use the boy's restroom a custodial staff member stops him from entering and tells him he belongs in the girls' bathroom and should "stop playing around."
2. A parent of a cisgender student calls you to ask about their child's transgender classmate. This parent states, "I don't want my daughter using the restroom with a boy. I believe that this is inappropriate and unsafe."

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Scenarios

3. Roberto wore a dress to school. Many students had questions about his outfit and the teacher felt that this was distracting. She sent him to your office with the request that he be sent home to change his clothes.
4. A student is overheard calling another student a transphobic slur.
5. Students are going on an overnight trip. Jacinta, a transgender female student, would like to share a room with her peers.
6. "I was in a meeting and a guest kept addressing me and my coworker as ladies, but my coworker is nonbinary."

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Reflection



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1. Reflect on your experiences and feelings about gender:
2. What systems are in place for gender diverse youth at my school?
3. Is there LGBTQ curriculum inclusion at my school?
4. Do I communicate a non-binary understanding of gender to my students through the visuals on my classroom walls, the books on the shelves and the language I use?
5. How do I ensure the safety of gender expansive students?



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Questions?

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Thank you!

The Potocsnak Family Division of Adolescent and Young Adult Medicine

Logan Pierce
Program Assistant
Lmpierce@luriechildrens.org
312-227-7807

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