

PROVIDING MENTAL HEALTH CARE TO LGBTQ+ YOUTH

PRESENTED BY KESTREL

LGBTQ+ YOUTH ARE VULNERABLE

According to a recent study over half of young people 13-26 identify as something other than cisgender and heterosexual. (1) So we know there is a huge number of LGBTQ+ young people.

A disproportionate amount of LGBTQ+ people struggle with mental illness and addiction.

LGBTQ+ youth are particularly vulnerable:

- May lack natural supports
- May experience bullying and harassment
- Many have other marginalized identities as well as being LGBTQ+
- We live in a heteronormative society that doesn't validate their identities

BARRIERS TO COMPREHENSIVE CARE

Barriers to care:

- Providers lacking knowledge about queer identities and how to talk about them
- Mental health facilities having unfriendly environments for LGBTQ+ people
- Lack of access to resources

TERMS

How do we describe this community?

Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Queer Questioning Intersex Asexual Pansexual + Sexuality And Gender Acceptance community
Queer community

Queer - An intentionally ambiguous term used to refer to variation from the "norm" in gender, sexuality, and relationship structures. It is a reclaimed slur which is also a specific academic term as in "Queer Theory"

Refer to the term sheet provided for other definitions

TRANS 101

Transgender -- Someone who does not identify with the gender they were assigned at birth

Cisgender -- Someone who does identify with the gender they were assigned at birth

Within the trans community there's a huge variation of experiences. Some trans people chose to modify their bodies with hormones and surgeries and some do not. Some identify within the binary of men and women and some do not.

Do not:

- Ask intrusive questions about trans peoples bodies such as if they've had surgeries or use hormones.
- Tell anyone about a queer person's identities without permission. Don't out people.
- Tell anyone what gender they are, how to express their gender, or what gendered spaces they can and can't access.
- Don't harass queer people or stand by and listen to them be harassed.

TRANS 101

Respecting gender variation

- Don't assume people's gender and sexuality
- Respectfully ask people what their pronouns are and what name they go by
- If you mess up someone's name or pronouns, say the sentence over again correctly. Don't make a big deal out of the mistake.

There's an important difference between gender and sexuality. Sexuality is who you go to bed with, gender is who you go to bed as. Trans people can be lesbian, gay, straight, pansexual, asexual etc.

Gender is an identity, it's in your brain. It's your sense of who you are.

Sex is your body, it's your hormones, genitals, secondary sex characteristics, and chromosomes.

Sexuality is your sexual and romantic attractions and who those are directed towards.

Gender Expression is how you present yourself. It can be clothes, hair, accessories, body modifications, mannerisms, etc.

THE GENDER UNICORN

Gender Identity
 Female/Woman/Girl
 Male/Man/Boy
 Other/Genderful

Gender Expression
 Feminine
 Masculine
 Other

Sex Assigned at Birth
 Female
 Male
 Other/Intersex

Physically Attracted to
 Woman
 Man
 Other/General (2)

MAKING FACILITIES ACCESSIBLE

It's important to remember that most mental health programs and facilities weren't made with marginalized people in mind. Queer people know that these spaces weren't made for them and often have anxiety about interacting with new providers.

Tangible ways to make facilities accessible to queer people:

- Residential facilities organize roommates by gender. That means that generally transwomen and ciswomen should be roommates and transmen and cismen should be roommates. Check in with trans clients about their comfort around roommates.
- Allow people to access the gendered spaces that are most comfortable for them (bathrooms, locker rooms, groups, etc)
- Make facilities appear welcoming. Put up a cheesy poster about gender and sexuality acceptance or have LGBTQ+ magazines in waiting rooms. Is there gender and sexuality training where you work? Can bathrooms be gender neutral? Get creative.
- Find resources in your area and compile them and offer them to queer clients
- Make sure paperwork is inclusive and accurate

PAPERWORK

<p>INACCURATE AND INACCESSIBLE</p> <p>Gender: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female</p> <p>▪ Only two options</p>	<p>ACCURATE AND ACCESSIBLE</p> <p>Gender: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Transgender <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____</p> <p>▪ Or if it isn't necessary to ask, don't ask</p> <p>▪ Or provide even more options</p>
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CONCLUSION

Providers can do a lot to make mental health care more accessible to LGBTQ+ youth

- Understand and question internal biases and prejudices
- Don't make assumptions
- Change or advocate for change of paperwork and protocols to be inclusive
- Put yourself in the shoes of an LGBTQ+ client and identify and correct barriers to care
- Make physical facilities openly welcoming
- Take responsibility for further education and understanding and educate others

SOURCES

- <https://www.ditchthelabel.org/research/paper/the-valentine-study/>
- <http://www.transstudent.org/>

Kestrel -
bokemaru99@gmail.com (608) 669-6422

LGBTQ+ terms

Lesbian – Women who are romantically and/or sexually attracted to women.

Gay – Men who are romantically and/or sexually attracted to men. Sometimes used as an umbrella term for LGB people.

Bisexual – Someone who is romantically and/or sexually attracted to both men and women.

Heterosexual – A man who is romantically and/or sexually attracted to women or a woman who is romantically and/or sexually attracted to men.

Transgender – Someone who identifies with a gender that was not the gender they were assigned at birth.

Cisgender – Someone who identifies with the gender they were assigned at birth.

Transman – A man who was assigned female at birth.

Transwoman – A woman who was assigned male at birth.

Trans* – An umbrella term for trans and gender non-conforming people that can include identities like genderqueer and gender fluid.

Genderqueer – Someone who identifies as neither male nor female. This person might identify as a mix of a man and a woman or as neither.

Gender fluid – Someone whose gender changes and may identify or express their gender differently at different times.

Agender – Someone who does not identify with a gender.

Queer – An intentionally ambiguous term used to refer to variation from the “norm” in gender, sexuality, and relationship structures. It is a reclaimed slur which is also a specific academic term as in “Queer Theory”

Questioning – Part of the LGBTQ+ community, someone who isn’t sure what label works best for them.

Intersex – Someone whose sex doesn’t align 100% with what we consider to be male and female. This can include variation in genitals, secondary sex characteristics, hormones, and/or chromosomes.

Asexual – Someone who does not feel sexual attraction or feels very little sexual attraction. Someone who is asexual may or may not feel romantic attraction.

Pansexual – Someone who is romantically and/or sexually attracted to many genders or all genders.

Polysexual – Someone who is romantically and/or sexually attracted to several genders.

Polyamory – The practice of having more than one romantic and/or sexual partner.

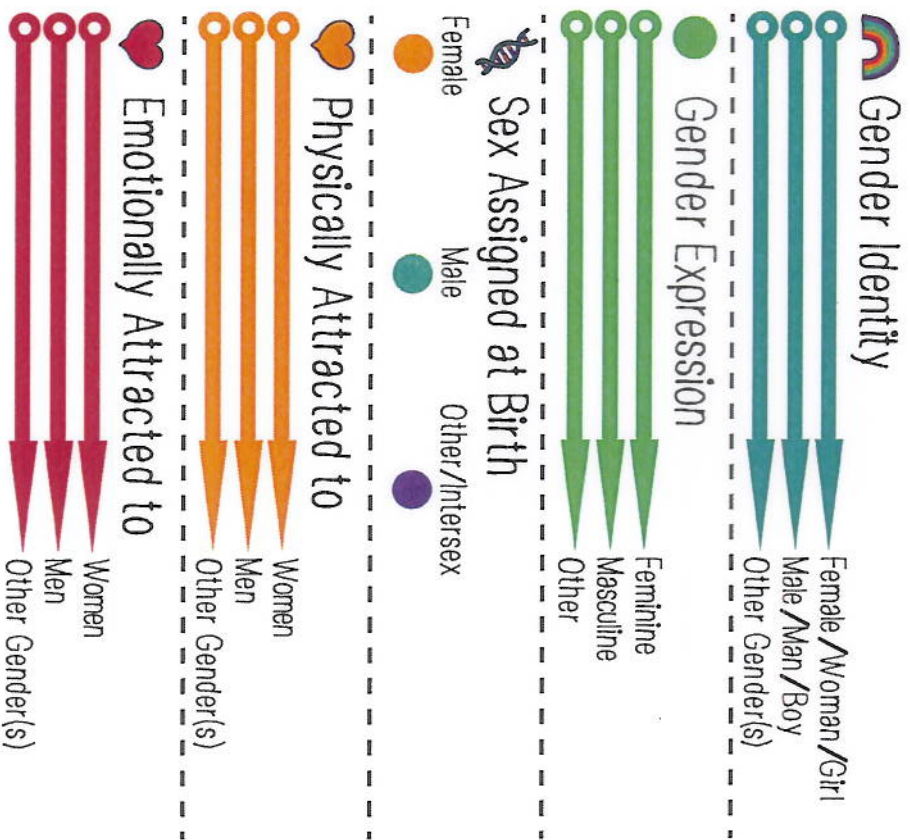
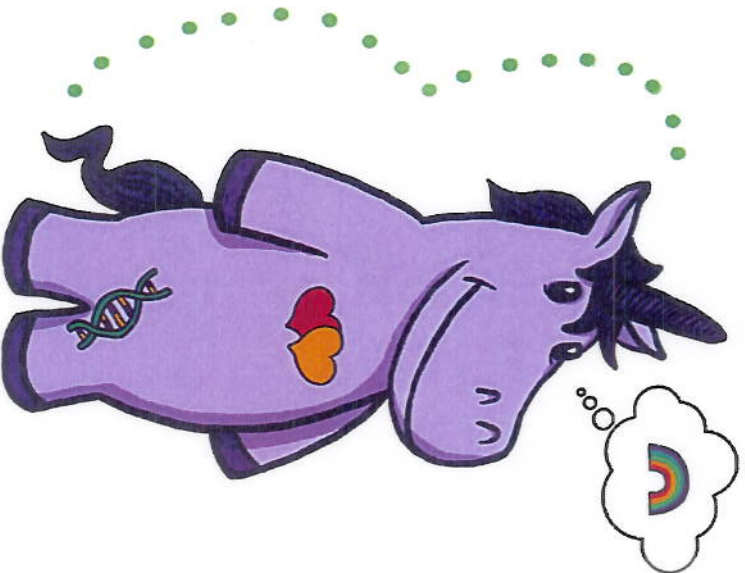
How to use they/them pronouns:

- Remember that we use singular they/them all the time and have for centuries. Be aware that they/them is recognized as a singular pronoun in the Merriam Webster dictionary and it's completely valid and reasonable.
- Refer to someone who uses they/them pronouns grammatically the same as you would if you were referring to two people or one person you didn't know the gender of. Such as "I saw Kestrel at the conference, they did a great job."
"I bet it was difficult for them to out themselves and explain gender and sexuality expansiveness to a room of strangers"
- The only grammatical difference would be that when you're referring to one person you use "themself" as opposed to "themselves"
- Practice gender neutral pronouns. If you make a mistake, quickly apologize then say the sentence correctly and don't draw extra attention to the mistake.

How to contact Kestrel to provide a training or presentation on gender and sexuality in social work - bokomaru99@gmail.com (608) 669-6422

The Gender Unicorn

Graphic by:
TSER
Trans Student Educational Resources



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

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