



The Bryson Institute
a program of

the attic
youth center

Definition of Terms

Note: Language is dynamic and ever changing and therefore these definitions vary based on several factors including time, place, culture, and society. No one term means the same to all people or describes all people, thus it is best to ask the person how the person identifies across sexuality and gender.

AFAB – Assigned female at birth.

ALLY – Someone who advocates for and supports members of a community other than their own, specifically the LGBTQ community.

AMAB – Assigned male at birth.

AGENDER – A person who does not identify themselves as having a gender.

AROMANTIC – A person who does not have romantic attraction.

ASEXUAL – A person who is not sexually attracted to anyone.

ASSIGNED SEX – The sex someone is assigned at birth based on their genitals. Male or female.

BIOLOGICAL SEX – The sex of a person based on their hormones, chromosomes, secondary sex characteristics, internal and external reproductive organs.

BIPHOBIA – A fear or dislike of bisexuals.

BISEXUAL – A person who is romantically attracted to men & women.

CISGENDER – A person whose assigned sex and gender identity are in alignment.

CISSEXISM – The belief that a person's assigned sex will always dictate their gender.

COMING OUT – Personally and/or publicly sharing one's sexual orientation or gender identity.

GAY – A man who is romantically attracted to other men. Term can also be used in reference to the entire LGBTQ community.

GENDER FLUID – A person who is moving through different genders at any given day, week, month or year of their life. Not to be confused with someone who is questioning their gender.

GENDER IDENTITY – Someone's personal sense of being a man, woman, both, or neither.

GENDER NON-CONFORMING – A person who does not identify solely as their sex assigned at birth. Also, has the additional usage by doctors working with younger trans youth.

GENDER QUEER – A person who does not identify solely as their sex assigned at birth.

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HETEROSEXISM – Assuming every person to be heterosexual therefore marginalizing persons who do not identify as heterosexual. It is also believing heterosexuality to be superior to homosexuality and all other sexual orientations.

HETEROSEXUAL – Someone that is attracted to 'the opposite' gender. (straight)

HOMOPHOBIA – A fear or dislike of gay people

INTERSECTIONALITY – The idea that all social justice issues relating to different parts of our identities are all connected in systems of oppression and not to be considered as independent issues. Example; a transwoman of color will experience racism for being a person of color, transphobia for being transgender and sexism for being a woman. These will frequently reinforce each other.

INTERSEX – A person whose biological sex falls between the medical standards of male and female.

LESBIAN – A woman who is romantically attracted to other women.

NON-BINARY – A person who does not identify in the gender binary (Man or woman)

PANSEXUAL – A person who is romantically attracted to people of any gender

PRONOUNS – A way to refer to someone outside of their name. Example; she, her, hers; he, him, his; they, them, theirs.

QUEER – Sometimes used as derogatory; can also be used in reference to someone that sees themselves as being outside of the heterosexual (straight) norm in regards to their sexual and/or gender identity.

QUESTIONING – Someone who is unsure of their sexual and/or gender identity.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION – To whom a person is attracted romantically, physically, spiritually, intellectually, etc.

TRANSGENDER – A person whose assigned sex and gender identity differ.

TRANSPHOBIA – A fear or dislike of transgender people.

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