



## **KEY TERMS**

**Sex** (Sex Assigned at Birth): A biological construct that refers to our physical attributes and our genetic makeup. This includes determines birth-assigned male or female sex.

**Gender Identity:** A person's internal, deeply-felt sense of being male, female, something other, or in between. Gender identity is not determined by genitals or Sex Assigned at Birth

**Gender Expression:** An individual's characteristics and behaviors such as appearance, dress, mannerisms, speech patterns, and social interactions that are perceived as masculine or feminine.

**Gender Nonconformity** (gender creative, gender expansive): Gender expressions that fall outside of societal expectations for one's sex assigned at birth

- May (or may not) impact gender identity:  
Natal male: "I am a girl and I like to express femininity."  
Natal male: "I am a boy and I like to express femininity."

**Non-Binary Gender:** An umbrella term that reflects gender identities that don't fit within the accepted binary of male and female. Individuals can feel they are both genders, neither or some mixture thereof. Terms under this umbrella: genderqueer, gender fluid, agender, bigender, etc. Non-binary folks may use they/them/theirs or other neutral pronouns.

**Gender diverse/fluid/expansive/creative:** Conveys a wider, more flexible range of gender identity and/or expression. It reinforces the notion that gender is not binary, but a continuum; and that many children and adults express their gender in multiple ways.

**Sexual Orientation:** The gender to which one is romantically and/or sexually attracted

**Transgender or Trans :** Individuals with an affirmed gender identity different than their sex-assigned-at-birth. Transgender can be used as an umbrella term that encompasses diversity of gender identities and expressions. Applies to identity, not necessarily body parts

**Cisgender (cis):** Term used to describe people whose gender identity is congruent with biological sex.

**Ally:** A person who is not LGBTQ but shows support for LGBTQ people and promotes equality in a variety of ways.



**Affirming:** The word 'affirm' is used to acknowledge the identity of an individual.

- For example: They are not changing their gender, rather, we are changing our perceptions based upon what the individual has expressed to us.

**Transphobia:** The fear and hatred of, or discomfort with, transgender people

**Intersex:** People are born with physical sex markers (genitals, hormones, gonads or chromosomes) that are neither clearly male nor female.

**Outing:** When someone discloses information about another's sexual orientation or gender identity without that person's knowledge and/or consent.



**Terms to Avoid (from GLAAD)**

| OFFENSIVE  | PREFERRED  |
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| <p><b>"homosexual" (n. or adj.)</b><br/>Because of the clinical history of the word "homosexual," it is aggressively used by anti-LGBTQ extremists to suggest that people attracted to the same sex are somehow diseased or psychologically/emotionally disordered – notions discredited by the American Psychological Association and the American Psychiatric Association in the 1970s..</p> | <p><b>"gay" (adj.); "gay man" or "lesbian" (n.); "gay person/people"</b><br/>Please use gay, lesbian, or when appropriate bisexual or queer to describe people attracted to members of the same sex.</p>                                     |
| <p><b>"homosexual relations/relationship," "homosexual couple" etc.</b></p>  | <p><b>"relationship," "couple" (or, if necessary, "gay/lesbian/same-sex couple")</b></p>   |
| <p><b>"sexual preference"</b><br/>The term "sexual preference" is typically used to suggest that being attracted to the same sex is a choice and therefore can and should be "cured."</p>  | <p><b>"sexual orientation" or "orientation"</b><br/>Sexual orientation is the accurate description of an individual's enduring physical, romantic, and/or emotional attraction to members of the same and/ or opposite/different gender.</p> |
| <p><b>"gay lifestyle," "homosexual lifestyle," or "transgender lifestyle"</b></p>  | <p><b>"LGBTQ people and their lives"</b></p>   |
| <p><b>"special rights"</b><br/>Anti-LGBTQ extremists frequently characterize equal protection of the law for LGBTQ people as "special rights" to incite opposition to such things as relationship recognition and inclusive nondiscrimination laws.</p>  | <p><b>"equal rights" or "equal protection"</b></p>   |