



Some Key Gender and Sexuality Terms

Sex Assigned at Birth: A label given to a baby (male, female, or intersex), typically based on the appearance of their genitals.

Intersex (Difference in Sex Development): When a person is born with physical characteristics that are outside the typical definitions of female or male. This can include variations in internal and external organs, hormone levels, and chromosomes.

Gender Identity: A person's sense of their own gender.

Cisgender: A person whose gender identity matches their sex assigned at birth (male = man, female = woman). Comes from the Latin prefix "cis" meaning "on the same side."

Transgender: A person whose gender identity differs from their sex assigned at birth. Comes from the Latin prefix "trans" meaning "across from."

Transition: Taking steps to change one's gender presentation socially (clothing, pronouns, etc.), legally (gender marker, name change), and/or medically (gender affirming surgeries, hormone replacement therapy). Some transgender people may choose to do none of these things, others may do some but not others, and some may do all of these.

Nonbinary: A person whose gender identity is in between or outside the gender binary of male/female.

Gender Nonconforming (GNC): People who don't follow conventional ideas about how they should look or act based on their sex assigned at birth. Can be a description of behavior and/or an identity.

Gender Expression: How people communicate gender to others through clothing, haircut, voice, and other forms of presentation.

Gender Role: Cultural behaviors "appropriate" to Boy/Man/Masculine or Girl/Woman/Feminine role. Examples: preference for same-gender peers, activity interests, social behaviors, work, parenting, etc.

Sexual Orientation: Who a person is sexually attracted to (e.g., one or more genders, or not to anyone).

Straight/Heterosexual: Attracted to people of the "opposite" gender (though this assumes there are only two genders).

Gay/Lesbian: Attracted primarily to people of the same gender.

Bisexual: Attracted to both men and women, or to people of your own and one or more other genders.

Pansexual: Attracted to people of any and all genders.

Demisexual: Experiencing sexual attraction, but only at certain times or in certain contexts.

Asexual: Doesn't experience sexual attraction, but may experience romantic attraction and/or other types of attraction.

Aromantic: Doesn't experience romantic attraction, but may experience sexual attraction and/or other types of attraction.

Queer: A) Attracted to people of many genders; B) Label for people who feel they do not fit cultural sexual orientation and/or gender identity norms; C) An umbrella term for all people with non-heterosexual sexual orientations.

Questioning: Someone who is unsure of or exploring their sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

