

COMMON VOCABULARY

Asexual People or Aces: Individuals who do not experience sexual attraction.

Bisexual or Bi People: Individuals who are romantically and physically attracted to people of more than one gender.

Pansexual: a person who experiences sexual, romantic, physical, and/or spiritual attraction for members of all gender identities/expressions

Cisgender or Cis People: Individuals who identify with the gender they were assigned at birth (i.e., non-trans people).

Gay People: Individuals who are romantically and physically attracted to members of the same sex. Often specifically used to refer to gay men; however, many women who are same-sex attracted also identify as gay.

Gender: A complex combination of roles, expressions, identities, performances, and more that are assigned gendered meaning by a society. Gender is both self-defined and society-defined. How gender is embodied and defined varies from culture to culture and from person to person.

Gender Binary: the idea that there are only two genders – male/female or man/woman and that a person must be strictly gendered as either/or.

Genderqueer/Non-Binary People: Individuals who identify outside of a gender binary by seeing themselves as neither male nor female, as both, or as somewhere in between.

Gender Dysphoria: Discomfort, unhappiness, or distress experienced by many but not all transgender people due to their assigned gender and the roles associated with that gender. It can relate to social interactions, personal appearance, and/or biological features. Dysphoria may accompany depression, anxiety, agitation, and an increased risk of suicide among trans people.

Gender Confirmation/Affirmation Surgery: A term used by some medical professionals to refer to a group of surgical options that alter a person's biological sex. In most cases, one or multiple surgeries are required to achieve legal recognition of gender variance.

Genderism: The societal, institutional, and individual beliefs and practices that privilege cisgender people and subordinate and disparage trans and gender-nonconforming people.

Heterosexism: The societal, institutional, and individual beliefs and practices that privilege heterosexuals and subordinate and disparage lesbians, gay men, and bisexuals.

Intersex: Biological variations in which development of chromosomal, gonadal, or anatomical sex does not fit the standard of male or female bodies. About one in 1,500-2,000 children are born with an intersex variation.

Lesbian: A woman who is romantically and physically attracted to other women. Some women identify as gay.

Passing: (verb) (1) a term for trans people being accepted as, or able to “pass for,” a member of their self-identified gender/sex identity (regardless of birth sex). (2) An LGB/queer individual who is believed to be or perceived as straight.

Transgender or Trans People: An umbrella term for individuals whose gender identity and/or expression is sometimes or always different from the gender assigned to them at birth. Trans people include transsexuals, cross dressers, drag queens and kings, non-binary individuals, and others who cross traditional gender categories.

Transition(ing): (noun & verb) this term is primarily used to refer to the process a trans person undergoes when changing their bodily appearance either to be more congruent with the gender/sex they feel themselves to be and/or to be in harmony with their preferred gender expression.

Transsexual People: Individuals whose gender identity is different from their assigned gender at birth. Transsexual people often undergo hormone treatments and gender-affirming surgeries to align their anatomy with their core identity, but not all desire or are able to do so.

Queer: Traditionally a pejorative term for LGBT people, the word has been reclaimed today by some LGBT people, particularly younger people, to describe themselves. If used by heterosexuals who are not allies, it is still considered derogatory.