

LGBTQIA+ Considerations for PSD School Nurses

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Overview of LGBTQIA+ Identities & Terminology

Sex Vocabulary

Gender Identity Vocabulary

Gender Transition Vocabulary

Gender Expression Vocabulary

Sexual Orientation Vocabulary

Sex Vocabulary

Biological sex: A medical term used to refer to the chromosomal, hormonal, and anatomical characteristics that are used to classify an individual as female, male, or intersex. Often referred to as simply “sex,” “physical sex,” “anatomical sex,” or specifically as “sex assigned at birth.”

Sex assigned at birth: The sex – male, female, or intersex – that a doctor or midwife uses to describe a child at birth based on their external anatomy.

Intersex: Intersex people are born with a variety of differences in their sex traits and reproductive anatomy. There is a wide variety of difference among intersex variations, including differences in genitalia, chromosomes, gonads, internal sex organs, hormone production, hormone response, and/or secondary sex traits.

Gender Identity Vocabulary

Gender identity: One's innermost concept of self as male, female, a blend of both or neither – how individuals perceive themselves and what they call themselves. One's gender identity can be the same or different from their sex assigned at birth.

Gender binary: A system in which gender is constructed into two strict categories of male or female. Gender identity is expected to align with the sex assigned at birth and gender expressions and roles fit traditional expectations.

Cisgender: A term used to describe a person whose gender identity aligns with those typically associated with the sex assigned to them at birth.

Transgender: An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or expression is different from cultural expectations based on the sex they were assigned at birth. Being transgender does not imply any specific sexual orientation.

Gender Identity Vocabulary

Agender: A person with no (or very little) connection to the traditional system of gender, no personal alignment with the concepts of either man or woman, and/or someone who sees themselves as existing without gender.

Bigender: A person who fluctuates between traditionally “woman” and “man” gender-based behavior and identities, identifying with both genders (or sometimes identifying with either man or woman, as well as a third, different gender).

Gender-expansive: A person with a wider, more flexible range of gender identity and/or expression than typically associated with the binary gender system. Often used as an umbrella term when referring to young people still exploring the possibilities of their gender expression and/or gender identity.

Gender-fluid: A person who does not identify with a single fixed gender or has a fluid or unfixed gender identity.

Gender Identity Vocabulary

Genderqueer: Genderqueer people typically reject notions of static categories of gender and embrace a fluidity or gender identity and often, though not always, sexual orientation. People who identify as “genderqueer” may see themselves as being both male and female, neither male nor female, or as falling completely outside these categories.

Non-binary: An adjective describing a person who does not identify exclusively as a man or a woman. Non-binary people may identify as being both a man and a woman, somewhere in between, or as falling completely outside of these categories. While many also identify as transgender, not all non-binary people do. Non-binary can also be used as an umbrella term encompassing identities such as agender, bigender, genderqueer, or gender-fluid.

Queer: A term people often use to express a spectrum of identities and orientations that are counter to the mainstream. Queer is often used as a catch-all to include many people, including those who do not identify as exclusively straight and/or folks who have non-binary or gender-expansive identities. This term was previously used as a slur but has been reclaimed by many parts of the LGBTQ+ movement.

Transitioning: A series of processes that some transgender people may undergo in order to live more fully as their true gender. This typically includes social transition (such as changing name and pronouns), medical transition (which may include hormone therapy or gender affirming surgeries), and legal transition (which may include changing legal name and sex on government identity documents). Transgender people may choose to undergo some, all, or none of these processes.

In 2023, Colorado's Essential Health Benefit (EHB) benchmark plan including gender-affirming care will take effect, which includes eye and lip modifications, face tightening, facial bone remodeling for facial feminization, breast/chest construction and reductions, and laser hair removal

Gender Transition Vocabulary

Puberty-blocking medicines: These medicines suppress the hormones that induce puberty. Using puberty blockers can avoid body changes that do not align with one's gender identity.

Hormone therapy: During puberty, one's body produces hormones that result in physical changes. With hormone therapy, one can produce secondary sex characteristics – such as voice pitch and breast development – that align with their gender identity.

Top surgery: This term refers to surgery for the construction of male-type chest or breast augmentation for a female-type chest.

Binder: An undergarment used to alter or reduce the appearance of one's breasts (worn similarly to how one wears a sports bra).

Gender Transition Vocabulary

Gender Expression Vocabulary

Gender expression: External appearance of one's gender identity, usually expressed through behavior, clothing, body characteristics or voice, and which may or may not conform to socially defined behaviors and characteristics typically associated with being either masculine or feminine.

Gender non-conforming: A broad term referring to people who do not behave in a way that conforms to the traditional expectations of their gender, or whose gender expression does not fit neatly into a category. While many also identify as transgender, not all gender non-conforming people do.

Androgyny: A gender expression that has elements of both masculinity and femininity.

Sexual Orientation Vocabulary

- Sexual orientation: The type of sexual, romantic, emotional/spiritual attraction one has the capacity to feel for some others, generally labeled based on the gender relationship between the person and people they are attracted to.
- Examples:
 - Straight
 - Gay
 - Lesbian
 - Bisexual
 - Asexual
 - Demisexual
 - Pansexual



Working with Students in Schools

Guidelines, Policies, Statues, & Resources

Gender Support Plans

- Name & pronouns
- Parent/guardian involvement/support
- Privacy, confidentiality, & disclosure
- Student safety
- Student records
- Use of facilities
- Extracurricular activities
- Other considerations (siblings, dress code, social dynamics)

Name and Pronouns

A student has the right to be addressed by the name and pronoun that corresponds to the student's gender identity.

- A court-ordered name or gender change is not required, and official records need not be changed.
- Always use the student's affirming name whether the name has been legally changed or not, not unlike the common practice of using a nickname by which others refer to the student rather than their legal name.

When working with students....

- Ask for their name and pronouns instead of assuming
 - We are not currently able to put in another gender outside of the male/female binary into Synergy until CDE changes reporting requirements
 - Some schools put pronouns in () in the name line when doing a PSD name/gender change
- If communicating home, ask the student what name and pronouns to use with whomever you're calling/communicating with to ensure we do not out a student & create a potentially unsafe situation

Confidentiality & Privacy

- All students have a right to privacy; this includes the right to keep private one's transgender or gender non-binary status.
 - Information about a student's transgender status, legal name, or sex assigned at birth also may constitute confidential information. Disclosing this information to other students, other parents, or third parties may violate privacy laws, such as FERPA.
 - School personnel should not disclose information that may reveal a student's transgender or gender non-binary status to others, including students, parents, other school personnel, or community members, unless legally required to do so or unless the student has authorized such disclosure.
- Transgender and non-binary students have the right to discuss and express their gender identity and expression openly and to decide when, with whom, and how much to share private information.

PSD Board Policies

Board Policy AC – Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity

- “No otherwise qualified student shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any District program or activity on the basis of...sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, [or] gender expression[.]”

Board Policy JBB – Harassment of Students

- “Harassment based on sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression can include... deliberately misusing a transgender student’s preferred name, form of address, or gender-related pronoun.”

Colorado Statutes

3 C.C.R. 708-1, Rule 81.9

- “All covered entities shall allow individuals the use of gender-segregated facilities that are consistent with their gender identity. Gender-segregated facilities include, but are not limited to, restrooms, locker rooms, dressing rooms, and dormitories. In gender-segregated facilities where undressing in the presence of others occurs, covered entities shall make reasonable accommodations to allow access consistent with an individual’s gender identity.”

C.R.S. 24-34-601

- “It is a discriminatory practice and unlawful for a person, directly or indirectly, to refuse, withhold from, or deny to an individual or a group, because of...sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, [or] gender expression... the full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or accommodations of a place of public accommodation.”

NASN Position on LGBTQ Students

It is the position of the National Association of School Nurses (NASN) that, to provide culturally competent care, school staff and communities should institute affirming policies that support lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer/questioning (LGBTQ) youth. These include bullying, health risk behaviors, and rejection from family and friends. Such challenges can cause adverse mental and physical health effects such as depression and suicidal ideation. Registered professional nurses (hereinafter referred to as school nurses) are uniquely positioned to help LGBTQ youth by creating LGBTQ-affirming spaces, guiding youth towards resources, advocating for school-wide protections, and assuring youth that their identities and feelings are normal and appropriate.

Resources

- NASN [Position Statement & Rationale](#)
- One Colorado's [Guidance for Educators Working with Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Students](#)
- Title IX [Protection Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity](#)
- ACLU [Letter about LGBT Student Privacy](#)
- CDE [Information on Gender and Sexual Orientation](#)
- Gender Spectrum's [Schools in Transition](#) Guide
- One Colorado's [Best Practices – Using Inclusive Language, Terminology, and Communication](#)
- One Colorado's [Health Resources for LGBTQ Patients](#)
- One Colorado's [Health Resources for Providers](#)