

INCLUSION OF LGBTQIA+ COMMUNITY IN THE WORKFORCE AND EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

A toolkit developed with the community



Canada



About HRC

The Human Rights Campaign has spent 40 years creating the most powerful movement for equality in the United States of America with a goal to ensure that all LGBTQIA+ people, and particularly those who are trans, people of colour and HIV+, are treated as full and equal citizens within this movement, across the country and around the world. By inspiring and engaging individuals and communities, the Human Rights Campaign strives to end discrimination against LGBTQIA+ people and realize a world that achieves fundamental fairness and equality for all.

About Red Dot Foundation

Red Dot Foundation works at the intersection of gender, technology, communications, data and urban planning and **Safecity** is its flagship program. They have been crowd mapping sexual and gender-based violence for the last eight years on its globally awarded reporting platform. The dataset on the app is crowdsourced anonymously. The idea is to make this data useful for individuals, local communities and local administration to identify factors that cause behaviour that leads to violence and work on strategies for solutions.



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About The QKnit Foundation

The QKnit Foundation founded by Mr. Sumit Pawar is a non-profit organisation set up in Mumbai which aims at facilitating conversations about queer life in India through social media, youth leadership, advocacy and capacity building. They work for the rights and issues of queer individuals and marginalized women.

How to use this toolkit?

1. To use any term in the toolkit correctly, it is imperative to acquire a thorough understanding of its context, concept, usages and cautions. This toolkit, therefore, does not attempt to suggest the “right” and “wrong” terminology.
2. It is suggested that you use the toolkit as a general guide, rather than strictly adhere to it.
3. Be careful not to make assumptions. The best advice is to listen to the people of the community and what their preferences are.
4. If you are not sure what terms to use, be forthright and ask them what terms they prefer.
5. Given the ever-changing nature of language, perceptions and social mores, terminologies covered in this toolkit may need to be reviewed on a regular basis.

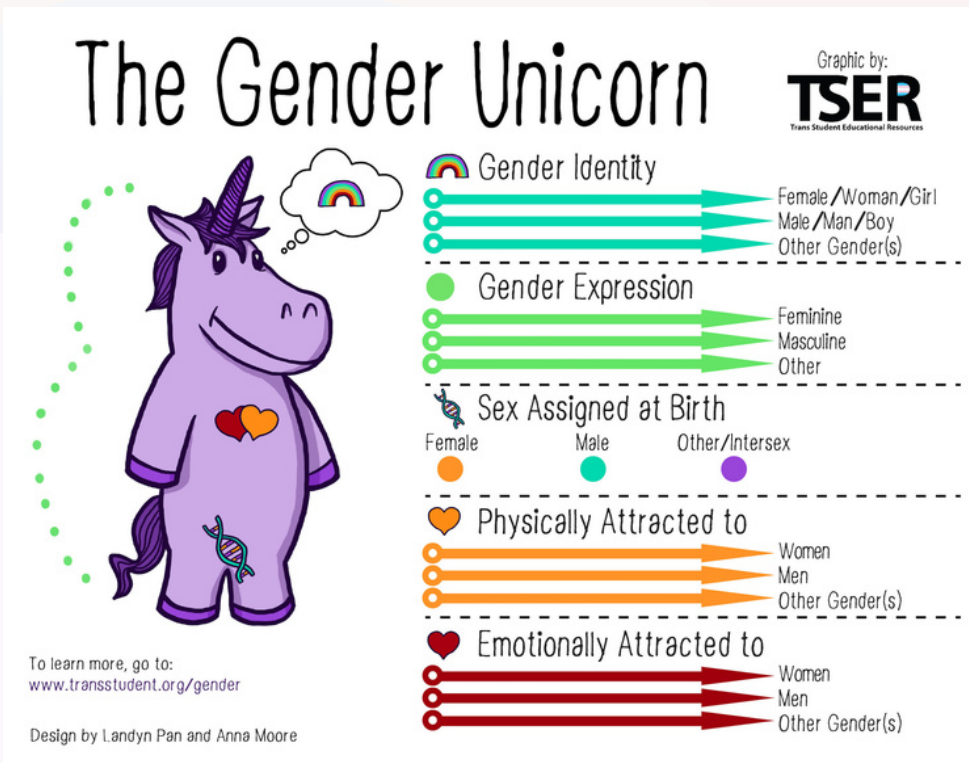


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Difference between Sex assigned at Birth and Gender

Sex is “a label assigned at birth based on the reproductive organs you are born with.” It is generally how we divide society into two groups, male and female—though intersex people are born with both male and female reproductive organs. (Important note: Hermaphrodite is a term that some find offensive.)



Gender goes beyond one’s reproductive organs and includes a person’s perception, understanding, and experience of themselves and roles in society. It is their inner sense about who they are meant to be and how they want to interact with the world.

While a person can only change their sex via surgery, one’s gender is more fluid and based on how they identify.

Gender is often spoken about as a social construct, for what a society considers to be feminine, for example, is based on such things as beliefs and values—not nature. That women are supposed to wear dresses and that “boys don’t cry” are, ultimately, made-up social customs and conventions.

What is the gender spectrum? / Basics of Gender Spectrum

Most people — including most transgender people — are either male or female. But some people do not neatly fit into the categories of “man” or “woman,” or “male” or “female.” For example, some people have a gender that combines elements of being a man or a woman. Other people identify with a gender that is different from both male and female. Some people do not identify with any gender. Some people’s gender changes over time.

Thought Box

We may have filled a form which requires us to identify our gender like this ‘Gender: Man, Woman or Other’. When we do that, please be mindful of the fact that a man or a woman also includes transgender man or transgender woman. The other category is a vague understanding, instead we can have ‘Non-binary’ as an option which denotes people who do not identify as a man or a woman.



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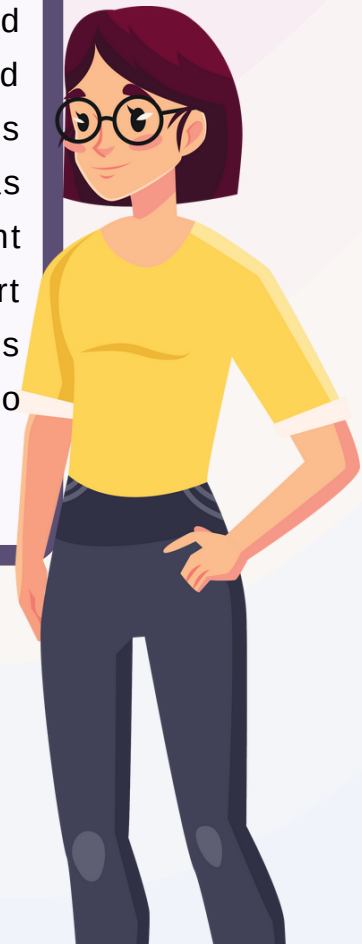


People whose gender is not male or female use many different terms to describe themselves, with “non-binary” being one of the most common.

HE / HIM
SHE / HER
THEY / THEM

Did you know?

On July 2, 2009 a 105 year old British law that criminalised consensual queer relationships (Section 377, IPC) was abolished by a judgement passed by the Supreme Court of India. Today in India, it is our right guaranteed by law to love whoever we wish to.



Common terms and their meanings

Orientation

Orientation is an umbrella term describing a person's attraction to other people. This attraction may be sexual (sexual orientation) and/or romantic (romantic orientation). These terms refer to a person's sense of identity-based on their attractions, or lack thereof.

Sexual orientation

Sexual orientation is a person's emotional, romantic and/or sexual attraction to another person.



Thought Box

RDF conducted 4 roundtable discussions from March to April 2022 with education institutions and government as well as corporate workplaces to understand how to be inclusive to the LGBTQIA+ community. This toolkit is a by-product of those conversations.

Lesbian

Refers to a woman who has a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards women. Some non-binary people may also identify with this term.

Bi/Bisexual

Bi is an umbrella term used to describe a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards more than one gender. Bi people may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms, including, but not limited to, bisexual, pan, queer, and some other non-monosexual and non-monoromantic identities.

Gay

Refers to a man who has a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards men. Also a generic term for lesbian and gay sexuality – some women define themselves as gay rather than lesbian. Some non-binary people may also identify with this term.

Trans

An umbrella term to describe people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth.

Transgender man

A term used to describe someone who is assigned female at birth but identifies and lives as a man. This may be shortened to trans man, or FTM, an abbreviation for female-to-male.

Transgender woman

A term used to describe someone who is assigned male at birth but identifies and lives as a woman. This may be shortened to trans woman, or MTF, an abbreviation for male-to-female.

Asexual/Ace

An umbrella term used specifically to describe experiences of a lack of, varying, or occasional experiences of sexual attraction. This encompasses asexual people as well as those who identify as demisexual and grey-sexual.

Queer

Queer is a term used by those wanting to reject specific labels of romantic orientation, sexual orientation and/or gender identity. It can also be a way of rejecting the perceived norms of the LGBT community (racism, sizeism, ableism, etc.). Although some LGBT people view the word as a slur, it was reclaimed in the late 80s by the queer community who have embraced it.

Pansexual

An identity label sometimes claimed by people who experience sexual attraction across the spectrums of gender identity, biological sex and sexual orientation.

Queerphobia

The fear or dislike of someone, based on prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views about people in the queer community. Queerphobic bullying may be targeted at people who are, or who are perceived to be, queer.

Polyamorous

An identity label sometimes claimed by individuals that recognize their ability to be in multiple loving and honest sexual and/or romantic relationships at the same time.

Cisgender or Cis

Someone whose gender identity is the same as the sex they were assigned at birth. Non-trans is also used by some people.

Non-binary

An umbrella term for people whose gender identity does not sit comfortably with 'man' or 'woman'. Non-binary identities are varied and can include people who identify with some aspects of binary identities, while others reject them entirely.

Deadnaming

Calling someone by their birth name after they have changed their name. This term is often associated with trans people who have changed their name as part of their transition. Referring to someone by their deadname is not a good practice.

Questioning

The process of exploring your own sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

Intersex

Intersex is not a gender identity and should not be lumped under the trans umbrella. It describes someone born with anatomical, hormonal and/or chromosomal variations in their sex characteristics. Some intersex people self-define as trans and/or non-binary, others with the gender they were assigned at birth. It is always up to an individual as to how they describe their gender identity. Some people use multiple terms or shift between different terms to better represent their gender identity. This should always be respected and supported.

Gender dysphoria

Used to describe when a person experiences discomfort or distress because there is a mismatch between their sex assigned at birth and their gender identity. This is also the clinical diagnosis for someone who does not feel comfortable with the sex they were assigned at birth.

Did you know?

In 1977, the first documented study of queerness was done by India's Math wizard Shakuntala Devi in a book she wrote called 'The World of Homosexuals'. Devi's investigative study included interviews of homosexuals in India. Through her book, she touched upon psychological and sociological aspects of being a homosexual and demanded a compassionate outlook towards them.

Aravani

Aravani is a term used for Hijras in Tamil Nadu.

Khwaja Sarai

Transgender people in Pakistan are called Khwaja Sarai.

Hijra

Hijra is a community of certain transgender persons who follow specific rituals and traditions of their respective Gharanas led by different Gurus. The Hijra community has a Guru-Chela system where Gurus look after their different Chelas. It is important to understand that all Hijras are transgender persons but not all transgender persons are Hijras. The Hijra community is found exclusively in South Asian countries only.



WHAT ARE PRONOUNS AND WHY ARE THEY NECESSARY?



Good Practices for Workplaces

1. Use of gender-inclusive language.
2. Emphasis on using appropriate pronouns.
3. Make sure your workplace is safe, inclusive and accessible for marginalised communities.
4. Build gender-inclusive washrooms.
5. Use pronouns in email signatures.
6. Promote diversity and inclusion initiatives.
7. Support events that have a diversity of speakers and thought leaders
8. Foster a workplace culture where every voice is welcome, heard and respected.
9. Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Rules, 2020 mandates all workplaces to create measures to protect transgender employees with welfare incentives and inclusive policies.
10. Adapt gender-inclusive policy for protection from sexual harassment at workplace.

Thought Box

Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 focuses on protection of women but many organisations in India adapt zero tolerance policy towards all genders by using gender-neutral language.



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Good Practices for Teachers and Education Institutions

1. Define clear minimum standards for behaviour.
2. Put up an inclusive and sensitive child protection policy.
3. Create opportunities to listen to all children.
4. Be aware of the specific needs of every student in your class.
5. Provide support for them in ways that benefit ALL students in your class.
6. Create a calm, purposeful learning environment.
7. Do not compare the progress of one child to another.
8. Emphasis on using appropriate pronouns.
9. Learn and use students' preferred names.
10. Ensure your course reflects a diverse society and world.
11. Build gender-inclusive washrooms.

Did you know?

In the year 2015, India welcomed its first public transgender persons' washroom in Mysore, Karnataka. Followed by it, we now have public transgender washrooms in Varanasi, U.P., Delhi, Bhopal and Mumbai. This was due to the NALSA judgement in 2014, where the Supreme Court of India expressed that denial of gender-neutral washrooms is a violation of an individual's fundamental right.



Ways to be a good ally (ACTION)

In a simple way, an ally is someone who stands against oppression and supports oppressed people.

- **A**ct with an open mind, there is always something new to learn.
- **C**arefully listen, the world needs empathetic listeners the most.
- **T**ry to empower others, so they can speak up for themselves and others who are oppressed.
- **I**ntervene: speak up when you see something offensive; do not let wrong things be normalised in the name of humour.
- **O**nus to learn is on you. Educate yourself and others, knowledge is the greatest power.
- **N**ow be inclusive, leave no one behind.



Don't: Ignore It

I came out to my parents. I told them not to constantly ask me about getting married to a girl as I am not interested in women, instead, I feel attracted to men. My parents showed care and love towards me and accepted me after having a long discussion with me about my feelings.



Nihal

Do: Ask Questions

When I told my mother that I think I am a man by heart and would like to identify and live life as a man, my caring mother started asking me several questions to understand what I am going through and what is the best way to help me with this.



Sameer

Do: Talk About Telling Others

When I confessed that I am in a relationship with a girl, my father started inviting my girlfriend to our family functions and festivals. He wholeheartedly accepted her as his second daughter and also started sharing about our relationship with family members.



Neha

Don't: Ask Them First

My mother accidentally saw a Gay Dating App's notification on my phone. At that very moment, she felt completely devastated and thought her child was betraying her, but later on, she calmed herself and asked me about it. I could tell her everything because she was there to understand me without any biases.



Kris

Don't: Assume

Even though I started wearing makeup while going out for parties, for a while my elder sister felt a little weird but she decided not to assume or jump to any conclusions until I myself told her anything about my identity. She firmly told the same thing to our parents and requested them to be understanding.



Sahil

Do: Talk About Safe Sex

When I explained to my mother about being a pansexual person the only thing my mother asked me is to be safe while engaging in sexual activities and also to be mindful of my mental health.



Rutu

Do: Be Mindful of Gender

When I told my mother that soon I will be starting my hormone therapy, my mother asked me to get her some good Hindi books about gender and sexuality so she can understand things better.



Amal

Do: Tell Them You Love Them

I was having a tough time accepting myself as a bisexual woman, I faced a lot of discrimination and got bullied in junior college but my parents were my support system throughout this journey and they always made sure that I never felt alone.



Jaspreet

How to Report on Safecity

- Help us by sharing your experience. Your identity will remain anonymous.
- It will bridge the data gap that exists due to under-reporting of incidents.
- Together, we can fight sexual abuse and domestic violence by analysing and acting on the data.
- We can make the world safer.

Step 1:

Download the SAFECITY app on your phone or open the webapp.safecity.in on your computer.

Step 2:

Fill out all the information requested about the situation you'd like to report, like location, time, dates and details of the incident.

Step 3:

If you have 5-10 minutes, fill out our secondary form so we can know more about the incident to understand other factors that play a role in sexual violence. By answering a few questions, you will help us build safer cities.




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Please Note: Safecity is not an SOS service. Please refer to the Help section for helplines and emergency services if in need. We respect your courage to report. Your identity will remain anonymous. No personal information is being collected. By reporting you will help increase public accountability, increase resources allocated for safe public spaces and demand policy change. Sharing your experience helps us identify patterns and create safer spaces.

Our Contact and Location:

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ANDHERIWEST, MUMBAI 400053

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