Gender in Schools: Beyond Binary

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Guidelines

• No right or wrong questions
• Confidential
• Use respectful language
• Share and allow others to share
• Shape this discussion to fit your needs
• Introduction
Objectives

• To provide an overview of key terms and concepts related to gender

• To provide an outline of gender inclusive schools and tactics to personally implement inclusivity

• Discuss how to talk about gender diversity with students, parents, and the school community
We support the physical, mental and social health of patients and their families as youth progress through gender identity development.

Why are staff from Lurie Children’s Hospital facilitating this discussion?

Gender Program Multidisciplinary Services

- Mental Health Services
- School outreach and support
- Parent and teen support groups
- Community advocacy and connection to legal services
My Gender Journey
Personal

- Growing up did you think of yourself as a boy, girl, or something else? How did you come to that conclusion?

- What messages did you receive from others about your gender? Did those messages make sense to you?

- What is your first memory of gender impacting you/your life?

- Have you ever been confused by someone’s gender? How did that make you feel? Why do you think you may have felt that way?

- Have you ever been confused by your own gender?

- If you were to describe your gender without discussing how you look, what would you say?
Professional

• What is your comfort level discussing gender with your colleagues?

• How might your experience with gender impact your work?

• How would you categorize your school’s overall acceptance of gender diversity?

• What professional training have you received regarding gender? Was it useful?

• Have you had any experiences that significantly impacted the way you view the role of gender in your workplace?
Key Terminology
Sex (assigned at birth)

Intersex

Gender Identity

*Raise your hand if you have a gender identity*

Gender Expression
Key Terminology

Gender Expansive (Nonconforming/Creative)

- Long-standing occurrence (e.g., 6 months or more) – not a fleeting curiosity or interest

- Gender nonconformity is a normative variation of human diversity
Key Terminology

Sexual Orientation

Cisgender (*cis-*“same side as”)

Sexuality
(who you love)

Gender Identity
(who you are)
Key Terminology

Transgender or Trans
• Applies to identity not body parts

Non-Binary Gender

An adjective, not a noun or a verb
a. Incorrect as noun: “She’s a transgender.”
b. Incorrect as verb: “That person is transgendered.”
c. Incorrect: “A transgendered person.”
d. Correct: “A transgender student/male/female”
There is no ONE way to be trans.
Pronouns

- It’s okay to ask people what pronouns they use
  - She/her/hers
  - He/him/his
  - They/Them/Theirs
  - Other pronouns

Quick Activity!

Turn to your neighbor and discuss what you did over the weekend without using any gendered language.
Identity
Attraction
Sex

Expression

To learn more, go to: www.transstudent.org/gender

Design by Landyn Pan and Anna Moore
What is the role of schools?
“When someone with the authority of a teacher, say, describes the world and you are not in it, there is a moment of psychic disequilibrium, as if you looked in the mirror and saw nothing.”

– Adrienne Rich, poet
Working With Students & Families
Maslow's Hierarchy of School Needs

- **Physiological**
  - Basic Needs Are Met
    - eats breakfast, has clean clothing, safe place to go home, able to sleep

- **Safety**
  - Emotional and Physical Safety
    - clear school/class routines, access to counselors/nurse, ok to take risks

- **Belonging**
  - Forming Relationships
    - advisory, adult role models, friendship groups, peer relationships

- **Esteem**
  - Positive Classroom Culture Present
    - positive feedback, time for reflection, encouragement to take risks

- **Self-Actualization**
  - Student Is Available to Learn
Gender Impacts Everyone

• 50% of elementary bullying is based on gender and/or sexual orientation slurs (Holt, M., & Espelage, D., 2013)

• More than 50% report school as an unsafe environment for “not being as masculine as other guys or as feminine as other girls” (Holt, M., & Espelage, D., 2013)

What gender stereotypes have you heard in your work in schools?
Cultural Norms

“The generally accepted rule is pink for boys, and blue for the girls. The reason is that pink, being a more decided and stronger color, is more suitable for the boy, while blue, which is more delicate and dainty, is prettier for the girl.”

-1918 article Earnshaw's Infants' Department trade publication
Cultural Norms
Feminine.
Not aggressive.
Dependent.
Easily influenced.
Submissive.
Passive.
Home-oriented.
Easily hurt emotionally.
Indecisive.
Talkative.
Gentle.
Sensitive to other's feelings.
Very desirous of security.
Cries a lot.
Emotional.
Verbal.
Kind.
Tactful.
Nurturing.

Masculine.
Aggressive.
Independent.
Not easily influenced.
Dominant.
Active.
Worldly.
Not easily hurt emotionally.
Decisive.
Not at all talkative.
Tough.
Less sensitive to other's feelings.
Not very desirous of security.
Rarely cries.
Logical.
Analytical.
Cruel.
Blunt.
Not nurturing.
How can you integrate discussions of diversity into your school?

- Gender diversity, cultural diversity, diverse families and family structures
- Others?
Supporting Trans and Gender Expansive Students
What is Transphobia?

You’ve just met Liz

You wouldn’t ask her about her genitals... ...

...so why would you if you knew she was transgender?

END TRANSPHOBIA

/</transphobia>

- Also described as cissexism
- Discriminatory acts directed toward trans people.
- Because gender is a deeply rooted concept in our society, reactions to those who do not conform female/male binary can be extremely severe.
- Systems of oppression and intersecting identities

What are some ways that this manifests itself in schools?
Outcomes Tied to Rejection and Acceptance

• Students that are not supported are at increased risk of:
  – Depressive symptoms, low life satisfaction, self-harm, isolation, posttraumatic stress, incarceration, homelessness, and suicidality

• Students that are supported are tied to the following traits:
  – Positive self-esteem, high social support, positive mental health, less depressive symptoms, greater self-esteem, greater life satisfaction (compared with youth whose families were non-supportive)

(D’Augelli, Grossman, & Starks, 2006; Garofalo, Deleon, Osmer, Doll, & Harper, 2006; Hill, Menvielle, Sica, & Johnson, 2010; Roberts, Rosario, Corliss, Koenen, & Bryn Austin, 2012; Skidmore, Linsenmeier, & Bailey, 2006; Toomey, Ryan, Diaz, Card, & Russell, 2010; Travers et al., 2012)
Why Support for Trans Youth Matters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trans' Youth with Supportive Parents</th>
<th>Trans' Youth with Unsupportive Parents</th>
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<tr>
<td>Reported Life Satisfaction</td>
<td>Reported High Self-Esteem</td>
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<tr>
<td>72%</td>
<td>64%</td>
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<tr>
<td>33%</td>
<td>13%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Described Mental Health As “Very Good” or “Excellent”</td>
<td>Faced Housing Problems</td>
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<tr>
<td>70%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>15%</td>
<td>55%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suffered Depression</td>
<td>Attempted Suicide</td>
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<tr>
<td>23%</td>
<td>4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>75%</td>
<td>57%</td>
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© TSER Trans
Student Equality Resources
Transition

What do you think of when you hear the word transition in relation to gender expansive individuals?

– Process by which an individual begins living in their affirmed gender
  • Social
  • Medical
  • Legal
– May or may not include hormonal and/or surgical treatment
– No one way to be trans; therefore, no one way to transition.
Affirming vs. Accepting

The word ‘affirm’ is used to acknowledge the identity of an individual.
Discussing Transitions

1. Support the transgender student—this is their story
2. Keep language simple and affirming
3. Don’t be afraid of questions!
Creating an affirming and supportive environment for transgender youth is about creating an inclusive school climate for everyone.
Best Practices for Creating a Supportive School Gender-Inclusive Culture
• Avoid gender segregation

• Restroom and locker room accessibility

• Respect name and gender pronoun (including forms)

• Ensure that all students are allowed to participate in activities/events in accordance with their gender identity

• Inclusive dress code
Northwestern University students will elect one Homecoming Wildcat from a court of 12 people.
• Respect Student Privacy and Confidentiality

• Implement nondiscriminatory policies and comprehensive policy for bullying and discrimination (explicitly include gender identity)

• Ensure that resources and support are easy for parents and students to locate

• Celebrate ALL different types diversity with curricular inclusion
Institutional Inclusion: Policies and Procedures
• **Berwyn South School District 100**
  – K-8
  – Gender Support Team
  – Parental notification for student under 13 for name change in SIS
• **Harlem District 122** (Rockford)
  – K-12
  – Roster change form (parent notification needed if under 18)
• **Williamsville CUSD 15**
  – Administrative Procedure adopted through an IDHR Complaint
  – No parent notification required
• **Lurie Children’s Hospital Model Policy**
7:10 Board Policies

7:10 board policies that include gender identity and gender expression as a protected class with AP to support policy.

- Districts D65, D112, and D113
  - Included public hearings
  - These policies do not yet clearly state that all students be given access to gender affirming facilities → public hearings made it clear in the hearings that that would be the practice implemented as part of their AP
1. Ask what the student needs
2. Take the student’s gender identity and expression seriously
3. Acknowledge mistakes (own them → practice to correct the behavior)
4. Respect the student’s name/pronoun (even if you are not in their presence).
5. Do not out ANYONE (or allow anyone else to do so) without their consent.
6. Treat trans people as members of their gender identity
7. Provide resources and support
Gender Inclusive Schools

- **Personal**
  - Focus on educator’s understandings of gender and building foundation to build inclusive practices

- **Interpersonal**
  - The various ways we communicate (verbal and nonverbal) and reinforce the school’s commitment to gender inclusion

- **Structural**
  - Institutional steps that create a foundation for gender inclusive practices

- **Instructional**
  - Specific ways in which teaching and learning are used to instill greater awareness of gender diversity

© Gender Spectrum 11/1/2016
Supporting Parents: Talking to Children About Gender Identity

It is important to respect differences.
Let the student guide your conversation. What specifically are they trying to understand?

- Be clear in explanation but also ensure that you understand what specific questions your adolescent has. Are the questions about gender? Transitioning?

- Don’t answer questions that they’re not asking.
1. Books and current events

2. Discuss the importance of respect
   Names & pronoun

3. Remind youth that it’s OK to be curious but it’s not OK to ask overly personal questions
“I don’t think that it’s OK to be gay or trans and I don’t want my child to think that it’s an OK option for them.”
Responding to religious questions/objections

- The role of schools is not to get everyone to agree but to foster a climate where there is respect for the diversity of beliefs and families within a community.

- Respect is built by acknowledging the diversity in the community, promoting opportunities for community dialogue and allowing the diversity of families to be visible within the school. Most people can agree that it is appropriate for schools to teach kindness and mutual respect for everyone’s beliefs.
Creating Gender Inclusive Schools Trailer
from Jonathan Skurnik
Reflection
Creating a Gender-Inclusive School Environment

1. Reflect on your experiences and feelings about gender.
2. What systems are in place for gender diverse youth at my school?
3. Is there LGBT curriculum inclusion at my school?
4. Do I communicate a non-binary understanding of gender to my students through the visuals on my classroom walls, the books on the shelves and the language I use?
5. How do I ensure the safety of gender expansive students?
Thank You!

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Program Manager, Gender & Sex Development Program
Jleininger@Luriechildrens.org
773-303-6056
References and Resources
Resources
### Organizations providing support to transgender individuals

**Illinois**
- Illinois Safe Schools Alliance
- Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children’s Hospital Gender Program
- Howard Brown Health Center
- Center on Halsted
- Youth Outlook

**National**
- GLSEN (The Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network)
- The Trevor Project (crisis and suicide prevention)

### Resources for Parents, Educators, and Allies

- Gender Spectrum
- Families in TRANSition: A Resource Guide for Parents of Trans Youth
- Schools in Transition: A Guide for Supporting Transgender Students in K-12 Schools
- Welcoming Schools
- American Psychological Association (q&a packet)
- A Guide For Parents
- Trans Youth Family Allies (TYFA)
- Lambda Legal: Working With Transgender and Gender-Nonconforming Youth
- Gender Creative Kids Resource Library
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Events</th>
<th>Orlando Massacre</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Legislation (i.e. North Carolina’s HB2)</td>
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<td>Legalization of Gay Marriage</td>
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<td>Historical Events</td>
<td>Stonewall Riots</td>
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<td>HIV/AIDS Epidemic</td>
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<td>Kinsey Scale</td>
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<td>Popular Culture Figures</td>
<td>Ellen DeGeneres</td>
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<td>Frank Ocean</td>
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<td>Sir Ian McKellen</td>
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<td>Anderson Cooper</td>
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<td>Historical Figures</td>
<td>Bayard Rustin</td>
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<td>Jane Addams</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Walt Whitman</td>
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<td>Alan Turing</td>
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<td>Eleanor Roosevelt</td>
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<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>Books</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Films</td>
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<td>Photography</td>
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1. Nick identifies as male and would like to use the male restroom at his school. He expresses a male identity in and outside of school and uses he/him pronouns. When Nick goes to use the boy’s restroom another student stops him from entering and tells him, “you’re really a girl.” A staff member is notified and asks Nick to use the nurse’s bathroom.
2. A parent of a cisgender student calls you to ask about their child’s transgender classmate. This parent states, “I don’t want my daughter using the restroom with a boy. I believe that this is inappropriate and unsafe.”
“I can assure you that the safety, well-being and education of all students remain our highest priorities.”

“Of course I can’t talk about any individual student, just as I would never talk about your child.”

“I know this is new territory for many of us. Sometimes change is really challenging. Perhaps I can share some information with you about gender identity and transgender people?”

Source: “Schools in Transition” 2015
3. A student at your school has asked to be called a name and pronoun, different from what is on their birth certificate. One of your colleagues continues to refer to the student by their legal name and doesn’t use their preferred pronouns.

What might you say to this staff member?

How would you respond if it was one of your other students using a classmate’s previous name/pronoun?
4. Robert, wore a dress to school. Many students had questions about his outfit and the teacher felt that this was distracting. She sent him to the principal’s office with the request that he be sent home to change his clothes.
5. A student is overheard calling another student a transphobic slur

What are some ways that you could handle that conversation? Should the guardians be notified?
6. Students are going on an overnight trip. Melissa, a transgender female student would like to share a room with her peers. Should you notify parents? How might you handle overnight trips for transgender students?
Discussing Transitioning: Examples
-Karen identifies female, is female and will be treated as a girl in every way. Karen wants us to use she/her pronouns and to be called Karen consistently by all staff and students. We will respect Karen and continue to use this name and female pronouns.

-Your classmate feels like a boy and he is boy. He has asked us to support him by calling him Bob and use he/him. This is just like how you like for us to call you Marco and use he/him.
-Sam doesn’t feel like a boy or girl and **would like to be called they they/them** pronouns because that makes them feel good. We want to support everyone at the school by being respectful of names and pronouns.

-While you may have known Jim as Jackie last year he feels like a boy and identifies as male. We will **show Jim support and respect by calling him Jim and using he/him pronouns consistently**. Calling Jim by any other name or pronoun will not be tolerated.
Additional Information/Resources
Illinois Safe Schools Alliance
www.illinoissafeschools.org

National Center for Transgender Equality:
www.NCTE.org

GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network) National: www.glesen.org

Gender Spectrum: www.genderspectrum.org

Welcoming Schools: www.welcomingschools.org
Community Resources

**Center on Halsted**
Where: 3656 Halsted, Chicago
When: Everyday, 8:00 – 9:00pm
Contact: (773) 472-6469

**VIDA/SIDA**
Where: 2703 W Division St.
Chicago, IL 60622
773.278.6737 (phone)
http://prcc-chgo.org/vidasida/

**Project VIDA**
2659 South Kedvale Avenue
Chicago, IL 60623
Phone: (773) 277-2291
Fax: (773) 277-3543

**Lurie Children’s Gender & Sex Development Program**
Jennifer Leininger
773-303-6056
Jleininger@Luriechildrens.org

**Broadway Youth Center**
Contact: (773) 935-3151
ImaniR@Howardbrown.org

**TYRA: Transgender Youth Resource and Advocacy Group**
At BYC- Wellington
For T/GE youth under 24
615 W. Wellington
Wednesdays, 5-7p
blue@howardbrown.org

**Illinois Safe Schools Alliance,**
innoissafeschools.org
-Youth Committee
-GSA Network
-Action Camp
-Statewide Advocacy

**Youth Outlook**
-Drop In Centers in Naperville, Aurora, DeKalb and Sterling
-Transcend program specifically for trans youth ages 13-21
-Parent Group youth-outlook.org

**Pinwheels,**
http://www.meetup.com/Pinwheels/
-playgroup for trans and gender expansive youth
-meets monthly in Palatine

**Angles Pride Youth Program**
-Drop In Centers in northern suburbs
Mental Health Resources

**IntraSpectrum Counseling, Ltd.**  
180 N Michigan Ave, Suite 1040  
Chicago, IL 60601  
(847) 363-5088  
[www.intraspectrum-chicago.com](http://www.intraspectrum-chicago.com)

**Live Oak Chicago**  
1300 W Belmont Ave, Suite 400  
Chicago, IL 60657  
(773) 880-1310  
[www.liveoakchicago.com](http://www.liveoakchicago.com)

**Valeo Pride Extensive Outpatient Program**  
Chicago Lakeshore Hospital  
Intake: (800) 888-0560

**Lurie Children’s Gender & Sex Development Program** (Drs. Hidalgo, Chen, Coyne, Leibowitz)

**Other therapists**  
- Deb Brozeweski  
- Jamie Pagano  
- Deb Wilke  
- Barb Getz
Health Resources

Gender and Sex Development Program and Lurie Children’s, 773-303-6056

Howard Brown Health Center, howardbrown.org

Country Care Options, Stroger’s Same Gender Loving Clinic

Open Door Clinic in Aurora/Elgin, opendoorclinic.org

Association of Gay and Lesbian Psychiatrists, aglp.org

WPATCH (World Professional Association for Transgender Health), wpath.org

Philadelphia Trans Health Conference, trans-health.org
Legal Resources

National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR), nclrights.org

Lambda Legal, lambdalegal.org

Human Rights Watch, hrw.org

National Center for Transgender Equality, transequality.org

Transgender Law Center, transgenderlawcenter.org

American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) aclu.org/issues/lgbt-rights/transgender-rights

Local:

The Transformative Justice Law Project of Illinois
Phone: (773) 272-1822
Email: info@tjlp.org
Website: http://tjlp.org

TJLP Name Change Mobilization
Where: 12th floor of the Daley Center Room 1202 50 W. Washington Chicago, IL
When: Last Friday of every month 9:00AM-3:00PM
Contact: namechange@tjlp.org

TransLife Center: TransLegal
Phone: 773.248.5200 Ext. 414

Jill Metz & Associates--Carol Jones (Chicago)
Emma Vosicky, evosicky@kgglle.com (Chicago)
Housing Resources

El Rescate – VIDA/SIDA
2703 W Division St.
Chicago, IL 60622
773.278.6737 (phone)
http://prcc-chgo.org/vidasida

The Crib
835 W. Addison
Chicago, IL 60613
Phone: 773-549-4158
thenightministry.org

TransLife Center at Chicago House
http://www.chicagohouse.org/?post_causes=translife-center

360 Youth Services
Transitional Housing Program for 18-24 year old experiencing homelessness
To refer a potential resident, call 331-215-7388
360youthservices.org

Open Door Shelter (night ministry)
1110 n Noble street
773 506 4100 or 877 286 2523 (toll free)
Ages 14-20 interim housing with max 4 month stay. LGBT youth welcome.
Best times to call are before 9am
Individual and Family Support/Helplines:

• Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gay/ Parents of Transgender Individuals
  – 2 Illinois Chapters of PTI
  – Chicago group: Arlene Collins
  – McHenry group: Toni Weaver
• Trans Lifeline, translifeline.org
  – 877-565-8860
• The Trevor Project, thetrevorproject.org
  – 24/7 Suicide Hotline
  – 866-488-7386
• RAD Database, radremedy.org
• It Gets Better Project, itgetsbetter.org
• Gender Spectrum, genderspectrum.org
• Trans Youth Family Allies (TYFA), imatyfa.org
• Family Acceptance Project, familyproject.sfsu.org
• Inter/Act Youth, http://interactyouth.org/
Chicago Resources
Support/Social Groups

PFLAG – Parents of Transgender Individuals
Where: Center on Halsted, 3656 Halsted, Chicago
When: 2nd Thursday 7p.m. – 9p.m.
Contact: ptichicago1@gmail.com

PFLAG Metro Chicago (LGBT)
Where: Center on Halsted Senior Room Location
3656 N Halsted, Chicago
When: 3rd Sunday, 2 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.
Contact: pflagchicagometro@pflagillinois.org

Meet Up Group-Pinwheels
Where: http://www.meetup.com/Pinwheels/
When: Monthly
Contact: livethethruth@gmail.com

Broadway Youth Center-TYRA
When: Thursdays, 6-8 PM
Contact: Baylie Roth 773-299-7604
BaylieR@howardbrown.org

Youth Outlook
Transcend (ages 14-20)
Where: West Chicago, IL
When: 2nd and 4th Wednesday

Transcend 2 (ages 18-25)
Where: Naperville
When: 3rd Wednesday
Contact: nancy.mullen@youth-outlook.org