

# Affirming LGBTQ Youth in Care

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Kalie J Lounds, LCSW  
She / Her / Hers

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# Hello and Welcome!

- She/Her/Hers
- Cisgender, white, queer woman
- From a rural Midwestern, middle-class family
- Working with LGBTQ youth for about 10 years

This is my lived experience and privilege within society. I will be doing my best to focus on intersectionality and the beauty of all identities encompassed within the gender spectrum.

I welcome feedback and critique on how to improve my practice.

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# Getting to know one another

On your index card:

- Your job and what you do
  - The three most important people in your life
  - The three most important events that have occurred in your life
  - The three things you enjoy doing the most in your free time
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# How Much Did You Learn?

- What did you learn about this person?
  - What kind of person does the person you just met seem?
  - What kind of relationship do you think you could create?
  - How much energy and conscious attention did it take to talk about yourself without mentioning the items on your index card?
  - What was it like to do this exercise?
  - How did it feel?
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# What Terminology Do You Know?

- Why is language important
- Positive & negative terminology



# Terminology

## Sex

- Sex refers to the sex assigned at birth and recorded on legal documentation
  - Sex is based on the appearance of genitalia
    - Male
    - Female
  - Sex is also determined by many characteristics including chromosomes, hormones, **and** internal anatomy, in addition to external appearance
    - Male
    - Female
    - Intersex
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# Terminology

**Gender Identity:** A person's inner sense of being male, female, neither, or somewhere in between

**Gender Expression:** A person's presentation of their gender through cues (hair, clothes, accessories, mannerisms, etc.)

**Transgender:** Umbrella term for individuals whose gender identity differs from their sex assigned at birth (FTM, MTF, Trans)

**Gender Expansive / Gender Queer:** Someone who might not adhere to traditional societal gender norms/expectations

**Cisgender:** Individuals whose gender may be congruent with their sex assigned at birth

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# Terminology

**Sexual Orientation:** who you desire sexually, emotionally, or romantically; who you have an affinity for

- May also refer to whether or not a person engages in sexual relationships and/or sexual practices
- May often hear term interchangeably with sexuality or sexual identity





# Terminology

- Man
  - Woman
  - Trans
  - Transman
  - Transwoman
  - Cis gender
  - Non-binary
  - Gender fluid
  - Androgynous
  - Masculine
  - Masculine of Center
  - Feminine
  - Feminine of Center
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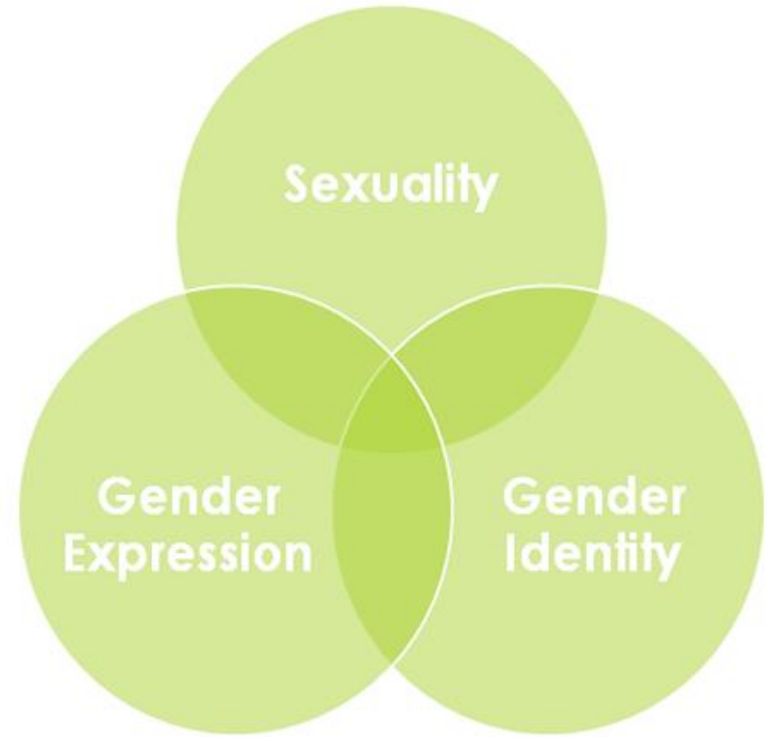
# Pronouns

- He Him His
- She Her Hers
- They Them Theirs
- Ze Hir Hirs
- Xe Xem Xyrs



# Intersectionality of Identity

- Race / Ethnicity
- Age
- Disability status
- Geographic location
- Socioeconomic status
- Education
- Religion



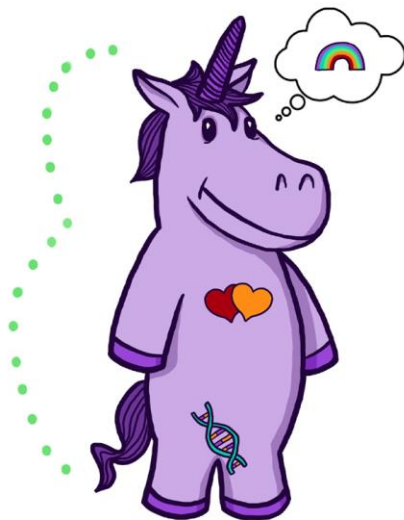
# The Gender Unicorn

- Explore the intersection of your identity
- Fluidity of sexuality and gender
- Each person will be different

Trans Student Educational Resources:  
<http://www.transstudent.org/gender/>

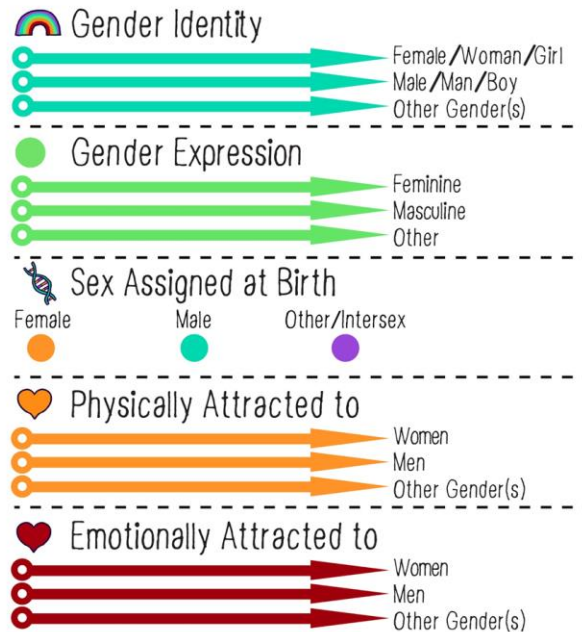
## The Gender Unicorn

Graphic by:  
**TSER**  
Trans Student Educational Resources



To learn more, go to:  
[www.transstudent.org/gender](http://www.transstudent.org/gender)

Design by Landyn Pan and Anna Moore



# Design your Own Gender Unicorn

- Where do you feel comfortable on the spectrums?
  - How do you envision your:
    - Gender identity
    - Gender expression
    - Sex assigned at birth
    - Physical attraction
    - Emotional attraction
  - What are you thinking about in terms of your own coming out process?
  - What do you feel safe enough to share with someone else?
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# Questions You Can Ask

- Name vs. Legal Name
    - What is your name? What name would you like me to use?
  - Pronouns
    - What pronoun do you use? What are your pronouns?
  - Gender Identity
    - What is your gender? What gender do you identify the most with?
  - Sexual Orientation
    - Are you dating anyone? Who are you attracted to? Do you have a significant other?
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# Trauma and LGBTQ Youth

## Prevalence of Trauma

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Violence
- Substance abuse
- Neglect
- Poverty

## Victimization of LGBTQ Identity

- Familial dysfunction / rejection
- Emotional / psychological abuse
- Financial abuse
- Bullying and harassment in school / community
- Dating violence and unhealthy relationships
- Assault or hate crimes

**We cannot equate past trauma or abuse with sexual orientation and gender identity**

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# Barriers to Affirming Care

- Regulations for youth placed in single-sex homes or facilities
  - Restrictive policies
- Access to clothing or programming that is sex or gender specific
- Competency of staff
- Electronic medical records & systems
- Insurance limitations
  - Specialist referrals
- Religious based placements

“In foster care we have clothing allowance and I had to buy female clothes, I couldn’t buy male clothes. I wasn’t allowed to buy the clothes for me. What I wanted to wear.”

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# Things You Can Do

- Create safe and affirming spaces
  - Provide access to clothing or programming that is gender specific and affirming
  - Create authentic LGBTQ representation
  - Engage and empower youth
  - Acknowledge and apologize for using the incorrect gender or pronouns with someone
  - Introduce yourself using your pronouns
  - Put up flyers and other LGBTQ friendly material around your office
  - Stop and address any bullying, harassment, discrimination, and maltreatment
  - Provide information for referral services and supports
  - Support youth who want to change their name or gender markers
  - Allow room for growth, challenges, and consistency
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# Care Considerations for Clients

- Informed consent and confidentiality
  - Establish communication pathways for sharing information
  - Training, supervision, and support to implement and sustain best practices
  - Care coordination with other treatment providers and collaterals
  - Creating access to gender affirming treatment and medically accurate sexual health information
  - Advocating for and with youth in school settings
  - Engaging families and promoting accepting behaviors
  - Empowering youth to identify needed supports and services
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# Resources

- The Fenway Institute
  - The Trevor Project
  - The Family Acceptance Project
  - Human Rights Campaign - All Children, All Families Seal
  - GLSEN - Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network
  - PFLAG - Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays
  - Lambda Legal
  - Local Organizations, Providers, and Clinicians
    - ACFLY - Atlanta Coalition for LGBT Youth
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# Thanks for Coming

I am hope.

I am love.

I am courageous.

I get back up.

This body is strong.

I am who I am.

I know who I am.



[AFFIRMATIONS with The Scene](#)

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# Questions

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