

# LGBTQIA+ Glossary of Terms

**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.

**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.

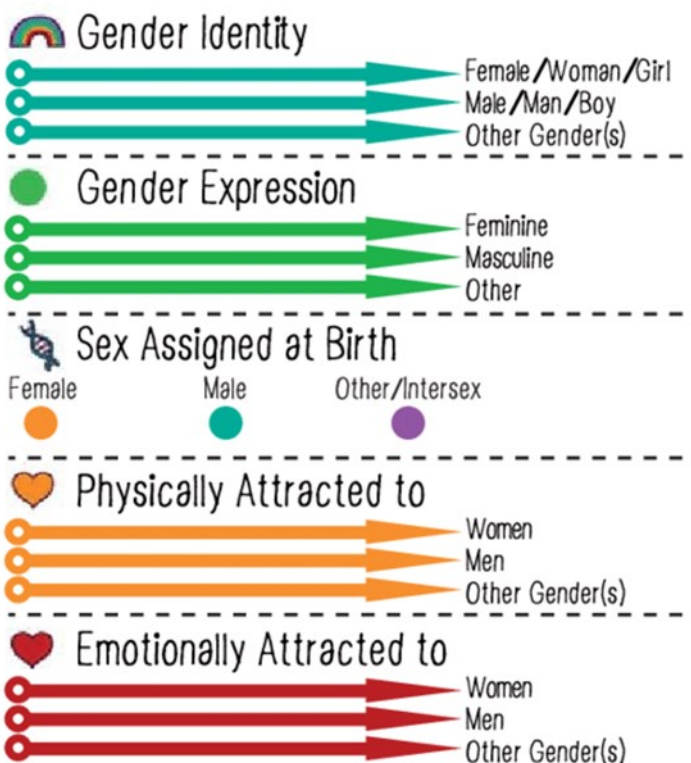
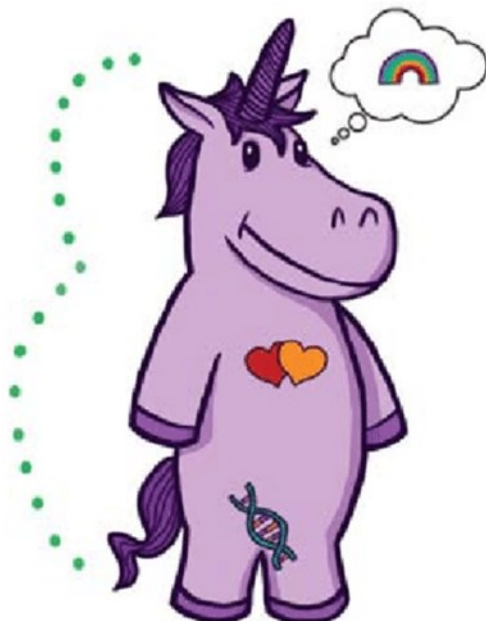
**Sexual orientation :** An inherent or immutable enduring emotional, romantic or sexual attraction to other people. Note: an individual's sexual orientation is independent of their gender identity.

**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. Therefore, transgender people may identify as straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, etc.

**LGBTQ+:** An acronym for "lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer" with a "+" sign to recognize the limitless sexual orientations and gender identities used by members of our community.

## 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

## Sexual Orientation – Related Terms

**Asexual:** Often called “ace” for short, asexual refers to a complete or partial lack of sexual attraction or lack of interest in sexual activity with others. Asexuality exists on a spectrum, and asexual people may experience no, little or conditional sexual attraction.

**Bisexual:** A person emotionally, romantically or sexually attracted to more than one gender, though not necessarily simultaneously, in the same way or to the same degree. Sometimes used interchangeably with pansexual.

**Lesbian:** A woman who is emotionally, romantically or sexually attracted to other women. Women and non-binary people may use this term to describe themselves.

**Pansexual:** Describes someone who has the potential for emotional, romantic or sexual attraction to people of any gender though not necessarily simultaneously, in the same way or to the same degree. Sometimes used interchangeably with bisexual.

## Gender – Related Terms

**Genderqueer:** Genderqueer people typically reject notions of static categories of gender and embrace a fluidity of 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.

**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 dysphoria:** Clinically significant distress caused when a person's assigned birth gender is not the same as the one with which they identify.

**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.

**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 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.

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

**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. Therefore, transgender people may identify as straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, etc..

**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.

