

Being Supportive

The support of friends and family is very important. There is still a lot of misunderstanding and fear about transgender people.

You can show your support to transgender people in the following ways:

- **Let go** of stereotypes about the way gender ought to be performed.
- **Accept** the range of genders and gender expressions people can have.
- **Respect** people's gender identity. If you're not sure which pronouns to use, ask the person privately.
- **Learn** about different genders and gender expressions.
- **Listen** to transgender people if they want to talk about their experiences.
- **Speak out** against transphobic remarks or behaviors. Informing others about the many ways gender can be expressed and the issues transgender people face can ensure a safer environment for everyone.
- **Consider** your own bias and how your language, approach, and outlook influence your views about gender.

Notable Transgender People in the U.S.

- **Marsha P. Johnson**
- **Sylvia Rivera**
- **Laverne Cox**
- **Chelsea Manning**
- **Leslie Feinberg**
- **Christine Jorgensen**
- **Miss Major Griffin-Gracy**
- **We'Wha**
- **Buck Angel**
- **Chaz Bono**
- **Janet Mock**
- **Kate Bornstein**
- **Renée Richards**
- **Carlett A. Brown**

To Learn More

- **Gender Spectrum**
www.genderspectrum.org
- **PFLAG Transgender Network**
www.pflag.org/transgender
- **National Center for Transgender Equality**
www.transequality.org

Local Resources

- **Transgender Center of the Rockies**
www.transgendercenteroftherockies.org
- **One Colorado**
www.one-colorado.org
- **The Center**
www.lgbtqcolorado.org

*We would like to note that sex, gender, and sexual orientation are defined as different entities, although they do inform each other and are not necessarily mutually exclusive
**For more information on non-binary identities, check out our Genderqueer 101 Pamphlet
†The identities and definitions in this pamphlet are subject to change as language develops to better reflect people's identities
††Pamphlet written and compiled by the LGBTQ Student Resource Center staff

Transgender 101



Understanding the Spectrum of Gender

Gender is a Spectrum!

People often think of gender as either man or woman, but gender is a lot more complex! Gender is a spectrum, with several different identities

- **Sex** refers to someone's biology, including hormones, chromosomes, and genitalia*
- **Sex Assigned at Birth** refers to the sex (male, female, or intersex) a person was assigned based on the appearance of one's genitalia when born.
- **Gender Identity** is a person's internal sense of their gender. Gender identity is separate from their sex assigned at birth*
- **Gender Expression** refers to how someone presents themselves to the world around them through appearance and behavior.
Presentation is separate from gender identity
- **Transgender** is an umbrella term to describe people whose sex assigned at birth and the gender they identify with are different. Commonly shortened to trans
- **Cisgender** means someone's sex assigned at birth and the gender they identify with are the same
- **Non-Binary** is an umbrella term used in Western cultures to define people who do not identify as either men or women**
- **Gender Dysphoria** is the social, emotional, anatomical, and sexual discomfort that one feels when relating to their assigned sex. Gender dysphoria is felt by many but not all transgender people
- **Gender Euphoria** is the comfort and/or joy one feels when their gender identity is affirmed. Gender Euphoria can be felt when one transitions, when getting affirming support, or thinking about their gender identity
- **Transsexual** is an outdated medical term that refers to trans people who have undergone a medical transition through surgery. Though it is still used by some transgender people, many people find the term to be offensive, and it should be avoided

In western culture people typically ascribe a person's gender identity based on sex, even though the concepts of sex and gender identity are separate. E.g. when a pregnant person is asked "Is it a boy or a girl?" that person is asking for the baby's sex.

- **DFAB/DMAB & AFAB/AMAB** is an abbreviation for "designated female/male at birth" and "assigned female/male at birth" respectively. These terms are used over other terms like "born female/male" or "female/male bodied"
- **Transphobia** is a range of negative attitudes, feelings or actions toward transgender people, or people who do not conform to society's gender expectations
- **Gender Non-Conforming** means that someone does not follow the traditional gender norms in society through appearance, behavior, expression, etc. It is generally a type of gender expression, rather than a gender identity itself. Commonly shortened to GNC
- **Passing** refers to when it is difficult to identify another person as transgender, based on the preconceived ideas of what a particular gender is supposed to look like, and the roles associated with that gender
- **Stealth**, or "going stealth," is when a transgender person is able to pass as cisgender and chooses to not openly identify as transgender. This comes in many forms, from not disclosing their identity in certain situations, or to certain people, to avoiding any references to their pre-transition life
- **Transitioning** is the process of making changes through a variety of different ways to help affirm one's gender identity. Some transgender people go through an extensive process, and others may not transition at all



Transgender Pride Flag

Coming Out

"Coming out" as transgender means telling other people about one's gender identity. Coming out can, but doesn't always, involve several things:

- **Getting support** through support groups, social media, or counseling can help people gather information and feel more confident in their gender
- **Socially transitioning** by making changes to help one be viewed as their gender in society. This can include changing one's name, pronouns, clothing, and behavior
- **Medically transitioning** by making changes to one's body to make it better fit their gender. This is often accomplished through Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) and/or gender affirmation surgery
- **Legally transitioning** by making changes through the judicial and other governmental systems in order to be legally recognized as their identified gender and/or name

Challenging Misperceptions

There are many misperceptions, and a lot of misinformation being generated, about transgender people. To help clear up some of the confusion, here are a few things to remember when someone comes out as transgender:

- Trans people were not "born in the wrong body." Genders come in all shapes and sizes, regardless of physical appearance.
- Just because someone is trans, they do not have to transition. It's a very personal decision.
- You can't "tell" if someone is trans or not. Just because someone presents in a gender non-conforming way, it doesn't mean they are trans.
- Trans people's presentations and identities vary across cultures and generations. Not all communities have language to describe trans identities, and others recognize multiple genders.
- Trans people have existed in society for millennia. It was trans women who started the Stonewall Riots, which paved way for the LGBTQ rights movement that exists today.