

GENDER AND SEXUALITY INCLUSIVE TERMINOLOGY



A **factsheet** for Indigenous women, girls, Two-Spirit, transgender, and gender-diverse (IWG2STGD+) People to gain knowledge of Indigenous and Western views of gender and sexuality

WHAT IS?



Sexual Orientation

Sexual orientation refers to emotional, romantic, and/or sexual attraction to other people. Sexual orientation can change or stay the same and can describe attraction to someone of a different sex or gender, same sex, or gender or more than one gender.

Gender Identity

Gender identity refers to a person's truly felt and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond to the sex assigned at birth. Gender expression is how a person presents their gender through physical appearance such as hairstyles, clothing, cosmetics, accessories, mannerisms, and attributes.





TERMS:



2SLGBTQQAI+

An acronym for Two Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer, Questioning, Asexual, and Intersex. The + acknowledges all other gender identities and sexualities not captured by the acronym.

Lesbian

Generally used by women with romantic and/or sexual attraction to other women.

Gay

Generally used by men with romantic and/or sexual attraction to other men.

Queer

A term that refers to different kinds of sexual and gender identities beyond heterosexual or cisgender. Queer was historically used as a slur but has been reclaimed by many as a way of self-identifying and/or as a statement against oppression.¹

2S or Two-Spirit

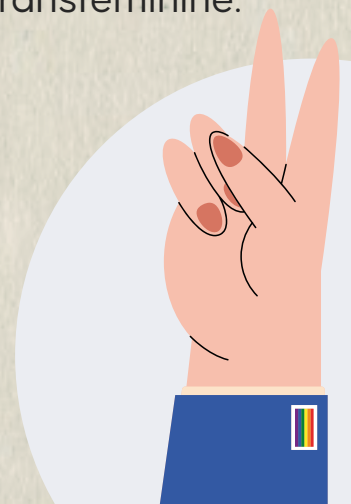
A term that involves sexual, gender, cultural, and spiritual identity from an Indigenous lens. It may be used by some Indigenous Peoples rather than or in addition to identifying as LGBTQQAI+. Two-Spirit should only be used for Indigenous Peoples. Two-Spirit Peoples were sometimes seen as an alternative gender different from woman or man.¹

Transgender

A person whose gender identity does not align with their assigned sex at birth. People who identify as transgender may or may not choose to have gender-affirming surgeries and can identify with any sexual orientation.¹ Some individuals may also identify as transmasculine or transfeminine.²

Bisexual

A person who is attracted to more than one gender.



Questioning

A term to describe sexual orientation as a process of exploration and discovery.¹

Intersex

A person whose biological sex is neither distinctly male or female or is both.¹

+

Includes all gender identities/sexualities not in the 2SLGBTQQAI acronym, *such as*:

Pansexual

Individuals who experience sexual and/or romantic attraction to people of varying gender identities and sexual orientations.

Gender-fluid

Individuals whose gender identity is in flux.



Asexual

A person who experiences no sexual feelings or desires; does not feel sexual attraction to anyone.



Indigiqueer

Indigiqueer acknowledges and celebrates both one's sexual/romantic orientation and their gender identity in connection to their Indigenous Identity.⁴ Indigiqueer is an identity, different from both Two-Spirit and LGBTQQA+ identities. Individuals can identify as Indigiqueer in addition to being Two-Spirit, gay, transgender, pansexual, and more. It's important to recognize that not all Two-Spirit and Indigenous LGBTQQA+ individuals identify as Indigiqueer.⁴

Agender/Non-gendered

Individuals who do not identify as having a gender.

Gender Variance/Gender Nonconformity



A term used to acknowledge that gender identity, gender expression, and sex do not correspond with one another. There are some who cannot or chose not to conform to societal gender norms associated with their assigned sex at birth.¹

Importance of Pronouns



Using pronouns is the first step to creating a safe space and an inclusive environment. By using a person's outlined pronouns, you are respecting and affirming their identity. Pronouns can consist of she/her, he/him, they/them, or ze/zir (to name a few). Pronouns can be any combination. Some people use she/they, they/she, she/her/they/them, she/he/they.³

Using someone's pronouns shows respect to the person they are and how they identify. This can support an individual's self-esteem and sense of self. If you do not know a person's pronouns, ask. If you misgender someone by accident (by using the wrong pronouns), correct yourself and apologize. Mistakes happen, but it is essential that we respect everyone's right to identify.³



Do's

Do use inclusive or gender-neutral language, such as parents, caregivers, friend, child, partner.

Do expect diversity of stories and experiences. We all have different ways of seeing the world and are on different journeys.



Don'ts

Do not assume a person's gender or sexual identity. If you do not know their pronouns, ask respectfully. Example: "What pronouns do you use?"

Do not assume a person is in a heterosexual relationship (woman and man). Example: "What do you and your partner like to do?"



Do's



Do use an open mind and non-judgmental tone when interacting. This ensures that people feel safe speaking to you.

Do acknowledge if you have made a mistake using pronouns or other identity markers. Do apologize and move forward by trying to not do it again.



Don'ts

Do not express disapproval, dismissal, or discouragement when interacting with a person who is sharing parts of their identity with you.

Do not just ignore your mistake, but address it and correct yourself. This ensures that you are taking accountability and that you respect the person's identity.

If you want to learn more about gender and sexuality:

- Reach out to 2SLGBTQQAI+ support groups, peer workers, or community organizations. They can be reached by phone and email, or you can walk in and see what is available.
- Learn about the history of Indigenous views and experiences of gender and sexuality by accessing books, resources, or toolkits from libraries, websites, Knowledge Keepers, or Elders.
- There are many Western courses and programs that focus on Western gender and sexuality studies at many colleges and universities.

Resources:



- Trans Lifeline: peer support phone service run by trans people for trans people. Phone: (877) 330-6366. Website: <https://translifeline.org>
- Crisis Services Canada: connect to a crisis responder to receive help. Phone: 1 (833) 456-4566 Website: <https://talksuicide.ca>



Resources:

- LGBT National Health Centre: For U.S. and Canadian residents to chat, share, and get support. Phone: 888-843-4564 (Monday to Friday, 4 pm to midnight Eastern Time, and Saturday, noon to 5 pm Eastern Time). Website: <https://www.lgbthotline.org/national-hotline>
- 2-Spirited People of the 1st Nations: provides prevention, education, and support for Two-Spirit People including First Nations People, Métis, and Inuit. Phone: (416) 944-9300. Website: <https://2spirits.org>



References:

1. Sex and Gender Inclusive Terminology (NWAC)
2. 2SLGBTQI Terms and Definitions (Egale)
3. An (incomplete) list of gender pronouns (LGBTQ Nation)
4. What is Two Spirit, Indigiqueer, & LGBTQPAI+? (Indigenous Pride LA)

