



# Understanding Gender & Identity



*thrive*



Los Alamos  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS



# Why?

- Encountering this topic more often
- Vulnerability to bullying and risk behaviors
- LAPS Policies prohibit discrimination
- New Mexico's Safe Schools for All Students Act



# Protective Factors



Accepting  
Family



Safe, Inclusive  
School



Role Models &  
Caring Adults



Post-Secondary  
Plan



# Experiences in School

More than 80% of LGBTQ students in New Mexico have heard homophobic remarks in school from other students

17% regularly heard homophobic remarks and 23% negative remarks about someone's gender expression from staff

More than 50% have been harassed or assaulted

Nearly half of transgender students were unable to use the bathroom associated with their gender and 39% were prevented from using their name or pronouns in school





# What?



## Research Takeaways

- The development of sexual and gender identity is a process
- Children may self-identify at a young age..... or not
- Youth today have access to many examples and sources of information - they recognize gender as more of a spectrum than a binary
- Historical and social contexts affect the above

RANGE OF  
GENDER

IDENTITIES



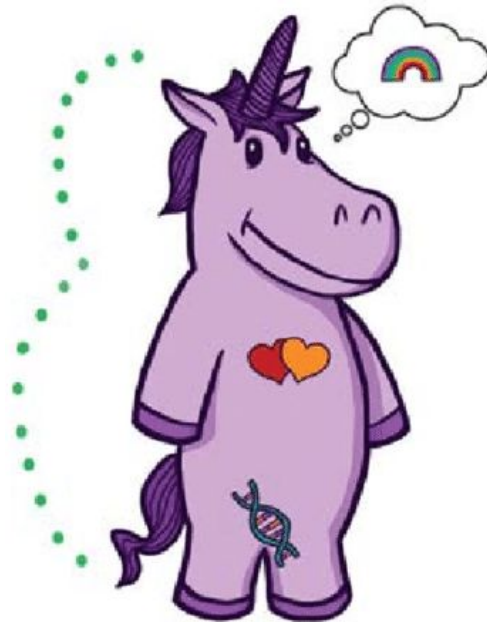
MALE?  
FEMALE?  
BOTH?

NEITHER?

**amaze**

# 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



# Common Terms

- **Gender Identity** - Female, Male, Non-binary, Agender, Cisgender, Transgender, Androgynous, Gender Queer, Gender Fluid, Gender Creative or Expansive, Gender Non-conforming (not all inclusive!)
- **Sexual Orientation** - Asexual, Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian, Pansexual, Queer, Straight, and many more
- **Process not an End Point** - Questioning, Coming Out, Transitioning
- **Being an Ally** - active - listen, learn, take cues, speak up, act



# A Word About Pronouns

Introduce yourself with your pronouns -  
add to signatures and name tags, wear a button

Gives people an opportunity to self-identify and  
prevents assumptions, mis-gendering someone

Most often - he/him, she/her, they/them -  
combinations are becoming more common

Yes, the singular they is ok! It just takes practice.

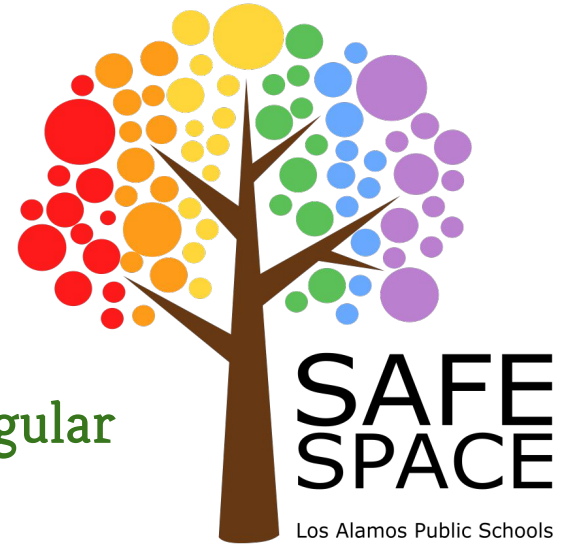
If you make a mistake, simply apologize,  
correct yourself and move on!





# How?

- Know the policies
- Use the correct name and pronouns, use singular they for person of unknown gender
- Reach out for support - Safe Space Resource People
- Connect with parents/caregivers to schedule an MLSS Meeting
- Diversify curriculum - windows and mirrors - use gender neutral language, avoid grouping by gender





# Resources

**GLSEN**

[www.glsen.org](http://www.glsen.org)

**Welcoming Schools**

[www.welcomingschools.org](http://www.welcomingschools.org)

**Learning for Justice**

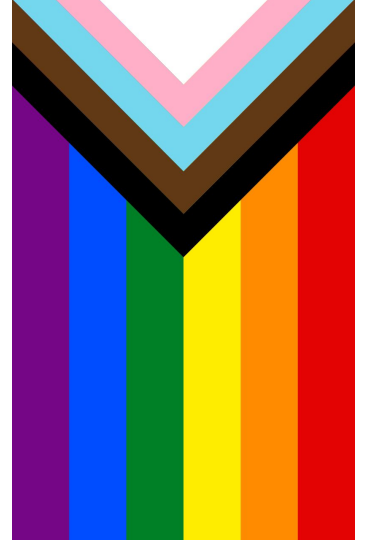
[www.learningforjustice.org](http://www.learningforjustice.org)

**Gender Spectrum**

[www.genderspectrum.org](http://www.genderspectrum.org)

**The Trevor Project**

[www.thetrevorproject.org](http://www.thetrevorproject.org)





# Questions, Concerns, Feedback?



Kristine Coblentz, LAPS Healthy Schools,  
k.coblentz@laschools.net, 505-663-2263