

LGBTQ+ 101: Understanding and Supporting all of those letters within your school community

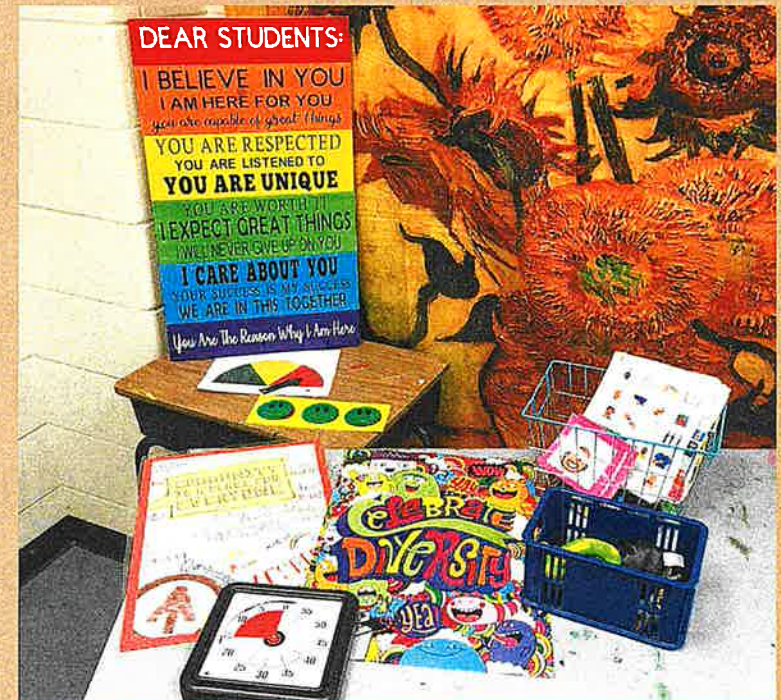
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March 18, 2022
Penobscot River Educational Partnership



The plan for our time together:

- I. **Who** (Let's sort through all of those darn letters)
- II. **Why** (The case and legal obligation for supporting LGBTQ+ students and staff)
- III. **How** (Tangible steps to take at every level)
- IV. **Uh, oh** (Troubleshooting commonly asked questions)



theartofeducation.edu

Who:

Terms to consider when sifting through the alphabet soup of gender and sexuality:

- Sex
- Gender
- Gender Identity
- Gender Expression
- Transgender/Cisgender
- Gender Fluid
- Nonbinary

LGBTQ is an acronym

meant to encompass a whole bunch of diverse **sexualities** and **genders**. Folks often refer to the Q (standing for "queer"*) as an **umbrella term**, under which live a whole bunch of identities. This is helpful because **lesbian, gay,** and **bisexual** aren't the only marginalized sexualities, and **transgender*** isn't the only gender identity. In fact, there are many more of both!



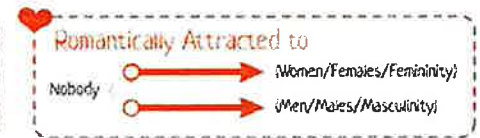
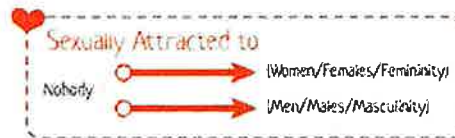
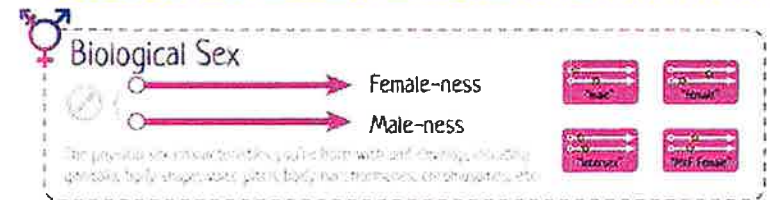
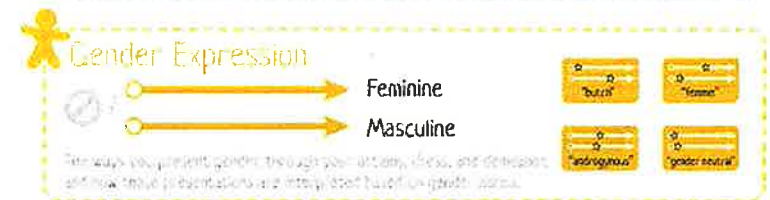
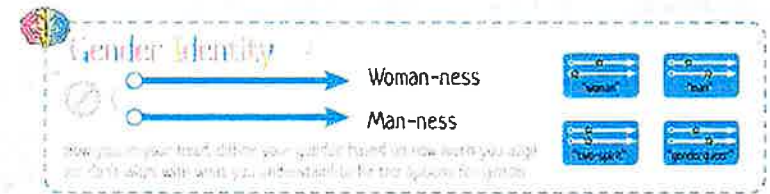
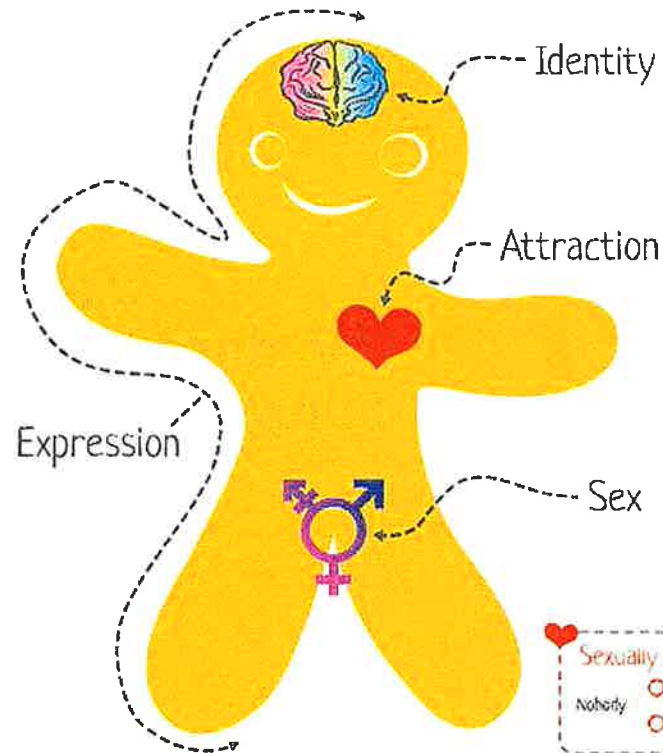
* The "Q" sometimes stands for "questioning" and "transgender" is often thought of as an umbrella term itself (sometimes abbreviated "trans"; or "trans*" in writing). Lots of asterisks, lots of exceptions, because hey - we're talking about **lots** of different folks with different lived experiences to be inclusive of.

Who:

The Genderbread Person v3.3

it's pronounced **METRO**sexual

Gender is one of those things everyone thinks they understand, but most people don't. Like *Inception*, Gender isn't binary, it's not either/or. In many cases it's both/and. A bit of this, a dash of that. This tasty little guide is meant to be an appetizer for gender understanding. It's okay if you're hungry for more. In fact, that's the idea.



For a bigger bite, read more at <http://bit.ly/genderbread>

Who: Thinking about gender-neutral and transgender language

→ **Transgender is an adjective.**

Use: *transgender people; a transgender person; transgender issues*

→ **Transgender is not a sexual orientation.**

Correct terms in a trans context: *gender; gender identity and expression*

Incorrect terms in a trans context: *sexual identity; sexuality*

Avoid: *Are you straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender (pick one)?*

→ **Transition is the correct word for the social and/or medical process of publicly living into one's true gender or lack of gender.**

Use: *Chris transitioned at age 32; the transition process*

Avoid: *Chris is transgenering; Chris had a sex change; Chris had "the surgery"; Chris became a woman; Chris changed genders*

(Adapted from <https://radicalcopyeditor.com/2017/08/31/transgender-style-guide/>)



Why:

- #1 reason: Q+ youth are vulnerable
 - Gender, sex, and sexual orientation are protected classes
 - There is no one-size-fits-all age or stage that sexuality and gender are realized...and identities change over the lifespan
 - Children are socialized into cultures before they are born, so providing developmentally appropriate educational and emotional supports are evidence-based. AKA: It's about promoting safety, respect, and celebration of diverse lives, not promoting or describing sexual behavior.
 - Education can look like many things
 - Allyship and a community of kindness speaks volumes—and translate to positive outcomes
 - Media and representation matter
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How:

- Know the law and your district policies (which are largely shaped by state and federal law)
 - Names and pronouns
 - Bathrooms and changing accommodations
 - Athletic and co/extra-curricular programming
 - Assess your practice (in curriculum, approaches, pedagogy)
 - Ask the important questions...to the correct people in the best possible way.
 - Identities may be politicized, but the humans behind them are not.
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How: Pronouns specifically

- Avoid pronouns assumptions
- Create an avenue for changes
- Communicate with safety in mind
- Neutralize language in classrooms both with sexuality (“significant other”/“partner”) and gender (first names or they/them if unsure)
- Set the tone!
- Clarify procedures and resources in your building



**When greeting others,
be mindful of language.**

Consider

“Thanks, **friends**.
Have a great
night.”

“Good morning,
folks!”

“Hi, **everyone!**”

“And for **you?**”

“Can I get
you **all**
something?”

Why?

Shifting to gender-inclusive language respects and acknowledges the gender identities of all people and removes assumption.

Based on Toni Latour's "Hello there" cards.

Learn more at qmunity.ca

Those 'oh no' moments...

- Investigation (Understand what's happening)
 - Stop the harm
 - Prevent recurrence
 - Remedy (Through BOTH supportive, direct measures AND systemic, policy and/or procedural adjustment)
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Those 'oh no' moments...

The major takeaway here: No one educator can be the keeper of all knowledge/language/best practice/resources, particularly when working with an ever-evolving demographic. Lean into collaboration, multiple sources of knowledge, and external resources when things get complex.

Locally:



Immediate resources:

Trans Lifeline: translifeline.org ; 877-565-8860 (Q+ Specific)

Trevor Project Lifeline: thetrevorproject.org ; 866-488-7386 (Q+ Specific)

Maine Crisis Line: 888-586-1112

NAMI Teen TEXT line: 207-515-8398

National Youth Crisis Hotline: 800-448-4663

Diversity is a fact.
Equity is a choice.
Inclusion is an
action.
Belonging is an
outcome.

(Arthur Chan)

Let's keep these conversations going 😊

Reach out anytime:

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