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**Mid-Atlantic**





# Transgender Education Primer

**ONYX Mid-Atlantic**

**May 8, 2021**



# AGENDA

-  **1** | Objectives
-  **2** | The Basics - Terminology
-  **3** | Transphobia
-  **4** | Understanding the Challenges
-  **5** | Supporting the Trans Community
-  **6** | Where Do We Go From Here

# MATERIALS

The information contained in this presentation was developed by ONYX Mid-Atlantic after review by a wide range of publically available resources, articles and trans community websites.

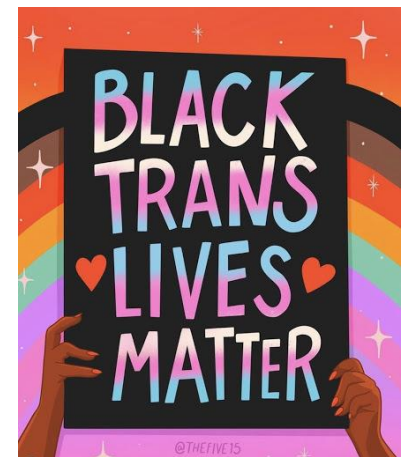
More importantly, we value the many hours of collaboration, reviews and direct input from our siblings across the trans community on driving and improving the content shared in this document.

Have suggestions for improvements, updates and corrections?

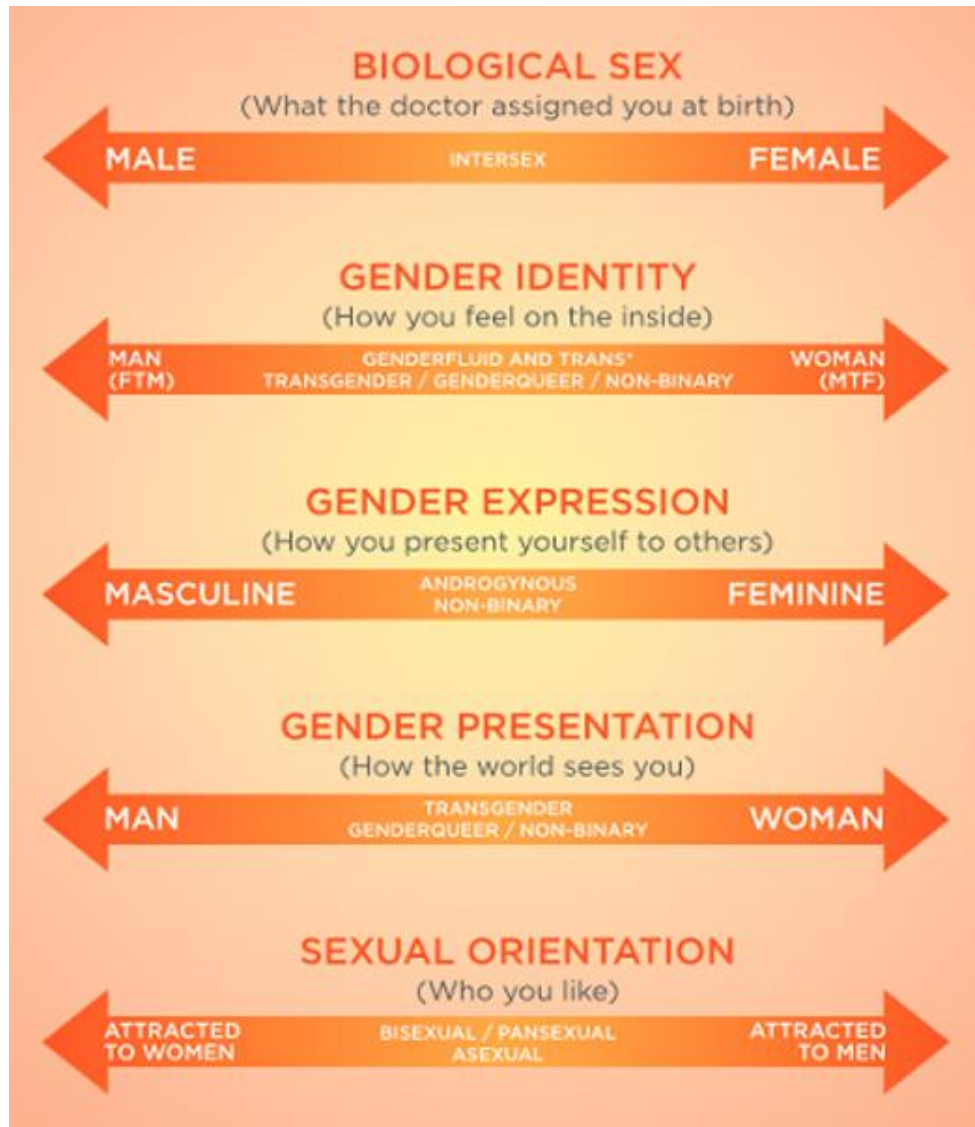
Contact [education@onyxma.com](mailto:education@onyxma.com)

# OBJECTIVES

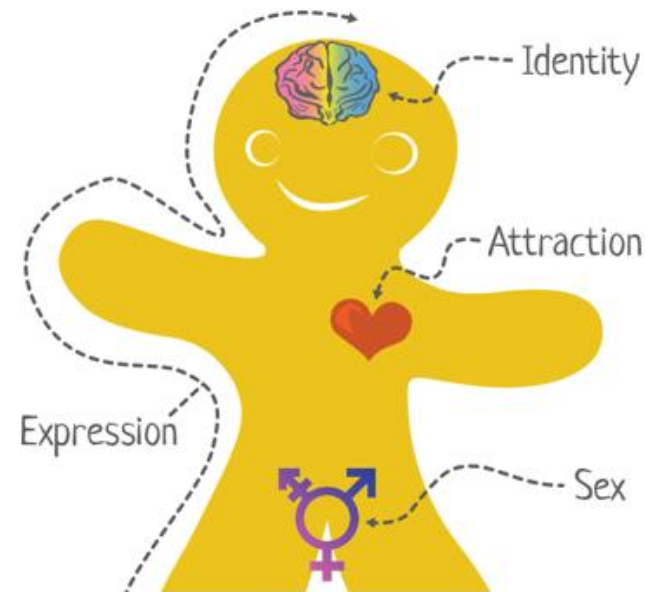
1. To provide education, awareness and understanding of the terminology, challenges and support needs of our transgender siblings and friends.
2. To collectively address the inequities faced in the transgender community by fostering diversity, inclusion and equality.
3. To create equity, equal opportunity, safety, health, and economic well-being for the transgender community.



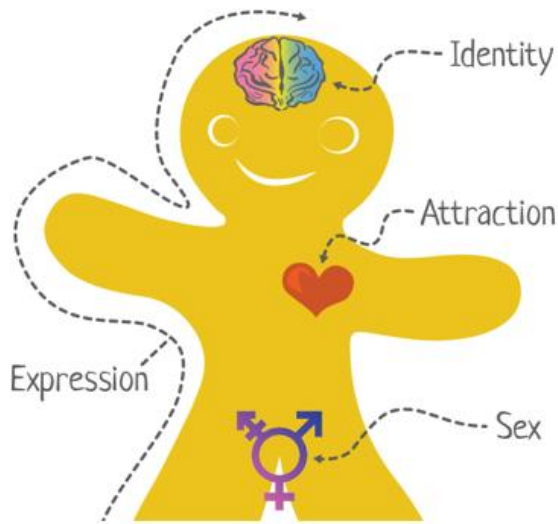
# THE BASICS – TERMINOLOGY



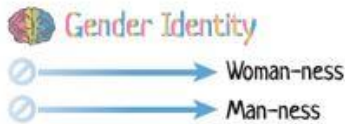
These two models are outdated due largely to their focus on binary representations and are considered inaccurate and non-inclusive.



# THE BASICS – TERMINOLOGY



⊖ means a lack of what's on the right side



Identity ≠ Expression ≠ Sex  
Gender ≠ Sexual Orientation

Sex Assigned At Birth  
 Female  Intersex  Male



**While still imperfect, this is a slightly improved model. In thinking about these terms and their meanings challenge yourself and remember:**

1. Think about how YOU change how you think and define yourself over time.
2. Don't think in binary terms (male / female, masculine / feminine, etc.).
3. Think spectrums. More of one does not have to mean less of another.
4. How we ALL feel, see ourselves, define ourselves and how others perceive us changes over time for a wide variety of reasons and situations.

# THE BASICS - TERMINOLOGY

## Transgender

1. **Origin in the Latin-derived prefix trans-, meaning “across from” or “on the other side of”.**
2. **Individuals whose sense of personal identity and gender does not correspond with their assigned birth sex.**
3. **An umbrella term that also includes people who are not exclusively masculine or feminine, e.g. people who are non-binary or genderqueer.**

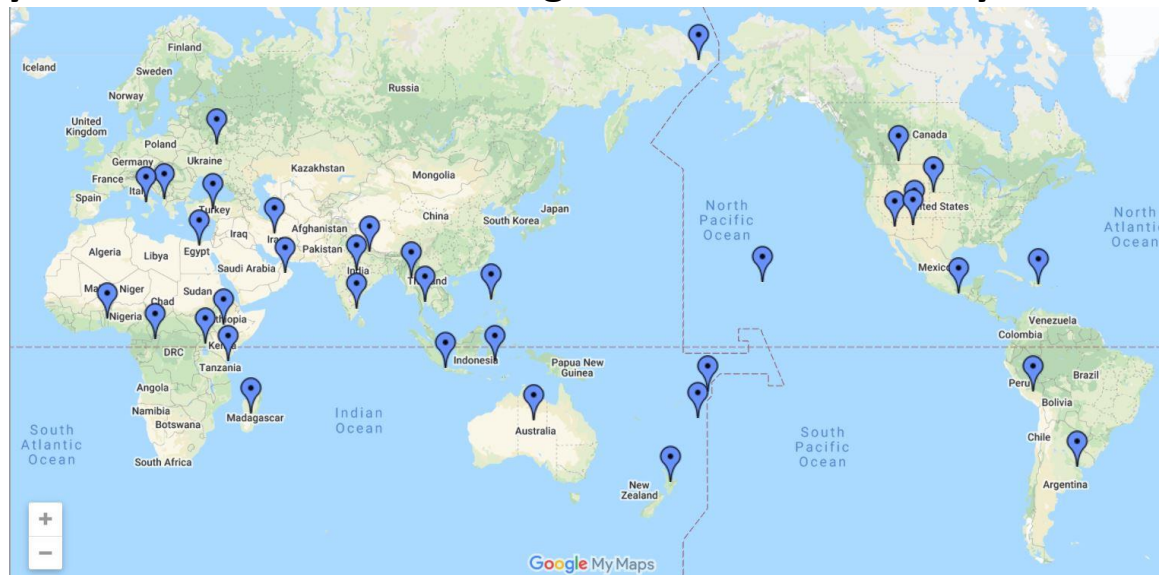
## Cisgender

1. **Origin in the Latin-derived prefix cis-, meaning “on this side of”.**
2. **Label for "individuals who have a match between the gender they were assigned at birth, their bodies, and their personal identity".**
3. **Cisgender is often used to replace the derogatory and inaccurate use of the label “normal”.**

# THE BASICS - TERMINOLOGY

## Non-Binary

1. A spectrum of gender identities that are not exclusively masculine or feminine, i.e. identities that are outside the gender binary.
2. Other terms include genderqueer, agender, bigender, and more. None of these terms mean exactly the same thing – but all speak to an experience of gender that is not simply male or female.
3. Non-binary identities fall under the transgender umbrella, since many non-binary people identify with a gender different from their assigned sex.
4. Non-binary identities have been recognized for millennia by cultures and societies.





# THE BASICS - TERMINOLOGY

## Intersex

1. **Individuals born with any of several variations in sex characteristics, including chromosomes, gonads, sex hormones or genitals that "do not fit the typical definitions for male or female bodies".**
2. **These atypical sex characteristics may be obvious from birth or may go unnoticed to an individual all of their life.**

## Gender Fluid

1. **An individual having different gender identities at different times.**
2. **All gender fluid persons are not trans (and vice versa).**

## Mx

1. **Honorific title that does not indicate gender.**

# THE BASICS – TRANSITIONS

Transitioning is the process of changing the way you look and how people see and treat you so that you become the gender you feel on the inside.

1. **There are two general types of “transitions”:**
  - a. **Social Transitioning**
  - b. **Medical (Physical) Transitioning**
2. **Transitioning is often a long and on-going process.**
3. **Always respect a persons gender identity no matter how they decide to transition socially or medically.**
4. **Not all transgender people transition. For those who do, not all transition in the same way.**

# THE BASICS – TRANSITIONS

**Social Transitioning may include but it not limited to:**

- 1. Coming out to your friends and family.**
- 2. Asking people to use correct pronouns.**
- 3. Going by a different name.**
- 4. Dressing/grooming in ways that match your gender identity.**

**Medical Transitioning may include but it not limited to:**

- 1. Hormone therapies.**
- 2. Multiple types of surgeries.**
- 3. Hair removal, etc.**

# THE BASICS – GENDER DYSPHORIA

**Gender dysphoria is the distress and anxiety a person feels due to a mismatch between their gender identity and their sex assigned at birth.**

- 1. The experience of dysphoria can vary significantly from one person to another.**
- 2. No two trans people are exactly alike in their needs, identities, or the way they experience dysphoria, or even if they do at all.**
- 3. A common way to support someone struggling with dysphoria is to acknowledge their feelings while finding ways of telling them what you love most about them.**
- 4. No one wants to hear that they're "being silly" or how they "should feel." Their feelings are theirs and are valid.**

# TRANSPHOBIA

Transphobia is the fear, hatred, disbelief, or mistrust of people who are transgender, thought to be transgender, or whose gender expression doesn't conform to traditional gender roles.

1. Transphobia involves both subtle and overt forms of discrimination.
2. It can prevent transgender and gender non-conforming people from living full lives free from harm.
3. If someone shares their trans identity with you, remember that this is very personal information and it's an honor that they trusted you enough to tell you. Always ask them what you're allowed to share with others and respect their wishes.



# TRANSPHOBIA – A FEW EXAMPLES

## Transphobia – Harmful Effects

1. Anxiety
2. Depression
3. Fear
4. Isolation
5. Hopelessness
6. PTSD
7. Financial
8. Suicide



## Transphobia Takes Many Forms

1. Negative attitudes and beliefs.
2. Aversion to and prejudice against transgender people.
3. Irrational fear and misunderstanding.
4. Disbelief or discounting preferred pronouns or gender identity.
5. Derogatory language and name-calling.
6. Bullying and other emotional abuse.
7. Physical abuse and violence.
8. Discrimination in employment, housing, health care access / coverage and provider bias, public services, etc.
9. Outing.

# **TRANSPHOBIA – WHAT CAN YOU DO?**

## **Steps You Can Take to Combat Transphobia**

- 1. Use proper terminology and appropriately call-out those who don't.**
- 2. Don't use slurs against transgender people.**
- 3. Don't ask personal questions about a person's genitals, surgery, or sex life.**
- 4. Avoid giving trans people compliments that are actually insults. Some examples include: "You look like a real man" or "I never would have guessed you were transgender!"**
- 5. Don't believe stereotypes about trans people or make assumptions.**
- 6. Avoid sharing your input on serious issues unless specifically asked.**
- 7. Educate YOURSELF on transgender issues. It starts with you!**
- 8. Respect someone's decisions about when and where to come out.**
- 9. If you don't know a person's preferred pronouns or name – ask!**
- 10. Use gender neutral language, such as "they" and "them" or "folks" and "people" instead of "he / she" or "men / women."**
- 11. Respect trans people's chosen pronouns and names and use them.**
- 12. Remember that being transgender is just one part of a person's life.**
- 13. Speak up when people act transphobic.**
- 14. Let the transgender people in your life know that you're a friend and ally.**

**Be a vocal and consistent supporter of the transgender community, regardless of your own gender identity.**

# UNDERSTANDING THE CHALLENGES

- 1. Support.**
- 2. Human rights.**
- 3. Legal Protections and the overall justice system.**
- 4. Physical, mental and social-emotional health.**
- 5. Discrimination (employment, economic, housing, education, public services, public accommodations, healthcare, policing, etc.).**
- 6. Violence and basic survival.**
- 7. Transphobia.**



# SUPPORTING THE TRANS COMMUNITY – DO'S & DON'TS

1. Never Out Anybody
2. Know Your Terms
3. Ask About Preferred Pronouns
4. Realize That It Can Be Painful
5. Keep Curiosity About The Process To Yourself
6. Never Make Assumptions
7. Listen
8. Know What Is Offensive
9. Don't Say "Gender Doesn't Matter"
10. Get Political

## Remember To Fight With Sensitivity

**“It can be very tempting to ride in, cis-gender, on your white horse, to Solve Trans Discrimination, but that can deny their capacity to fight for themselves. You're with them, but you ain't in charge.”**

*JR Thorpe, April 2015*

# **SUPPORTING THE TRANS COMMUNITY**

## **A Beginner's Guide to Being an Ally**

- 1. Listen to trans people.**
  - **Don't center on yourself**
  - **Treat it as a continuous conversation**
  - **Trans people are not a monolith**
- 2. State your own pronouns. Normalize this practice.**
- 3. Messed up? Learn from it. Apologize & move forward.**
- 4. Use gender inclusive language.**
- 5. Recognize being transgender is not about looks.**
- 6. Accept that just because you don't understand an identity doesn't make it not real.**
- 7. Show up – Use your privilege to uplift trans voices and raise awareness.**

# SUPPORTING THE TRANS COMMUNITY

## Shift from Ally to Accomplice

1. An ally engages in activism by standing with an individual or group in a marginalized community.
2. An accomplice focuses more on dismantling the structures that oppress that individual or group... and such work will be directed by the stakeholders in the marginalized group.
3. An ally will listen, and accomplice will act.
4. To Promote True Advocacy, Don't be an Ally: Be an Accomplice: Disruption isn't easy or polite.

Accomplices have passed the initial phase of allyship and done the requisite work of learning and understanding their roles in upholding unjust structures. Accomplices flip the dynamic and use what they've learned and whatever access they have to help course correct systemic bias. Accomplices are active, engaged and intentional.

# **SUPPORTING THE TRANS COMMUNITY**

## **Cisgender People Should Know...**

- 1. Gender and sexuality are not the same.**
- 2. All trans people don't know each other.**
- 3. Trans people don't think as a monolith.**
- 4. There is no universal trans experience.**
- 5. Respect peoples pronouns.**
- 6. Use gender neutral language.**
- 7. Don't assume a "binary".**
- 8. Trans woman are woman.**
- 9. Trans men are men.**
- 10. Non-binary people are nothing new.**
- 11. Call out transphobic language.**
- 12. Speak up when you see transphobia.**
- 13. Don't speak over a trans person.**
- 14. Transphobia is never funny or in jest.**
- 15. Never ask about genitalia or body parts.**
- 16. Don't argue something isn't transphobic.**
- 17. Don't fetishize trans folk.**
- 18. Talk with trans folk about everyday life.**
- 19. Try to understand & acknowledge triggers.**
- 19. Ensure trans people are included in your platform (and paid).**
- 20. Help trans people when asked.**
- 21. Trans POC are often targets of emotional & physical violence.**
- 22. Give trans people platforms to share work that aren't all about being trans.**
- 23. Do your own research before asking.**
- 24. Transphobia is still a huge issue in the queer community.**
- 25. Drag queens are not always trans.**
- 26. Don't ask what gender dysphoria feels like. You can't understand it.**
- 27. Be aware of systems that work against trans folk (policing, housing, health care, economics, law, etc.).**
- 28. Trans only groups are not your spaces.**
- 29. Fight for transgender rights.**
- 30. Be active about your allyship.**

# THE BASICS – AVOID THIS LANGUAGE

**Gender Identity Disorder (or GID)** – The preferred term is gender dysphoria. “Disorder” is a false categorization and is offensive.

**Hermaphrodite** – The preferred term is intersex.

**Normal** – In the past people sometimes compared transgender people to “normal” people. There is nothing abnormal about being transgender.

**Pre / Post Op** – Focusing on whether someone had surgery invasive and a violation of privacy.

**Sex Change Operation** – Preferred terms are Sex Reassignment Surgery (SRS) or gender affirming surgery.

**Shemale** – An offensive term for a transgender woman.

**Tranny** – This is an offensive and derogatory slur.

**Transgendered** – Adding “-ed” to the end of transgender isn’t grammatically correct. You would not call someone is gayed, womaned or african americaned.

# WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE

## Start With These 5 Steps

### #1 — KNOW THE — TERMINOLOGY



### #2 — RECOGNIZE THE — HUMANITY



**DON'T** ask personal information about a transgender person's body or medical care.

**DON'T** 'out' trans people as trans without their permission.

**DO** model the language a person uses for themselves.

### #3 — KNOW THE — ISSUES



Transgender people face **discrimination** obtaining **accurate** identification documents such as driver's licenses, and passports.



**1 in 5** trans people report being refused medical care that they need.



**78%** of trans people experience harassment in K-12 settings.



**31** states lack explicit legal protections for trans people.

### #4 LEAD WITH RESPECT

### #5 EDUCATE YOURSELF

# CONTACT US!



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