

LGBTQ+ and Disability

Words matter: Creating an inclusive environment for LGBTQ+ identified VR clients





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- Queer, Genderqueer, Non-Binary
- Senior Research Associate at the Center for Rehabilitation Counseling Research and Education (CRCRE) at the George Washington University
- Works on three RSA-funded projects to support state vocational rehabilitation agencies (CIT-VR, Project E3 & WINTAC).
- Doctoral Student Human and Organizational Learning
- Areas of interest/expertise include intersection of disability and poverty, work incentives counseling and financial empowerment, partnership development and braiding and leveraging resources and supporting LGBTQ+ populations





Learning Objectives

- Increased knowledge on the application of CRC/ACA ethics for working with LGBTQ+ Youth
- Increased knowledge and ability to utilize common language around LGBTQ+ identity
- How to support LGBTQ+ people, including Transgender and Gender Expansive persons, in their pursuit of work.
- Strategies for Creating a Welcoming Environment
- A desire to examine your own agency's policies and procedures toward ensuring safe and inclusive services.



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Importance of Language

- Language contributes to identity and helps LGBTQ+ people create and find community
- Nuance and differences in beliefs
 - ❖ LGBTQ People are not a monolith
 - ❖ If you have met one trans person, you've met one trans person
- Constantly Changing Landscape
- People (especially youth) will know quickly if you are a safe person.
- Person first language vs. Disabled
- Utilizing language clients use talking about multiple identities
- What is informing your language?



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LGBTQ+ or LGBTQIA: Acronyms and Definitions

- **Lesbian** - A woman who is emotionally, romantically or sexually attracted to other women.
 - **Gay** - A person who is emotionally, romantically or sexually attracted to members of the same gender.
 - **Bisexual** - A person emotionally, romantically or sexually attracted to more than one sex, gender or gender identity though not necessarily simultaneously, in the same way or to the same degree.
 - **Transgender** - Umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or expression is different from cultural expectations based on the sex they were assigned at birth. Being transgender does not imply any specific sexual orientation. Therefore, transgender people may identify as straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, etc.
 - **Queer** - Umbrella term for sexual and gender minorities who are not heterosexual and cisgender.
 - **Intersex** - Umbrella term used to describe a wide range of natural bodily variations. In some cases, these traits are visible at birth, and in others, they are not apparent until puberty. Some chromosomal variations of this type may not be physically apparent at all.
 - **Asexual** - The lack of a sexual attraction or desire for other people.
- 

Gender Identity

- **Gender**

- ❖ Identity
- ❖ Expression

- **Sex Assigned at Birth**

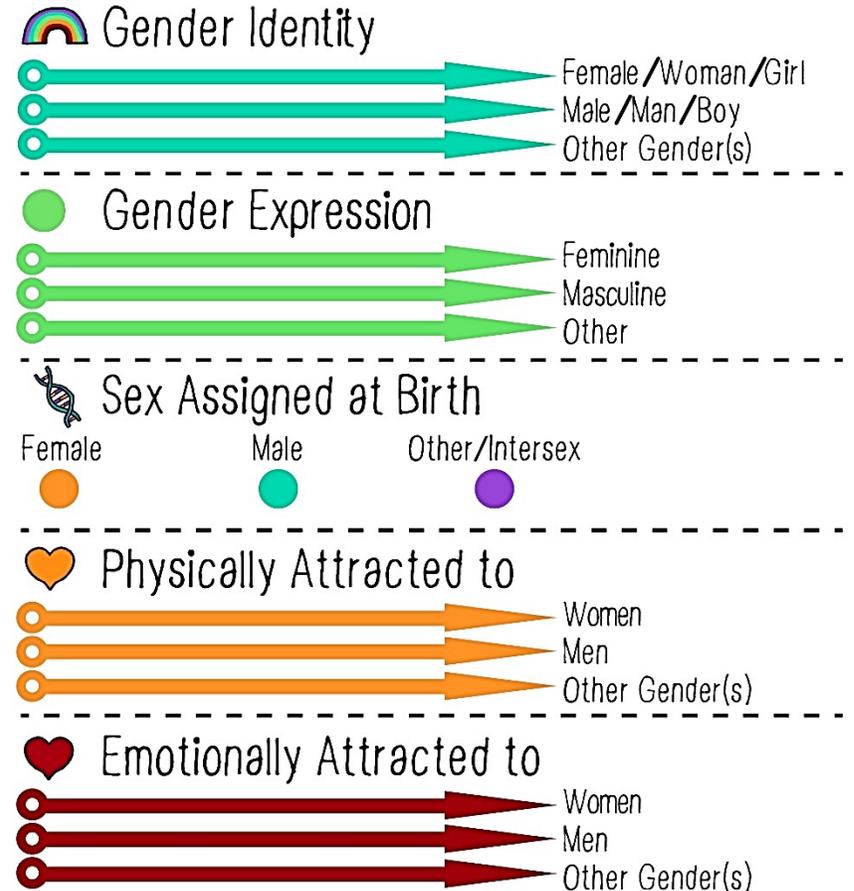
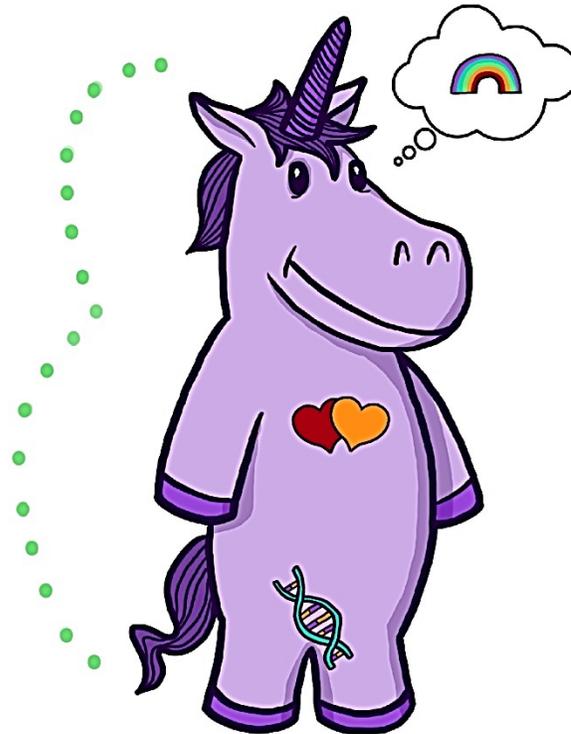
- ❖ AMAB
- ❖ AFAB
- ❖ Intersex/Other

- **Sexual/Affectual Attraction (Orientation)**

- ❖ Physical
- ❖ Emotional

The Gender Unicorn

Graphic by:
TSER
Trans Student Educational Resources



To learn more, go to:
www.transstudent.org/gender

Orientation vs. Identity

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Sexual/Affectual Orientation

- An inherent or immutable enduring emotional, romantic or sexual attraction to other people.
 - ❖ Gay
 - ❖ Lesbian
 - ❖ Homosexual
 - ❖ Bisexual
 - ❖ Pansexual

Gender Identity

- One's innermost concept of self as male, female, a blend of both or neither – how individuals perceive themselves and what they call themselves. One's gender identity can be the same or different from their sex assigned at birth.
 - ❖ Transgender
 - ❖ Non-Binary
 - ❖ Genderqueer
 - ❖ Gender-Fluid
 - ❖ Gender Expansive
 - ❖ Gender Non-Conforming

American Psychological Association: Defining Transgender Terms

- **Cisgender:** Used to describe an individual whose gender identity and gender expression align with the sex assigned at birth.
- **Gender binary:** The classification of gender into two discrete categories of male and female.
- **Gender dysphoria:** Discomfort or distress related to an incongruence between an individual's gender identity and the gender assigned at birth.
- **Gender expression:** Clothing, physical appearance and other external presentations and behaviors that express aspects of gender identity or role.
- **Gender identity:** An internal sense of being male, female or something else, which may or may not correspond to an individual's sex assigned at birth or sex characteristics.

➤ [American Psychological Association – A Glossary: Defining Transgender Terms](#)

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American Psychological Association: Defining Transgender Terms (continued)

- **Gender nonconforming:** Describes an individual whose gender identity or gender expression differs from the gender norms associated with the sex they were assigned at birth.
- **Genderqueer:** Describes an individual whose gender identity doesn't align with a binary understanding of gender, including those who think of themselves as both male and female, neither, moving between genders, a third gender or outside of gender altogether.
- **Non-Binary** - a person who does not identify exclusively as a man or a woman. Non-binary people may identify as being both a man and a woman, somewhere in between, or as falling completely outside these categories. While many also identify as transgender, not all non-binary people do.
- **Trans-affirmative:** Being aware of, respectful and supportive of the needs of transgender and gender-nonconforming individuals.
- **Transgender:** An umbrella term encompassing those whose gender identities or gender roles differ from those typically associated with the sex they were assigned at birth.

Words Matter: Defining Terms (continued)

- **Trans Man:** Someone who is transgender and identifies as a man.
 - **Trans Woman:** Someone who is transgender and identifies as a woman.
 - **Someone who is Trans and Non-Binary:** Someone who is transgender and identifies as non-binary.
 - **Pansexual:** Describes someone who has the potential for emotional, romantic or sexual attraction to people of any gender though not necessarily simultaneously, in the same way or to the same degree.
 - **Someone who is “Out”:** Someone who is living openly in terms of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity, where and when it feels appropriate to them.
 - **Outing:** Exposing someone’s LGBTQ+ identity without their permission; can have serious repercussions on employment, economic stability, personal safety or religious or family situations.
- [Human Rights Campaign – Glossary of Terms](#)

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Pronouns 101



Type	Name	Example
Feminine	She, her, her	She went to the store. I spoke to her. It was her apple.
Masculine	He, him, his	He went to the store. I spoke to him. It was his apple.
Gender Neutral	They, them, their	They went to the store. I spoke to them. It was their apple.
Gender Neutral	Ze, hir, hirs	Ze went to the store. I spoke to hir. It was hirs apple.



Please note that these are not the only pronouns. There are an infinite number of pronouns as new ones emerge in our language.

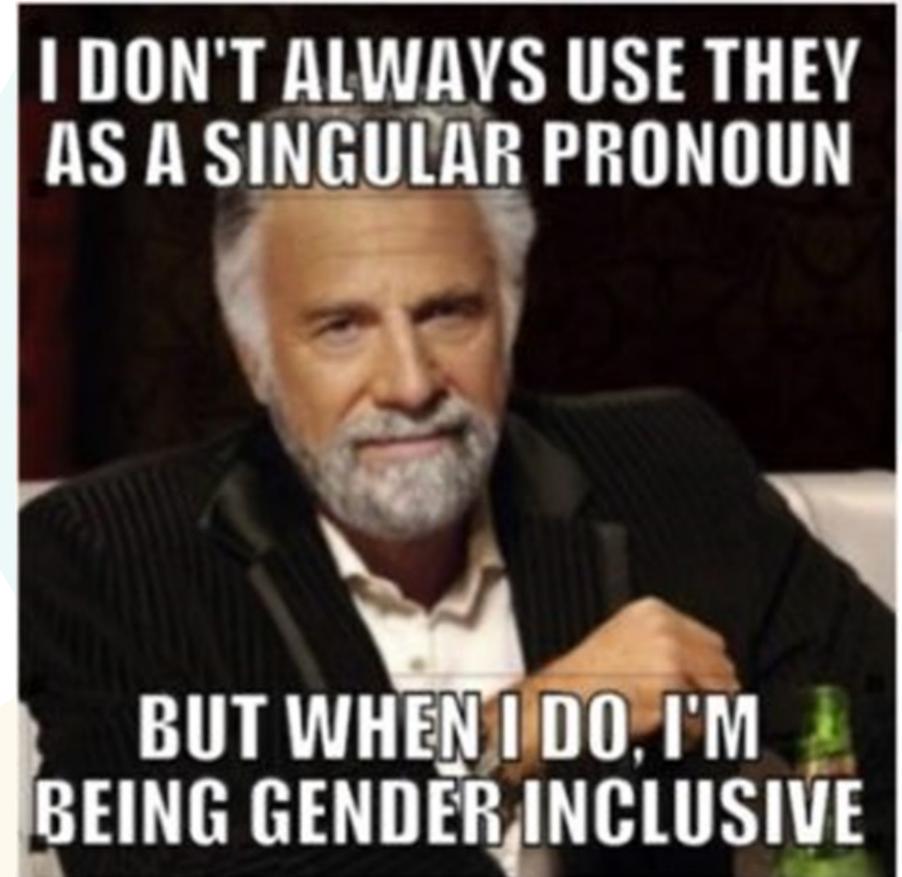
PRONOUNS

I'm seeing Jeremy this weekend. They're going to take me skateboarding. Then I'm going to go with them to the movies.



Pronouns

- Organizations that have recognized the singular use of “they”:
 - ❖ Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary (2019 Word of the Year)
 - ❖ Associated Press Stylebook
 - ❖ Chicago Manual of Style
 - ❖ American Psychological Association Manual



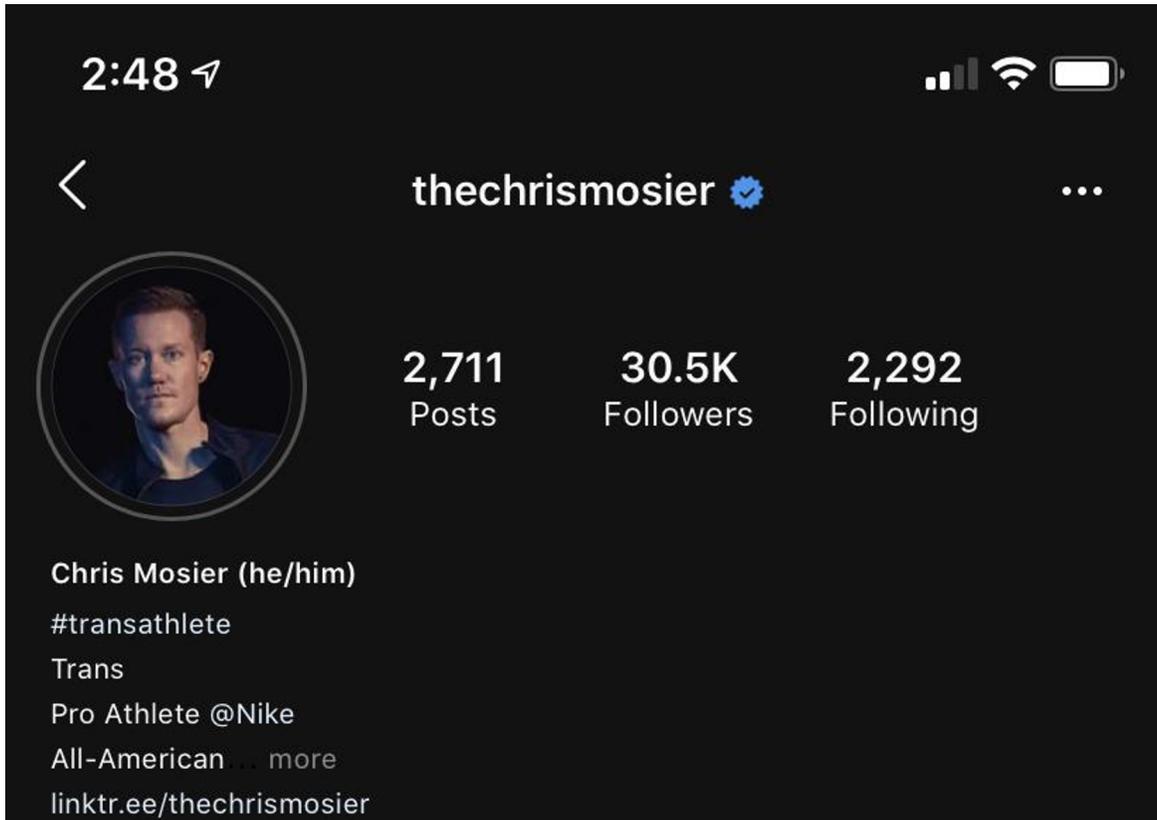


Transition 101

The American Psychological Association defines transition as:

The process of shifting toward a gender role different from that assigned at birth, which can include social transition, such as new names, pronouns and clothing, and medical transition, such as hormone therapy or surgery.

Chris Mosier (he/him)



@thechrismosier

<https://www.thechrismosier.com/>

#transathlete

Transgender

Pro-Athlete @Nike

All-American Athlete, 2X National
Champion and 6X Team USA

Athlete and Professional Speaker -
Instagram post 07/20/20

Instagram Post 1-2: @thechrismosier



WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO
TRANSITION?

TRANSITION REFERS TO THE
PROCESS A TRANSGENDER
INDIVIDUAL TAKES TO LIVE
CONSISTENTLY WITH THEIR GENDER
IDENTITY.

**THERE ARE THREE MAIN CATEGORIES
OF TRANSITION:**



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- **SOCIAL**
- **MEDICAL**
- **LEGAL**



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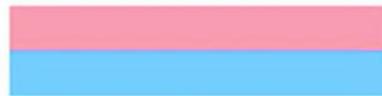


Instagram Post 3-4: @thechrismosier



**MANY PEOPLE CONSIDER
TRANSITION TO BE A LIFE-LONG
PROCESS, PARTICULARLY IF
TAKING HORMONES.**

**WHEN PEOPLE SAY "I TRANSITIONED
X YEARS AGO," THEY ARE TYPICALLY
REFERRING TO WHEN THEY STARTED
THEIR PROCESS.**



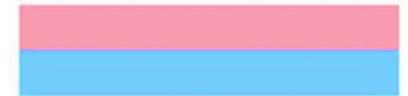
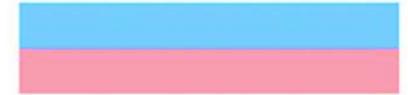
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**THERE'S NO ONE "RIGHT WAY" TO
TRANSITION.**

**TRANSITION IS AN EXTREMELY
PERSONAL PROCESS AND CAN BE
DIFFERENT FOR EACH PERSON.**

**THE GOALS OF ONE'S TRANSITION
ARE UP TO THAT
INDIVIDUAL.**



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Instagram Post 5-6: @thechrismosier



THERE IS NO BLUEPRINT FOR TRANSITION.

PEOPLE MAY TAKE ANY STEP IN ANY ORDER OR DO NONE OF THESE AT ALL AND STILL BE TRANSGENDER.



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SOCIAL TRANSITION CAN INCLUDE CHANGING:

- NAME AND/OR PRONOUNS
- HAIR STYLE, CLOTHING, OR OTHER PHYSICAL EXPRESSION
- MANNERISMS OR SPEECH PATTERNS
- RESTROOMS ONE USES
- AND MORE



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MEDICAL TRANSITION CAN INCLUDE:

- USE OF HORMONE BLOCKERS
- HORMONE THERAPY
- GENDER-AFFIRMING SURGERY
- ELECTROLYSIS OR LASER HAIR REMOVAL
- OTHER GENDER-AFFIRMING PROCEDURES



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LEGAL TRANSITION CAN INCLUDE CHANGING:

- DRIVER'S LICENSE
- SOCIAL SECURITY CARD
- BIRTH CERTIFICATE
- BANK ACCOUNT & CREDIT CARDS
- JOB-RELATED DOCUMENTS
- ACADEMIC RECORDS
- MEDICAL RECORDS
- PASSPORT
- OTHER DOCS



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**NOT EVERY TRANS PERSON WANTS
TO MEDICALLY TRANSITION.**

**DOING SO OR NOT DOING SO DOES
NOT MAKE ONE MORE OR LESS
TRANS.**



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**THERE IS NO "RIGHT WAY"
TO TRANSITION.**

**THERE'S ONLY
A RIGHT WAY FOR YOU.**



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LGBTQ+ Disclosure in the Workplace

Supreme Court Rulings:

- June 15, 2020 (Civil Rights Act Includes Workplace Discrimination of LGBTQ+ Employees)
- July 8, 2020 (Ministerial Exception)



Photograph: AP | Kevin Wolf, 2020

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Creating A Welcoming Space

- Consider your application and intake process.
 - ❖ Ask about preferred name/name you go by
 - ❖ Include your own pronouns when introducing yourself
 - ❖ Ask about pronouns
- Understand and use language of LGBTQ+ community
- Research memes and cultural references
- Accessibility!

When somebody calls you by your birthname



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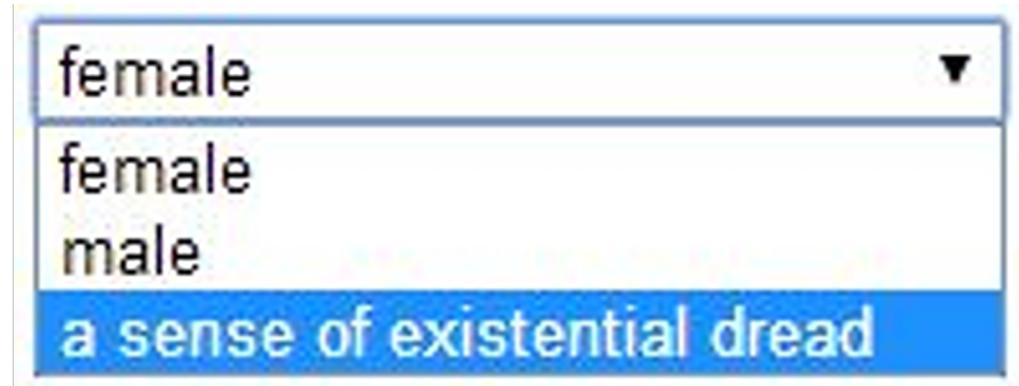
Advocacy

- Model correct gender pronouns and name
- Correcting people as needed
- Provide resources
- Get involved
- Assist in educating others
- Create open and affirming office spaces (flyers, stickers, intake forms, all gender restrooms, training, etc.)
- Make it safe for people to tell you their stories w/o judgment if relevant



Supporting Gender Expansive & Transgender Persons

- Familiarize yourself with legalities of transition
 - ❖ Adult? Minor? Guardian?
 - ❖ Government ID
 - Name and Gender
 - ❖ Birth Certificate
 - Is surgery needed in your state to amend?
 - ❖ Name change
 - Cost and fee waivers
 - ❖ Gender Marker Change
 - Access to a professional
- State and Federal anti-discrimination laws and policies (seen above)
- Review how other agencies and organizations successfully support LGBTQ and Gender Expansive folks and mirror those supports
- Scenario for Consideration: Applying for Jobs with Legal Name when you have socially and/or medically transitioned.



A screenshot of a dropdown menu. The menu is open, showing four options: "female", "female", "male", and "a sense of existential dread". The "a sense of existential dread" option is highlighted in blue. The menu has a blue border and a small black triangle in the top right corner.

Examining Agency Policy and Practices

Considerations:

- Language
- Intake Forms/Case Management System
 - ❖ Legal Name
 - ❖ Preferred Name
 - ❖ Pronouns
- Bathrooms



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Locating and Connecting to Resources

- Not expected to be experts, but familiar with resources and connections to those who are
- Locating resources for clients we have
- Locating resources for clients we don't yet have
- Familiarizing ourselves with legitimate sources and organizations
- Keep learning
- Community involvement

Examples of reputable LGBTQ+ organizations that offer resource lists:

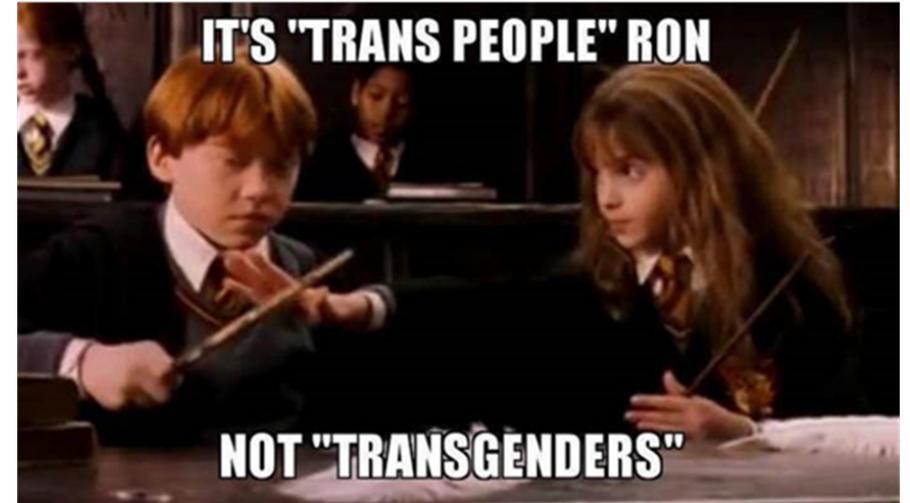
- ➔ GLAAD - LGBTQ Resource List: <https://www.glaad.org/resourcelist>
- ➔ The Trevor Project - Resources: <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/resources/>
- ➔ Human Rights Campaign - Resources: <https://www.hrc.org/resources>
- ➔ PFLAG: <https://pflag.org/>

What organizations are in your area?



Final Concepts/Reminders

- Sex is biological, chromosomal, and a construct
- Various sexual/affectational orientations
- Gender Identity is often understood before sexual orientation
- Gender Identity encompasses an inner sense of being
- Transsexual is an outdated term
- DO: A transgender person, a trans man, a trans woman, a non-binary person, a genderqueer individual etc.
- DON'T: transgendered, a trans, "I would have never known you were trans/disabled," etc.
- Disability encompasses invisible and visible
- Disabled folx exist on the sexual/affectational, gender spectrums





Resources

- ➔ Human Rights Campaign - Glossary of Terms: <https://www.hrc.org/resources/glossary-of-terms>
 - ➔ Merriam-Webster - Definition of Queer: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/queer>
 - ➔ NPR Wisconsin Public Radio - How The Pandemic Is Making The Gender Pay Gap Worse: <https://www.npr.org/sections/money/2020/08/18/903221371/how-the-pandemic-is-making-the-gender-pay-gap-worse>
 - ➔ Business Insider - 7 charts that show the glaring gap between men's and women's salaries in the US: <https://www.businessinsider.com/gender-wage-pay-gap-charts-2017-3>
 - ➔ The New York Times - Civil Rights Law Protects Gay and Transgender Workers, Supreme Court Rules: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/15/us/gay-transgender-workers-supreme-court.html>
- 

Resources (continued)

- ➔ Job Accommodation Network - Disability Disclosure: <https://askjan.org/topics/Disability-Disclosure.cfm>
- ➔ Center for Story-Based Strategy - #the4thbox: <https://www.storybasedstrategy.org/the4thbox>
- ➔ The New York Times - Civil Rights Law Protects Gay and Transgender Workers, Supreme Court Rules: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/15/us/gay-transgender-workers-supreme-court.html>
- ➔ NBC News - Supreme Court's religious employer ruling could weaken LGBTQ protections: <https://www.nbcnews.com/feature/nbc-out/supreme-court-s-religious-employer-ruling-could-weaken--lgbtq-protections-n1233461>
- ➔ NBC News - Supreme Court's religious employer ruling could weaken LGBTQ protections: <https://www.nbcnews.com/feature/nbc-out/supreme-court-s-religious-employer-ruling-could-weaken--lgbtq-protections-n1233461>
- ➔ NAH Nzinga Harrison, MD <https://www.nzingaharrisonmd.com/suicide-attempts-three-times-more-common-in-bisexual-individuals/>
- ➔ MAP movement advancement project – LGBT People With Disabilities <https://www.lgbtmap.org/file/LGBT-People-With-Disabilities.pdf>

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References

- ➔ The New York Times - Civil Rights Law Protects Gay and Transgender Workers, Supreme Court Rules:
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/15/us/gay-transgender-workers-supreme-court.html>
- ➔ NBC News - Supreme Court's religious employer ruling could weaken LGBTQ protections:
<https://www.nbcnews.com/feature/nbc-out/supreme-court-s-religious-employer-ruling-could-weaken--lgbtq-protections-n1233461>

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Thank You

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