



GENDER-DIVERSE Provider 101

GENDER-DIVERSE

Gender-diverse is an umbrella term used to describe people who are not cisgender. *Some people prefer genderqueer or other terms.*

Cisgender (Cis): A person may be cis if their gender identity matches the sex they were assigned at birth.

TRANSGENDER

A person may be trans if their gender identity doesn't match the sex they were assigned at birth.

*Note: the word transsexual should **not** be used.*

NONBINARY

A person may be nonbinary if they don't identify fully as male or female. They may identify as both male and female, as a mixture of male and female, or as another gender (neither male nor female).

GENDERFLUID

A person may be genderfluid if their gender identity changes from day to day or from moment to moment. Some genderfluid people identify as trans. Others do not.

AGENDER

A person may be agender if their gender is absent or neutral. Some agender people identify as trans. Others do not.

TWO-SPIRIT

Two Spirit refers to someone who is Native and expresses their gender identity or spiritual identity in indigenous, non-Western ways.

This term can only be applied to a person who is Native. A Two Spirit person has specific traditional roles and responsibilities within their tribe.

Not all Native LGBTQ people identify as Two Spirit.

Important Notes on Usage:

- None of these terms have an -ed on the end.
- These terms are adjectives, not nouns. You could say, "a Two Spirit person" or "a person who identifies as Two Spirit." You would not say, "a Two Spirit." The same applies to all terms.
- The words "transsexual," "tranny," and "transvestite" are offensive and should not be used.
- All of these terms are relatively new and quickly evolving. It's best if you ask someone what the term they use means to them.
- These terms don't provide any information about sexual orientation or attraction.
- This sheet is not meant to guide pronoun use. If you don't know someone's preferred pronouns, ask, "Do you use pronouns? If so, what pronouns do you use?"
- While some run parallel to traditional Indigenous concepts, none of the concepts listed here are traditional terms from specific tribal cultures.



SEXUAL ORIENTATION Provider 101

A person's sexual orientation refers to the way one describes their emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction. The language we have to describe sexual orientation is still informed by cisnormative ideas.

These terms are self-definitions. People who identify with these terms may have different and equally valid ways of defining these terms.

GAY

A word used to describe people whose emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction is to people of the same gender.

Avoid identifying gay people as "homosexuals," an outdated term considered derogatory and offensive to many lesbian and gay people.

LESBIAN

A word used to describe women who are emotionally, romantically, or sexually attracted to other women. Some lesbians may identify as gay.

PANSEXUAL

A word used to describe people who form emotional, romantic, or sexual attractions to people of any gender identity.

BISEXUAL

A word used to describe people whose emotional, romantic, or sexual attractions might be to people of the same gender or of another gender.

AROMANTIC

A word used to describe people who do not experience romantic attraction.

ASEXUAL

A word used to describe people who do not experience sexual attraction.

QUEER

A word used to describe people whose sexual orientation isn't straight. This may include people who also identify as gay, bisexual, lesbian, pansexual, or another identity.

STRAIGHT

A word used to describe people whose emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction is to people of the opposite (man/woman) gender.

TWO-SPIRIT

For some people, Two Spirit can describe a sexual orientation that exists beyond the confines of Western definitions. The term Two Spirit may denote meanings that relate to gender identity or sexual orientation.

NOTES: A person's gender identity and sexual orientation are two different aspects of their identity. It's important not to make any assumptions about a person's sexual orientation based on their gender identity and vice versa.

