LGBTQ+ Definitions

**LGBTQQIA+** - any combination of letters attempting to represent all the identities in the queer community, this example (although not exhaustive) represents Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Ally

**Ally** - a straight person who supports queer people

**Androgyne** - (1) a gender expression that has elements of both masculinity and femininity; (2) occasionally used in place of “intersex” to describe a person with both female and male anatomy

**Asexual** - a person who generally does not experience sexual attraction (or very little) to any group of people

**Binary Gender** - a traditional and outdated view of gender, limiting possibilities to “man” and “woman”

**Binary Sex** - a traditional and outdated view of sex, limiting possibilities to “female” or “male”

**Biological sex** - the physical anatomy and gendered hormones one is born with, generally described as male, female, or intersex, and often confused with gender

**Bisexual** - a person who experiences sexual, romantic, physical, and/or spiritual attraction to people of their own gender as well as another gender; *often confused for and used in place of “pansexual”*

**Cisgender/cis-woman/cis-man** - a description for a person whose gender identity, gender expression, and biological sex all align (e.g., man, masculine, and male)

**Coming Out** - the process of revealing your sexuality or gender identity to individuals in your life; often incorrectly thought to be a one-time event, this is a lifelong and sometimes daily process; *not to be confused with “outing”*

**Cross-Dressing** - wearing clothing that conflicts with the traditional gender expression of your sex and gender identity (e.g., a man wearing a dress) for any one of many reasons, including relaxation, fun, and sexual gratification; also **Cross-Dresser or Transvestite**, *often confused with transsexual*

**Drag Queen** - a person who consciously performs “femininity,” usually in a show or theatre setting, presenting an exaggerated form of feminine expression, often times done by a man; *often confused with “transsexual” or “transvestite” (Drag King is the parallel version of a female performing as a male)*

**Dyke** - a derogatory slang term used for lesbian women; reclaimed by many lesbian women as a symbol of pride and used as an in-group term

**Faggot** - a derogatory slang term used for gay men; reclaimed by many gay men as a symbol of pride and used as an in-group term

**Fluid(ity)** - generally with another term attached, like gender-fluid or fluid-sexuality, fluid(ity) describes an identity that is a fluctuating mix of the options available (e.g., man and woman, gay and straight); *not to be confused with “transitioning”*

**FTM / MTF** - a person who has undergone medical treatments to change their biological sex (Female To Male, or Male To Female), often times to align it with their gender identity; *often confused with “trans-man”/“trans-woman”*

**Gay** - a term used to describe a man who is attracted to men, but often used and embraced by women to describe their same-sex relationships as well

**Gender Expression** - the external display of gender, through a combination of dress, demeanor, social behavior, and other factors, generally measured on a scale of masculinity and femininity

**Gender Identity** - the internal perception of an individual’s gender, and how they label themselves

**Genderqueer** - (1) a blanket term used to describe people whose gender falls outside of the gender binary; (2) a person who identifies as both a man and a woman, or as neither a man nor a woman; *often used in exchange with “transgender”*
**Hermaphrodite** - an outdated medical term used to describe someone who is intersex; not used today as it is considered to be medically stigmatizing, and also misleading as it means a person who is 100% male and female, a biological impossibility for humans

**Heterosexism** - behavior that grants preferential treatment to heterosexual people, reinforces the idea that heterosexuality is somehow better or more “right” than queerness, or ignores/doesn’t address queerness as existing

**Homophobia** - fear, anger, intolerance, resentment, or discomfort with queer people, often focused inwardly as one begins to question their own sexuality

**Homosexual** - a medical definition for a person who is attracted to someone with the same gender (or, literally, biological sex) they have, this is considered an offensive/stigmatizing term by many members of the LGBTQ community; often used incorrectly in place of “lesbian” or “gay”

**Intersex** - a person with a set of sexual anatomy that doesn’t fit within the labels of female or male

**Outing [someone]** - when someone reveals another person’s sexuality or gender identity to an individual or group, often without the person’s consent or approval; not to be confused with “coming out”

**Pansexual** - a person who experiences sexual, romantic, physical, and/or spiritual attraction for members of all gender identities/expressions

**Queer** - (1) historically, this was a derogatory slang term used to identify LGBTQ+ people; (2) a term that has been embraced and reclaimed by the LGBTQ+ community as a symbol of pride, representing all individuals who fall out of the gender and sexuality “norms” and is used as an in-group term

**Questioning** - the process of exploring one’s own sexual orientation, investigating influences that may come from their family, religious upbringing, and internal motivations

**Same Gender Loving (SGL)** - a phrase coined by the African American/Black queer communities used as an alternative for “gay” and “lesbian” by people who may see those as terms of the White queer community

**Sexual Orientation** - the type of sexual, romantic, physical, and/or spiritual attraction one feels for others, often labeled based on the gender relationship between the person and the people they are attracted to; often mistakenly referred to as “sexual preference”

**Sexual Preference** - the types of sexual intercourse, stimulation, and gratification one likes to receive and participate in, often confused with sexual orientation

**Transgender or Trans** - a blanket term used to describe all people who are not cisgender; occasionally “transgendered” is used, which is offensive to many in the transgender community

**Transitioning** - a term used to describe the process of moving from one sex/gender to another, sometimes this is done by hormone or surgical treatments

**Transsexual** - a person whose gender identity is the binary opposite of their biological sex, who may undergo medical treatments to change their biological sex, often times to align it with their gender identity, or they may live their lives as the opposite sex; often confused with “trans-man”/“trans-woman”

**Transvestite** - a person who dresses as the binary opposite gender expression (“cross-dresses”) for any one of many reasons, including relaxation, fun, and sexual gratification; often called a “cross-dresser,” and often confused with “transsexual”

**Trans-man** - a person who was assigned a female sex at birth, but identifies as a man; often confused with “transsexual man” or “FTM”

**Trans-woman** - a person who was assigned a male sex at birth, but identifies as a woman; often confused with “transsexual woman” or “MTF”

**Two-Spirit** - a term traditionally used by Native American people to recognize individuals who possess qualities or fulfill roles of both genders