

LGBTQIA+ Vocabulary

Becoming familiar with terms used by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, and all sexual and gender minorities (LGBTQIA+) is a form of support and allyship. A few things to keep in mind: (1) Definitions vary across communities; not every person will agree with all of these definitions, so defer to individuals to describe themselves; (2) Some labels have an overlap in definitions; different individuals may prefer different labels for different reason. (3) There are identity labels not included on this list; we tried to keep the list as relevant as possible; (4) Terms and definitions change frequently; we will try to update this list to keep up with changing language. Thank you!

Agender – A person who experiences little to no connection to traditional concepts of gender, no personal alignment with the idea of being either a man or woman, and/or someone who sees themselves as existing without gender. May also be referred to as gender neutrois or genderless.

Alloromantic - Someone who typically experiences romantic attraction; someone who is not aromantic or on the aromantic spectrum.

Allosexual – Someone who typically experiences sexual attraction; someone who is not asexual or on the asexual spectrum.

Androgyne – A person whose gender identity is experienced as being simultaneously feminine and masculine, although not necessarily in equal amounts. Someone who is androgynous.

Androgynous/Androgyny – A gender expression with elements of both femininity and masculinity.

Aromantic – Describes a person who does not experience romantic attraction to others and/or lacks interest in forming romantic relationships. Sometimes abbreviated to “aro” (pronounced like “arrow”).

Aromantic Spectrum – Refers to aromanticism as existing on a continuum from people who experience no romantic attraction, to those who experience low or infrequent levels of romantic attraction, and to those who experience romantic attraction only under specific conditions. Identities such as demiromantic and gray-romantic are on the aromantic spectrum. May be shortened to aro spectrum or arospec.

Asexual – Describes a person who does not experience sexual attraction to others and/or has a lack of interest in sexual relationships/behavior. Some asexual people still engage in romantic relationships, but others do not. Sometimes abbreviated to “ace.”

Asexual Spectrum – Refers to asexuality as existing on a continuum from people who experience no sexual attraction, to those who experience low or infrequent levels of sexual attraction, and to those who experience sexual attraction only under specific conditions. Identities such as demisexual and gray-asexual are on the asexual spectrum. May be shortened to ace spectrum or acespec.

Assigned female at birth/Assigned male at birth – Refers to the sex that is assigned to an infant, most often based on the infant’s anatomical characteristics. Commonly abbreviated as AFAB (assigned female at birth) or AMAB (assigned male at birth). Less commonly, may also be referenced as female/male assigned at birth (abbreviated as FAAB and MAAB), as designated female/male at birth (abbreviated as DFAB and DMAB), or as female/male designated at birth (abbreviated as FDAB and MDAB).

Assumed gender – The gender others assume an individual to be based on assumptions related to gender markers and expectations (e.g., physical attributes and characteristics).

Authentic/Affirmed gender – An individual’s true gender identity, as opposed to their gender assigned at birth based on their assigned sex.

Bigender – Describes a person whose gender identity is a combination of two genders.

Binding – The process of tightly wrapping one’s chest to minimize the appearance of having breasts. This is achieved through use of constrictive materials such as cloth strips, bandages, or specially designed undergarments, called binders.

Biphobia – Fear, marginalization, discomfort, and/or hatred of bisexual people, or those who are perceived as bisexual. This includes negative attitudes, prejudices and discrimination towards these individuals or groups. Individuals, communities, policies, and institutions can be biphobic.

Biromantic – A romantic orientation that describes a person who is emotionally and romantically (but not sexually) attracted to more than one gender. Whether someone is attracted to two genders, all genders, or somewhere in between, will vary by the individual. May also be defined as someone who is romantically attracted to people of their same gender and to people of different gender(s). Often used by those who also identify as asexual.

Bisexual – A sexual orientation that describes a person who is emotionally, romantically, and/or sexually attracted to more than one gender. Whether someone is attracted to two genders, all genders, or somewhere in between, will vary by the individual. May also be defined as someone who is sexually and/or romantically attracted to people of their same gender and to people of different gender(s). Some define bisexuality as someone attracted to both men and women, but more definitions are often preferred. Sometimes abbreviated as “bi.”

Bottom – Refers to someone who is the receptive and/or sexually submissive partner during sex. Most commonly used by men who have sex with men to refer to the receptive partner in anal sex.

Bottom surgery – Slang term for gender affirming genital surgery.

Butch – a person who identifies themselves as masculine, whether it be physically, mentally, and/or emotionally. Most often used among queer women to refer to masculine women.

Chosen Name/Name Used – The name a person goes by and wants others to use in personal communication, even if it is different from the name on that person’s identification documents (e.g., birth certificate, driver’s license, and passport). Chosen name is recommended over preferred name.

Cis man/cisgender man – A person who was assigned male at birth and identifies as a boy/man.

Cis woman/cisgender woman – A person who was assigned female at birth and identifies as a girl/woman.

Cisgender – A person whose gender identity is consistent with their sex assigned at birth based on societal expectations; not transgender. The term cisgender comes from the Latin prefix *cis*, meaning “on the same side of.”

Cisnormativity – The individual and/or institutional assumption that all people adhere to a binary sex and gender system (that there are only two sexes and two genders), that a person’s sex determines their gender, and/or that being cisgender is superior to being transgender.

Cissexism – Behavior that grants preferential treatment to cisgender people, reinforces the idea that being cisgender is better or more “natural” than being transgender, and/or denies the existence of other genders.

Coming out – The process of identifying and accepting one’s own sexual orientation and/or gender identity (coming out to oneself), and the process of sharing one’s sexual orientation and/or gender identity with others (coming out to others).

Closeted/In the closet – An individual who is not open to themselves and/or others about their (queer) sexual orientation and/or (trans) gender identity. This may be by choice and/or for other reasons, such as fear for one’s safety, family/community rejection, or loss of resources.

Dead name/Dead naming – A term used by trans people to refer to the name that they were given at birth but no longer use. Some prefer the term birth name over dead name. Dead naming refers to, accidentally or deliberately, addressing someone as the name that they were given at birth but no longer use.

Demiboy - Someone who identifies at least partially with being a boy/man but not completely.

Demigender – Someone who identifies as a specific gender on some level but not completely. Examples include demigirl and demiboy.

Demigirl - Someone who identifies at least partially with being a girl/woman but not completely.

Demiromantic – A romantic orientation that describes a person with little or no capacity to experience romantic attraction until a strong emotional bond is formed with someone. Often used by those who also identify as asexual.

Demisexual – A sexual orientation describing a person with little or no capacity to experience sexual attraction until a strong emotional connection is formed with someone, often within a romantic relationship.

Differences/Disorders of Sex Development (DSD) – See intersex.

Down low – Refers to someone, typically a cisgender man, who openly identifies as straight but who secretly has sex with members of the same sex. Down low (or DL) originated in, and is most commonly used by, Black communities.

Drag – A theatrical (and often over-exaggerated) performance of gender to an audience for entertainment. Performers are typically called Drag Queens if performing femininity and Drag Kings if performing masculinity. Many drag performers are cisgender, but some identify as trans.

DSG – Common abbreviation standing for “Diverse Sexualities and Genders.” Used as an umbrella term to describe all those who have a non-normative (or queer) sexuality and/or gender. Preferred by some as a more inclusive alternative to LGBT/LGBTQ/LGBTQIA.

Electrolysis Hair Removal (EHR) – A method of permanent hair removal from the face, body, and/or genital areas for gender affirmation or as part of a preoperative preparation process. EHR involves the use of an electric current with a very fine probe that is manually inserted sequentially into individual hair follicles, permanently preventing the hair from going back.

Emotional attraction – Describes one’s capacity to want to engage in emotionally intimate behavior (e.g., sharing, confiding, trusting, depending on), experienced in varying degrees (from little-to-none to intense). Often conflated with sexual attraction and/or romantic attraction.

Feminine-of-center (FoC) – A phrase indicative of those who present, understand themselves, and/or relate to others in ways considered feminine, but that don’t necessarily identify as women (or men).

Femme or **fem** – Someone who identifies themselves as being feminine physically, mentally and/or emotionally. Often used to refer to a feminine-presenting queer woman or people.

Fluid – Describes an identity that may change or shift over time between or within a mix of identities. Typically used as a sexual orientation label. (Someone who has a gender identity that is fluid will likely identify more specifically as genderfluid.)

Gay – A sexual orientation describing people who are primarily emotionally, romantically, and physically attracted to people of the same gender as themselves. Commonly used to describe men who are attracted to men and can also describe women attracted to women.

Gender affirmation – Refers to being recognized or affirmed in a person’s gender identity. It is usually conceptualized as having social, psychological, medical, and/or legal dimensions. May be used to refer to the transition process.

Gender affirming/affirmation chest surgery – Surgeries to remove and/or (re)construct a person’s chest to be more aligned with that person’s gender identity, such as through a double mastectomy or breast augmentation. May also be referred to as gender confirming/confirmation chest surgery. Within the trans community, this may be referred to as top surgery.

Gender affirming/affirmation facial surgery – Surgeries to feminize or masculinize the face in order to be more aligned with that person’s gender identity. May also be referred to as gender confirming/confirmation facial surgery.

Gender affirming/affirmation genital surgery – Surgeries that help align a person’s genitals and/or internal reproductive organs with that person’s gender identity. Procedures for transmasculine people can include hysterectomy, oophorectomy, metoidioplasty, phalloplasty, scrotoplasty, and aesthetic procedures. Procedures for transfeminine people can include orchiectomy, vaginoplasty, vulvoplasty, and aesthetic procedures. Such surgery is also referred to as gender confirming/confirmation genital surgery or sex reassignment surgery (SRS); however, the latter term has fallen out of favor. Within the trans community, this may be referred to as bottom surgery.

Gender affirming hormone therapy/treatment (GAHT) – See Hormone Replacement Therapy.

Gender affirming/affirmation surgery (GAS) – Surgeries to change primary and/or secondary sex characteristics to affirm a person’s gender identity. Types of GAS include but are not limited to chest and genital surgeries, facial surgery, body sculpting, and hair removal. May also be referred to as gender confirming/confirmation surgery (GCS) or sex reassignment surgery (SRS); however, the latter term has fallen out of favor.

Gender assigned at birth (GAAB) – The gender (boy or girl) and related expectations assigned to an infant based on their sex assigned at birth. Less commonly, may also be referenced as assigned gender at birth (AGAB), as gender designated at birth (GDAB), or as designated gender at birth (DGAB).

Gender binary – The social construct that there are only two sexes (male and female) with two corresponding genders (man and woman), and that a person must strictly fit into one category or the other based on sex assigned at birth.

Gender creative – A term used to refer to children who reject expected gender stereotypes and typical gender roles. Gender creative children may question their gender identity, or express that they are, or wish they were, the “opposite” sex. They may embrace both feminine and masculine qualities to varying degrees. May be preferred over the term gender non-conforming.

Gender diverse – Those with gender identities and/or expressions that are different from social and cultural expectations attributed to their sex assigned at birth. (e.g., non-binary, genderqueer, genderfluid, gender expansive). May be preferred over the term gender non-conforming.

Gender dysphoria – A state of distress or discomfort that may be experienced because a person’s gender identity differs from that which is physically and/or socially attributed to their sex assigned at birth. The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) includes gender dysphoria as a diagnosis for people whose distress is clinically significant and impairs social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning. The degree and severity of gender dysphoria is highly variable among transgender people, and not all trans people experience gender dysphoria. Medical facilities and health insurance companies may require a diagnosis of gender dysphoria to access transition-related care

Gender euphoria – A state of happiness or joy experienced when one’s gender identity is being respected and affirmed, such as through their gender expression being perceived correctly, through representation, and/or through an internal acceptance of one’s own gender. Seen as the opposite of gender dysphoria.

Gender expansive – A term sometimes used to describe people, typically children, who expand notions of gender expression and/or gender identity beyond expected gender norms but are not confined to one gender narrative or experience. This term is intended to refer to youth who don’t meet traditional understandings of gender without putting their identity in a box. May be preferred over the term gender non-conforming.

Gender expression – The way a person communicates their gender identity to the world through mannerisms, clothing, speech, behavior, etc. Expectations related to gender expression vary depending on culture, context, and historical period.

Gender identity – A person’s inner sense of self in relation to gender, such as one’s sense of being a man, a woman, a blend of both, neither, or something else; and how they label themselves, based on how much they align or don’t align with traditional conceptions of gender.

Gender incongruence – A person’s marked and persistent experience of an incompatibility between that person’s gender identity and the gender expected of them based on their birth-assigned sex, which often leads to a desire to transition in order to live and be accepted as a person of the experienced gender. A diagnostic term listed in the International Classification of Diseases. Medical facilities and health insurance companies may require a diagnosis of gender incongruence to access transition-related care.

Gender non-conforming – Describes someone who, in gender expression and/or gender identity, does not adhere to some or all of the norms associated with their gender by the standards of a culture. Often abbreviated as “GNC.” This term can refer to those who are transgender (GNC gender identity) or cisgender (GNC gender expression). More contemporary terms include gender expansive, gender creative, gender variant, genderqueer, non-binary, agender, genderfluid, bigender, androgynous, and gender diverse.

Gender neutral – Not gendered, genderless. Can refer to language (such as pronouns and honorifics), spaces (like bathrooms and changing rooms), or identities (such as agender and gender neutrois).

Gender roles/norms – A set of societal expectation dictating what types of behaviors are considered acceptable, appropriate, and/or desirable for a person based on their actual or perceived gender. Expectations related to gender roles vary depending on culture, context, and historical period.

Gender socialization – The process by which an individual is taught and influenced on how they should behave as a man or a woman (or as another gender). Parents, teachers, peers, media, and books are some of the many agents of gender socialization.

Gender spectrum – The concept that gender exists beyond a simple man/woman binary model, but instead exists on a continuum. Some people fall towards more masculine or more feminine aspects, some people move fluidly along the spectrum, and some identify off the spectrum entirely.

Gender variant – A term, often used by the medical community, to describe individuals who dress, behave, and/or express themselves in a way that does not conform to gender norms. Some outside the medical community avoid this term because they feel it suggests these identities are abnormal.

Genderfluid – Describes a person whose gender identity is not fixed. A person who is genderfluid may feel more aligned with a certain gender some of the time and other genders at other times, and sometimes no gender at all. How frequently a genderfluid person shifts genders varies by the individual.

Genderqueer – Describes someone who, in gender expression and/or gender identity, blends, blurs, or rejects conventional gender roles, expressions, and/or expectations. Someone who uses this label may identify as being both a man and a woman, as being neither, or as being somewhere in between. May be used by a person who identifies as both masculine and feminine, and/or androgynous.

Gray aromantic or grayromantic – An identity on the aromantic spectrum that is characterized as being "in between" aromantic and alloromantic. This romantic orientation can describe people who feel very low amounts of romantic attraction, rarely feel romantic attraction, only feel romantic attraction under specific circumstances, or are not sure if they experience romantic attraction

Gray-asexual or graysexual – An identity on the asexual spectrum that is characterized as being "in between" asexual and allosexual. This sexual orientation can describe people who feel very low amounts of sexual attraction, rarely feel sexual attraction, only feel sexual attraction under specific circumstances, or are not sure if they experience sexual attraction. May be shortened to gray-ace.

GSM/GSRM – Common abbreviation standing for “Gender and Sexual Minorities” or “Gender, Sexual, and Romantic Minorities.” Gender minority is an umbrella term used to refer to anyone who is not cisgender (e.g., anyone who identifies as transgender and/or non-binary). Sexual minority is an umbrella term used to refer to anyone who is not heterosexual (e.g., gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, queer, asexual). Romantic minority is an umbrella term used to refer to anyone who is not heteroromantic (e.g., homoromantic, biromantic, panromantic, aromatic). Preferred by some as a more inclusive alternative to LGBT/LGBTQ/LGBTQIA.

Heteronormativity – The assumption, in individuals and/or in institutions, that everyone is heterosexual, and that heterosexuality is superior to all other sexualities. Also refers to societal pressure for everyone to look and act in a stereotypically heterosexual way.

Heteroromantic – A romantic orientation that describes a person who is exclusively or primarily emotionally and romantically (but not sexually) interested in people of a different gender than themselves, usually whichever is considered the “opposite” gender. Often used by those who also identify as asexual.

Heterosexism – Behavior that grants preferential treatment to heterosexual people, reinforces the idea that heterosexuality is better or more “natural” than queerness, and/or denies the existence of other sexualities.

Heterosexual – A sexual orientation that describes someone who is exclusively or primarily emotionally, romantically, and sexually attracted to members of a different gender than their own, usually whichever is considered the “opposite” gender. Also referred to as straight.

Homoromantic – A romantic orientation that describes someone who is primarily emotionally and romantically (but not sexually) interested in people of the same gender as themselves. Often used by those who also identify as asexual.

Homophobia – Fear, marginalization, discomfort, and/or hatred of lesbian and gay people, or those who are perceived as lesbian or gay. This includes negative attitudes, prejudices, and discrimination towards these individuals or groups. Individuals, communities, policies, and institutions can be homophobic.

Hormone blockers – A medication, typically prescribed by an endocrinologist, to pre-pubescent and very early puberty transgender/gender expansive children. Hormone blockers delay puberty and prevent the development of secondary sex characteristics by blocking certain hormones from escalating until the child is older and can choose if/when they want to medically transition. Also called puberty blockers.

Hormone Replacement Therapy/Treatment (HRT) – Feminizing or masculinizing hormone treatments to help align secondary sex characteristics with one’s gender identity. Masculinizing HRT involves taking testosterone. Feminizing HRT typically involves taking estrogen, anti-androgens (testosterone blockers), and sometimes progesterone. May also be referred to as gender affirming hormone therapy/treatment.

Intersex – A term for individuals born with sex characteristics (such as chromosomes, genitals, gonads, and/or hormonal patterns) that do not fit exclusively into the male or female category as expected. The medical community sometimes uses the term differences of sex development (DSD) to describe intersex conditions; however, the term intersex is recommended in all other settings.

Laser Hair Removal (LHR) – A method of permanent hair reduction on the face, body, and/or genital areas for gender affirmation or as part of a preoperative preparation process. LHR uses laser energy to target hair follicles, causing damage to the follicles within the skin that produce hairs, and results in the destruction of hair growth.

Lesbian – A sexual orientation that describes a woman who is exclusively or primarily emotionally, romantically, and sexually attracted to women.

LGBT/LGBTQ/LGBTQIA – An acronym that collectively refers to individuals who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and/or asexual. The inclusion of additional letters is meant to make the acronym more inclusive to all those with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities. The ‘Q’ can also stand for questioning, referring to those who are still exploring their own sexuality and/or gender. The ‘+’ represents those who are part of the community, but for whom LGBTQIA does not accurately capture or reflect their identity.

Masculine-of-center (MoC) – A term indicative of those who present, understand themselves, and/or relate to others in ways considered masculine, but that don't necessarily identify as men (or women).

Men who have sex with men (MSM) – A category often used in public health research to describe men who engage in same-sex sexual behavior, regardless of how they identify their sexual orientation.

Misgender – To refer to a person, accidentally or deliberately, by a pronoun set or other gendered term (e.g., Ms./Mr., sir/ma'am) that does not align with how that person identifies their gender.

Monosexual – An umbrella term that includes all people who experience attraction to one gender only (e.g., gay, lesbian, straight). In contrast to multisexual, which describes someone attracted to more than one gender.

Multisexual – An umbrella term that includes all people who experience any kind of attraction to more than one gender (e.g., bisexual, pansexual, polysexual, omnisexual). Sometimes referenced as “non-monosexual.” In contrast to monosexual, which describes someone only attracted to one gender. Some use the terms bisexual umbrella or bi+ to refer to multisexual identities; however, others find this terminology problematic in subsuming other identities as forms of bisexuality.

Mx. – A gender-neutral honorific, pronounced like “mix.” Often used by those who identify outside the gender binary or for other reasons do not want to use gendered honorifics (e.g., Mr., Ms., Mrs.).

Neopronouns – Refers to alternative sets of singular third-person pronouns, usually considered gender neutral, that were coined in the 20th century or later. More well-known neopronouns are ze/zir/zirs, xe/xem/xems, and ey/em/eirs. For more examples and pronunciation guides, visit the [Pronouns Page](#).

Neutrois – See agender.

Non-binary – Describes a person whose gender identity falls outside of the traditional gender binary structure of female/woman and male/man. Also used an umbrella term for anyone who does not identify exclusively as a man or exclusively as a woman. Sometimes abbreviated as NB or enby.

Non-monosexual – See multisexual.

Omnioromantic – A romantic orientation that describes a person who is emotionally and romantically (but not sexually) to all genders but with gender related preferences. Some distinguish omnioromantic from panromantic in defining the latter as someone who is romantically attracted to all genders *without* gender related preferences. Often used by those who also identify as asexual.

Omnisexual – A sexual orientation that describes someone who is attracted to all genders but with gender related preferences. Some distinguish omnisexual from pansexual in defining the latter as someone who is attracted to all genders *without* gender preferences. Sometimes abbreviated as “omni.”

Open relationship – Describes a relationship between two partners who consensually agree to non-monogamy (i.e., intimacy outside the primary partnership).

Out – Describes people who openly self-identify as LGBTQIA+ in their private, public, and/or professional lives. Some people who are transgender prefer to use the term “disclose.”

Outing – The deliberate or accidental sharing of one person’s sexual orientation and/or gender identity to another without their explicit consent.

Passing – A transgender person, typically a trans man or trans woman, who is accepted as, or able to “pass” as a member of, their authentic gender identity without being recognized as transgender. May also be used to refer to an LGBTQIA+ individual who is perceived as heterosexual and cisgender.

Panromantic – A romantic orientation that describes a person who is romantically and emotionally (but not sexually) attracted to people of all gender identities, or whose attractions are not related to other people’s gender. Often used by those who also identify as asexual.

Pansexual – A sexual orientation that describes a person who is emotionally, romantically, and sexually attracted to people of all gender identities, or whose attractions are not related to other people’s gender. Sometimes abbreviated as “pan.”

Personal pronouns – The set(s) of singular third-person pronouns that an individual personally uses and would like others to use when talking to or about that individual. Examples of personal pronouns are she/her/hers/herself, he/him/his/himself, they/them/theirs/themself, and others. Some people are comfortable being addressed by more than one set of personal pronouns. In English, the singular pronouns that we most frequently use are seen as gendered, so some individuals prefer to use gender neutral pronouns. The most commonly used gender-neutral pronoun set in English is they/them/theirs. While pronouns and gender may be connected for some, pronouns ≠ gender. Alternative pronoun sets that were coined in the 20th century and later may be referred to as neopronouns.

Polyamory – The practice of forming romantic and/or sexual relationships with more than one person at the same time, with the informed consent of all partners involved. Polyamory describes a type of relationship structure.

Polyamorous – Describes someone who has sexual and/or romantic relationships with more than one person, or someone who is capable of and open to having multiple sexual and/or romantic relationships, simultaneously. Sometimes abbreviated as poly or polyam.

Polyromantic – A romantic orientation that describes a person who is emotionally and romantically (but not sexually) attracted to more than one gender, but not all genders. Often used by those who also identify as asexual.

Polysexual – A sexual orientation that describes someone who is attracted to more than one gender, but not all genders. Sometimes abbreviated as “poly.”

Puberty blockers – See Hormone Blockers.

QPOC/QTPOC – An acronym that stands for queer people of color/queer and trans people of color.

Queer – A word that refers to all people who are not heterosexual and/or cisgender. May be used both as an umbrella word and as an individual identity label. Some identify as queer because they feel that the other letters of the acronym (LGBTIA) don’t fully express their identity. Some identify as queer to express a resistance to societal ideals of normalcy, to celebrate difference and defiance. Some people view the term queer as more fluid and inclusive than other terms for sexual orientation and gender identity. Although historically used as a slur, it has been reclaimed by many as a term of resistance and empowerment. But some still find the term offensive. Use caution when using this word to refer to an individual.

Questioning – Describes a person who is unsure about or is exploring their sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

Romantic attraction – One’s capacity to want to engage in romantic intimate behavior (e.g., dating, relationships, marriage), experienced in varying degrees (from little-to-none to intense). Often conflated with sexual attraction and/or emotional attraction.

Romantic orientation – The type of romantic attraction one has the capacity to feel for others (e.g., dating, relationships, marriage), often labeled based on the gender relationship between the person and the people they are attracted to. Often used in the asexual community.

Same-gender loving (SGL) – An alternative to the labels of gay and lesbian. SGL is more commonly used in Black communities.

Sex assigned at birth (SAAB) – The sex (male or female) assigned to an infant, most often based on the infant’s anatomical and other biological characteristics. Sometimes referred to as birth sex, natal sex, biological sex, or sex; however, sex assigned at birth is the recommended term. Less commonly, may also be referenced as assigned sex at birth (ASAB), as birth assigned sex (BAS), as designated sex at birth (DSAB), or as sex designated at birth (SDAB).

Sexual attraction – One’s capacity to want to engage in physically intimate behavior (e.g., kissing, touching, intercourse), experienced in varying degrees (from little-to-none to intense). Often conflated with romantic attraction and/or emotional attraction.

Sexual orientation – The type of sexual, romantic, and/or emotional attraction one has the capacity to feel for others, often labeled based on the gender relationship between the person and the people they are attracted to.

Stealth – A transgender person, typically a trans man or trans woman, who is not openly out as trans and is assumed by others to be a cisgender member of their authentic gender. May be referred to as passing.

Straight – Another term for heterosexual.

Stud – A label used in queer Black and Latina communities to indicate a masculine-of-center lesbian.

TGNC – Common abbreviation standing for Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming. May be used to refer to all those with diverse gender identities and gender expressions.

Third gender – A term for a person who does not identify as a man or a woman but does identify as another gender. This term is typically used in the context of cultures, both contemporary and historic, that recognize(d) three or more genders,

Top – A term used to refer to someone who is the penetrative and/or sexually dominant partner during sex. Most commonly used by men who have sex with men to refer to the penetrative partner in anal sex.

Top surgery – Slang term for gender affirming/affirmation chest surgery.

Transition/Transitioning – The process of making social, medical, and/or legal changes to better recognize, accept, and express one’s gender identity. Social changes can include changing one’s pronouns, name, clothing, and hairstyle. Legal changes can include changing one’s name and sex/gender markers on legal documents. Medical changes can include receiving gender affirming hormones and/or gender affirming surgeries. Also referred to as the gender affirmation process.

Transgender/trans – Describes a person whose gender identity and sex assigned at birth differ based on traditional expectations. Includes trans women, trans men, and people who identify outside of the gender binary (e.g., genderqueer, non-binary, agender). Often abbreviated as trans. The term transgender comes from the Latin prefix *trans*, meaning “across from” or “beyond.”

Trans man/transgender man – A person whose gender identity is boy/man and who was assigned female at birth. Some will simply use “man” to describe their gender identity, preferring not to differentiate themselves from cisgender men.

Trans woman/transgender woman – A person whose gender identity is woman and who was assigned male at birth. Some will simply use “woman” to describe their gender identity, preferring not to differentiate themselves from cisgender women.

Transfeminine – Describes a person, typically someone assigned male at birth, who identifies with femininity to a greater extent than masculinity. May be used as an umbrella word to refer to both trans women and non-binary people who identify as feminine-of-center. Some use this term as their preferred gender label.

Transmasculine – Describes a person, typically someone assigned female at birth, who identifies with masculinity to a greater extent than with femininity. May be used as an umbrella word to refer to both trans men and non-binary people who identify as masculine-of-center. Some use this term as their preferred gender label.

Transphobia – Fear, marginalization, discomfort, and/or hatred of transgender people, or those perceived as transgender, and/or gender non-conformity. This includes negative attitudes, prejudices, and discrimination towards transgender and gender non-conforming individuals. Individuals, communities, policies, and institutions can be transphobic.

Transsexual – A term sometimes used in medical literature and by some trans people to describe those who have gone through (or want to go through) the process of medical gender affirmation (i.e., gender affirming hormones and surgeries). This term is considered outdated by many and should only be used if the individual in reference identifies as such.

Tucking – The process of concealing one’s penis and testes with tape, tights, or specially designed undergarments called gaffes.

Two-Spirit – A culturally-specific term used among some Native American and First Nations people to refer to a person who identifies as having both a male and a female essence or spirit. The term – which was created in 1990 by a group of Native American activists at an annual Native LGBTQ conference – encompasses sexual, cultural, gender, and spiritual identities, and provides unifying, positive, and encouraging language that emphasizes reconnecting to tribal traditions.

Women who have sex with women (WSW) – Category often used in public health research to describe women who engage in same-sex sexual behavior, regardless of how they identify their sexual orientation.