



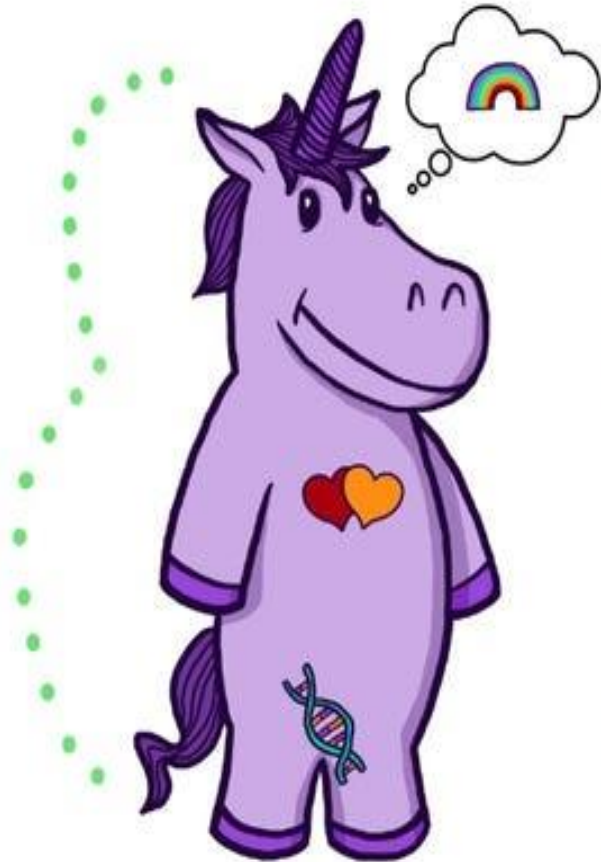
Transgender Youth:

Understanding Gender, Identity, Support, and Best Practices




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The Gender Unicorn

Graphic by:
TSER
Trans Student Educational Resources



Gender Identity

-  Female/Woman/Girl
-  Male/Man/Boy
-  Other Gender(s)

Gender Expression

-  Feminine
-  Masculine
-  Other

Sex Assigned at Birth

-  Female
-  Male
-  Other/Intersex

Physically Attracted to

-  Women
-  Men
-  Other Gender(s)

Emotionally Attracted to

-  Women
-  Men
-  Other Gender(s)

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

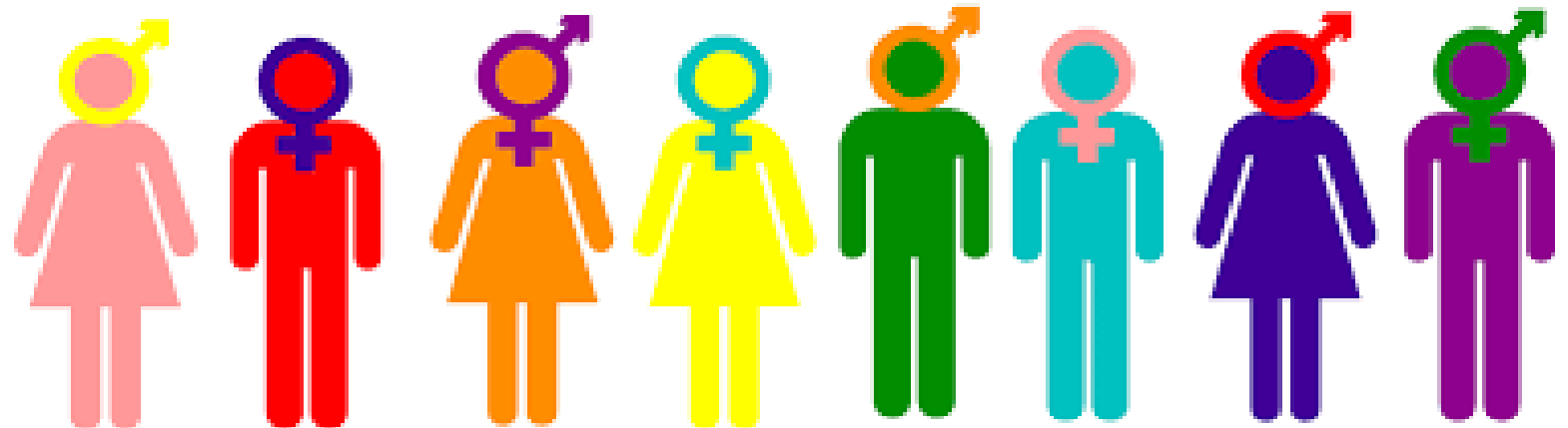
Design by Landyn Pan and Anna Moore

Gender Identity: Sex versus Gender

- ▶ Sex
 - ▶ classification of a person as male, female, or intersex
- ▶ Gender
 - ▶ our internal understanding and experience of our own gender identity

- ▶ Genders include:

- ▶ Cisgender
- ▶ Transgender
- ▶ Nonbinary
- ▶ Two Spirit



Gender Expression vs. Perception



- ▶ Expression
 - ▶ the way in which we present or express our gender
- ▶ Perception
 - ▶ based on other people's evaluation of our bodies

Gender Dysphoria

- ▶ clinically significant distress or impairment related to a strong desire to be of another gender
- ▶ Not all trans individuals experience gender dysphoria
- ▶ Can often be relieved by expressing one's gender in a way that the person is comfortable with



Transgender Identity and Mental Illness

Being
Transgender
Is It A Mental
Disorder?



- ▶ Transgender is not categorized as a mental illness
- ▶ Transgender individuals often deal with mental health issues such as depression and anxiety as a result of intolerance from family and society

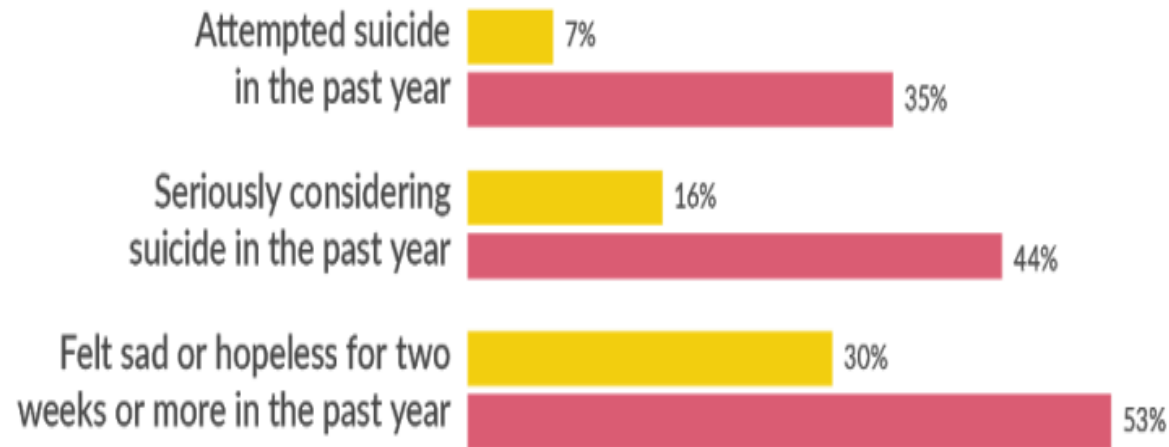
Statistics for Trans Youth

- ▶ 1.8% of youth identify as transgender (about 1.3 million youth between the ages of 0-17)
- ▶ Double the previously thought numbers estimated at 0.7%



Trans youth rates of Depression, Suicidality, and Victimization

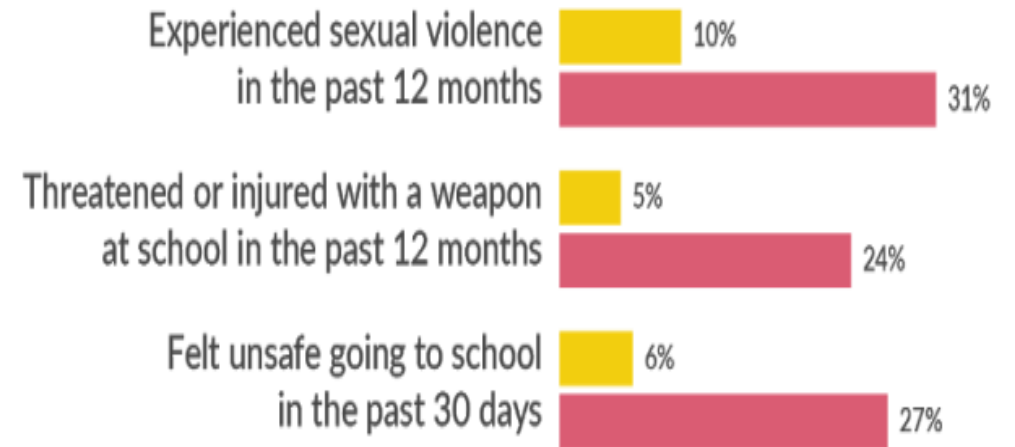
Depression & Suicidality



Cisgender

Transgender

Victimization



Trans Youth and the Law in Alabama

- ▶ Alabama has advanced in 2021-2022 bills that
 - ▶ outlaw access to puberty blockers, hormone treatments and surgery; requires school personnel to out trans students to their parents/legal guardians (HB 266)
 - ▶ Block trans students from playing in public school sports (HB 391)
 - ▶ Ban transgender youth from using the bathrooms that align with their gender identity (HB 322)
- ▶ *“Denying best practice medical care and support to transgender youth can have life-threatening consequences, and is morally wrong. Delaying and denying care have shown to contribute to depression, social isolation, self-hatred, risk of self-harm and suicidal behavior, and more.”*
~**Human Rights Campaign Alabama State Director Carmarion D. Anderson-Harvey**

How to Support Trans Youth

- ▶ Family Acceptance
- ▶ Trans Youth in School
- ▶ Names and Pronouns



Family Support and Acceptance

Research shows that trans youth with supportive families experience:

52% decrease in recent suicidal thoughts^b

46% decrease in suicide attempts^b



Significant increases in self-esteem and general health^b



But only **27%** of trans youth say their families are very supportive.^c

Fewer than half (43%) say they have an adult in their family they could turn to if they felt sad or worried.^c



Trans Youth In School

MANY TRANS YOUTH EXPERIENCE DISCRIMINATION IN THEIR SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES

Only **9%** of trans youth say their communities are very accepting.^c

Only **8%** of trans youth say their place of worship is very accepting.^c

80% of transgender students said they'd avoided bathrooms because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable.

64% of transgender students avoided gym class because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable.

59% of transgender students had been required to use a bathroom that did not match the gender they live every day.

Only **12%** of trans youth say their school or district has official policies support trans students.^e



Names and Pronouns

- ▶ Names can seem gendered so often trans and nonbinary individuals prefer to choose a new name that more closely aligns with their gender identity
- ▶ Pronouns are also a communicator of an individual's gender
 - ▶ She/her, He/him, They/them
- ▶ Honorifics: Mister (Mr.), Miss (Ms./Mrs.)
 - ▶ New option: Mx.



Clinical Considerations with Trans Youth



- ▶ World Professional Associations for Transgender Health (Wpath)
 - ▶ Standards of care established in 1979 and have been revised 7 times. Currently the board is working on revision 8 due out this year.
 - ▶ Provides clinical guidance for healthcare professionals but can be used by family, educators, and allies to help support trans youth
- ▶ Ethics for Counselors
 - ▶ Do not impose personal values/opinions
 - ▶ Do not practice beyond one's knowledge, training, and capabilities

Best Practices

- ▶ Disclosure
- ▶ Transitioning
- ▶ Age
- ▶ Binary and Non-Binary Genders
- ▶ Sexuality
- ▶ “Passing”
- ▶ Misgendering
- ▶ Microaggressions



PROTECT
TRANS YOUTH

Disclosure

- ▶ Do not rush or force a conversation
- ▶ Just listen when they are ready to share with you
- ▶ Do not share their story/identity with others, even family and friends



Transitioning

- ▶ Transitioning looks different for every individual
- ▶ Transitioning can include hormone replacement therapy, surgeries, a combination of approaches, and at times some individuals chose not to transition at all
- ▶ Can take years to complete
- ▶ Never ask about a trans or nonbinary individual's body, genitals, plans for medical procedures, or previous name/dead name

Age



- ▶ No “right” age to understand gender and identity
- ▶ Some know in childhood, some in adolescence, and some later in life

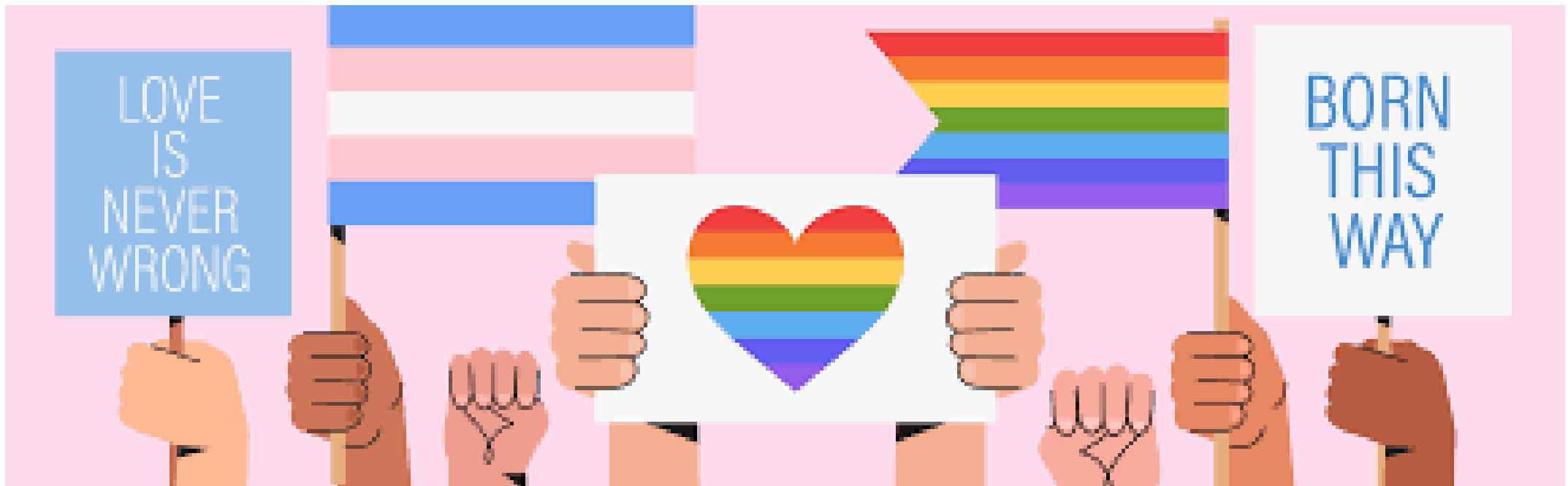
Binary and Nonbinary Genders

- ▶ Binary: individual identifies as Male or Female
- ▶ Nonbinary: do not identify with one of the binary genders
- ▶ Genderfluid: gender is not fixed and can fluctuate during different times or even day to day



Sexuality

- ▶ Sexuality and sexual orientation does not relate to gender identity
- ▶ Trans youth can identify with any sexual orientation



Passing

- ▶ used to describe whether or not a person is perceived as a certain gender
- ▶ Passing is the goal for many trans individuals; not all have this goal
- ▶ “Passing privilege”



Misgendering

- ▶ to use the wrong name, pronouns, or form of address for a person's gender
- ▶ Can be unintentional or deliberate
- ▶ Can lead to safety issues by accidentally outing an individual



Microaggressions

You're trans?! I never would have known! You look just like a real wo/man!

Are you transgendered / A transgender?

You're so attractive for a trans person!

Have you had the surgery yet?

What's your real name?

- ▶ everyday comments and questions that can be hurtful or stigmatizing to marginalized people and groups
- ▶ For example, a common comment that transgender people may hear is, "You don't look trans!"

Mistakes and Saying Sorry

- ▶ Listen
 - ▶ Seek to understand and empathize
- ▶ Be Accountable
 - ▶ Take responsibility for your actions, privileges, and experiences that attribute to your biases
- ▶ Commit to doing better
 - ▶ Use as a learning experience to change behaviors

I have been called out.

I messed up.

I'm sorry.

I am listening.

I am learning.

I can change.

References and Resources

- ▶ <https://transequality.org/>
- ▶ <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/>
- ▶ <https://www.lgbtmap.org/>
- ▶ <https://www.wpath.org/>
- ▶ <https://www.glaad.org/transgender/resources>
- ▶ <https://www.hrc.org/resources/transgender>
- ▶ <https://www.pride.com/trans/2020/3/31/6-resources-every-trans-person-and-ally-should-know-about>
- ▶ <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/research-briefs/data-on-transgender-youth/>