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Working in Greater Minnesota to create welcoming, safe, inclusive and bias-free communities

Commonly Used LGBTI2SQ&A Terminology

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered, Intersex, 2-Spirited, Questioning & Ally

Lesbian – A woman who is emotionally, physically and/or sexually attracted to another woman

Gay – A man who is physically, emotionally and/or sexually attracted to other men

Bisexual – A man or woman who is emotionally, physically and/or sexually attracted to both men and Women

Transgendered – Describes a person who was assigned a gender at birth and no longer feels that this assigned gender is accurate and/or complete. A person who identifies as a gender different than the one they were assigned at birth. Transgender people may identify as heterosexual, gay, lesbian or bisexual

Intersex – A man or woman having genitalia that are not clearly defined as male or female

2-Spirited – Refers to the commonly shared notion in many Native American tribes that some individuals naturally possess and manifest both masculine and feminine spiritual characteristics

Questioning – A person who is exploring their sexuality or gender identity

Queer – Used by some individuals to refer to themselves; sometimes used as a political statement or to refer to the LGBT community as a whole. This is a problematic word, exercise caution when using it, can be interpreted as derogatory

Ally – A person, straight or gay who is supportive and/or advocates for LGBT people and LGBT who advocate for all the other acronym letters

Straight – Generic term for heterosexuality, person attracted to opposite sex

LGBT/GLBT – Both mean the same and are used interchangeably, usually depending on your geographic Location

Out/Out of the Closet – Openly stating one's sexual orientation or gender identity versus hiding or denying one's orientation or identity

Cross-dresser – A person who enjoys wearing clothes usually associated with the opposite of his/her assigned gender

Drag Kings/Queens – A person who dresses up as the opposite sex, generally done for entertainment, may or may not be an indicator of their sexual orientation

Homophobia – Negative feelings, attitudes and behaviors against LGBT people/active hate and hatred of Homosexuality

Heterosexism – A system of oppression that reinforces the belief that straight people are superior

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Gender Bending – Period of time during which a person may be exploring whether female or male gender identity is more comfortable

Fluid – Umbrella term for those whose gender expression, gender roles, gender identity, sexual behavior, sexual desires, and/or sexual identity changes over time

Third Gender – Alternative descriptive phrase for Transgender population

Transitioning – Refers to the complex process of altering one's gender

Male-to-Female/ MTF – A person assigned male sex and masculine gender at birth, who is transitioning into a female identity

Female-to-Male/FTM – A person assigned female sex and feminine gender at birth, who is transitioning into a male identity

Femme – Feminine or effeminate dress and behavior, regardless of sex or gender identity

Butch – Masculine or macho dress and behavior, regardless of sex or gender identity

Diversity- The focus on the appreciation and understanding for people from different backgrounds and cultures

Cultural Competency- Ability to interact effectively with those from different backgrounds and cultures

Down Low – African American men who identify as straight, but have sex on the side with other men and do not disclose this secret part of themselves to their female partner(s)

Nadle – Navajo term meaning 'one who is transformed'. Applied to an androgynous male or female individual who has combined elements of both masculinity and femininity in their personalities or two-spirited

Winkte – Lakota word meaning half man/half woman. Seen as spiritual healers and helpers

Berdache - Androgynous men – seen as shamans and possessing sacred spiritual giftedness in American Indian Culture that has not been influenced by Christianity. Almost always homosexual but revered for their dual personality traits, not their sexual behavior

Amazons – Females inclined to take on traditional masculine role, of hunter/warrior. Again revered as a gift from the spirit in the American Indian culture, that has not been influenced by Christianity

Heterosexual Privilege – Basic civil rights, social privilege and status automatically awarded to heterosexuals that is automatically denied to LGBT communities based solely on sexual/gender orientation

Sexism – Fear of someone who 'violates' social sex/gender roles and identities

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Erotophobia – Individual and cultural anxiety around issues relating to human sexuality

Internalized ‘Phobic’ Messages – The process of claiming bias/hate-based social and cultural messages as internal/core truths without seeing the root of those messages as methods to maintain control by those in positions of power, with the goal of those messages being to limit or deny access

‘Straight Bashing’, ‘Gay Bashing’ – Name calling and degrading of any group of people

GNC – Gender non-conforming

Sex + Sexual Orientation + Gender Identity Develop Separately, But Are Interconnected

We all have a sex, sexual orientation and a gender identity

Sex – Male, Female, Intersex (assigned at birth)...how are biological body appeared at the time of birth

Sexual Orientation – Who and how we are attracted to someone and what we choose to call that attraction. Sexual behavior, sexual desire, sexual identity

Gender Identity – How we know ourselves, our psychological sense of gender (regardless of anatomical factors). Gender is a social construct and not the result of biology, Gender expression, gender identity, gender role