Gender in School Health Centers: Beyond Binary

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We support the physical, mental and social health of patients and their families as youth progress through gender identity development.
Guidelines

• No right or wrong questions
• Confidential
• Use respectful language
• Share and allow others to share
• Shape this discussion to fit your needs
• Introduction

Don’t be afraid to ask questions.
Objectives

- To provide an overview of key terms and concepts related to gender

- To provide an outline of gender inclusive spaces and tactics to personally implement inclusivity

- Discuss how to talk about gender diversity with students, parents, and the school community
Personal

• Growing up did you think of yourself as a boy, girl, or something else? How did you come to that conclusion?

• What messages did you receive from others about your gender? Did those messages make sense to you?

• What is your first memory of gender impacting you/your life?

• Have you ever been confused by someone’s gender? How did that make you feel? Why do you think you may have felt that way?

• Have you ever been confused by your own gender?

• If you were to describe your gender without discussing how you look, what would you say?
Professional

• What is your comfort level discussing gender with your colleagues?

• How might your experience with gender impact your work?

• How would you categorize TimeLine's overall acceptance of gender diversity?

• What professional training have you received regarding gender? Was it useful?

• Have you had any experiences that significantly impacted the way you view the role of gender in your workplace?
Key Terminology
Sex (assigned at birth)

Gender Identity

Raise your hand if you have a gender identity

Gender Expression
Key Terminology

Gender Nonconforming (Expansive/Creative)

- Long-standing occurrence (e.g., 6 months or more) – not a fleeting curiosity or interest

- Gender nonconformity is a normative variation of human diversity
Key Terminology

Sexual Orientation

Intersex

Cisgender (cis-“same side as”)

Sexuality (who you love)

Gender Identity (who you are)
Key Terminology

Transgender or Trans
• Applies to identity not body parts

Non-Binary Gender

An adjective, not a noun or a verb
a. Incorrect as noun: “She’s a transgender.”
b. Incorrect as verb: “That person is transgendered.”
c. Incorrect: “A transgendered person.”
d. Correct: “A transgender student/male/female”
Key Terminology

Pronouns
• It’s okay to ask people what pronouns they use
  – She/her/hers
  – He/him/his
  – They/Them/Theirs
  – Other pronouns
There is no one way to be trans.

Trans*/Transgender
Someone who does not identify with their sex assigned at birth

Transfeminine/Transmasculine
Someone who identifies more female than male or more male than female

Trans Man/Trans Woman
Someone who was female at birth but identifies as male/someone who was male at birth but identifies as female

Agender
Someone who does not identify with a gender

Two-Spirit
Someone who fills one of the many mixed-gender roles prevalent in Native American communities

Multigender
Someone who identifies with more than one gender (e.g. bigender)

Gender Fluid
Someone whose gender changes

Genderqueer
Someone who does not identify within the gender binary

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Expression

Identity

Attraction

Sex

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

Design by Landyn Pan and Anna Moore
Gender Stereotypes
“The generally accepted rule is pink for boys, and blue for the girls. The reason is that pink, being a more decided and stronger color, is more suitable for the boy, while blue, which is more delicate and dainty, is prettier for the girl.”

-1918 article Earnshaw's Infants' Department trade publication
Cultural Norms
# Traditional Gender Stereotypes.

## Feminine.
- Not aggressive.
- Dependent.
- Easily influenced.
- Submissive.
- Passive.
- Home-oriented.
- Easily hurt emotionally.
- Indecisive.
- Talkative.
- Gentle.
- Sensitive to other's feelings.
- Very desirous of security.
- Cries a lot.
- Emotional.
- Verbal.
- Kind.
- Tactful.
- Nurturing.

## Masculine.
- Aggressive.
- Independent.
- Not easily influenced.
- Dominant.
- Active.
- Worldly.
- Not easily hurt emotionally.
- Decisive.
- Not at all talkative.
- Tough.
- Less sensitive to other's feelings.
- Not very desirous of security.
- Rarely cries.
- Logical.
- Analytical.
- Cruel.
- Blunt.
- Not nurturing.

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*Gender roles examined*
Supporting Trans and Gender Nonconforming Students
What is Transphobia?

- Discriminatory acts directed toward trans people.

- Because gender is a deeply rooted concept in our society, reactions to those who do not conform female/male binary can be extremely severe.

- Similar to other systems of oppression.
Health Risks

Outcomes Tied to Rejection and Acceptance

• Students that are not supported are at increased risk of:
  – Depressive symptoms, low life satisfaction, self-harm, isolation, posttraumatic stress, incarceration, homelessness, and suicidality

• Students that are supported are tied to the following traits:
  – Positive self-esteem, high social support, positive mental health, less depressive symptoms, greater self-esteem, greater life satisfaction (compared with youth whose families were non-supportive)

Why Support for Trans Youth Matters

Trans' Youth with Supportive Parents

- Reported Life Satisfaction: 72% vs. 33%
- Described Mental Health As "Very Good" or "Excellent": 70% vs. 15%
- Suffered Depression: 23% vs. 75%

Trans' Youth with Unsupportive Parents

- Reported High Self-Esteem: 64% vs. 13%
- Faced Housing Problems: 0% vs. 55%
- Attempted Suicide: 4% vs. 57%


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Student Equality Resources
Supporting Gender Diversity within a Medical Context
What is a Transition?

- Process by which an individual begins living in their affirmed gender
  - Social
  - Medical
  - Legal
- May or may not include hormonal and/or surgical treatment
- No one way to be trans; therefore, no one way to transition.
Affirming Approach

The word ‘affirm’ is used to acknowledge the identity of an individual.

Shared tenets:
1. Gender variations are not disorders
2. Gender may be fluid (not always binary)
3. Follow appropriate guidelines/recommendations around best practices
Do

- Introduce yourself with your name/pronoun
- Ask what is your sex assigned at birth (if relevant)
- Ask “what name do you go by?”
- Keep it relevant/clinical
- Find resources

Don’t

- Be overly invasive—want to know vs. need to know
- Refer to a student as “it”
- Ask what someone’s legal name is
- Tell families or out a student without their consent
- Make assumptions
Discussing Transitions

1. Support the transgender student—this is their story
2. Keep language simple and affirming
3. Don’t be afraid of questions!
Transgender children are already at increased risk for violence, bullying, harassment and suicide. They may be more prone to depression and engaging in self-harm.

These children need acceptance and affirmation, not stigmatization.

As a result of last night's action by the Departments of Justice and Education, the simple act of using the restroom may subject transgender students to further harm.

Policies excluding transgender youth from facilities consistent with their gender identity have detrimental effects on their physical and mental health, safety and well-being. No child deserves to feel this way, especially within the walls of their own school.

AAP Statement on Protecting Transgender Youth
2/23/2017 by: Fernando Stein, MD, FAAP, President, American Academy of Pediatrics
Best Practices for Creating a Supportive Gender-Inclusive Culture
• Avoid gender segregation
• Actively create a welcoming environment (marketing, visuals etc.
• Restroom and locker room accessibility

• Ensure that all students are allowed to participate in activities/events in accordance with their gender identity
• Ensure that SBHC are collecting information in ways that allow students to self identify—keep language inclusive
• Implement inclusive dress code
Northwestern University students will elect one Homecoming Wildcat from a court of 12 people.
• Respect Student Privacy and Confidentiality

• Respect name and gender pronoun (including forms) — How does your EMR recognize gender, pronoun, sex, legal name, affirmed name?

• Implement nondiscriminatory policies and comprehensive policy for bullying and discrimination (explicitly include gender identity)

• Keep it friendly and clinical/relevant—if you need to ask questions about sex/body explain why

• Celebrate ALL different types diversity
1. Ask what the student would like you to do to be a good ally
2. Take the student’s gender identity and expression seriously
3. Acknowledge mistakes (and own them)
4. Respect the student’s name/pronoun.
   **Remember to always refer to transgender persons by the name and pronoun that corresponds with their gender identity (even if you are not in their presence).**
5. Do not out anyone (or allow anyone else to do so) without their consent.
6. Treat trans people as members of their gender identity.
7. Provide resources and support
Gender Inclusive Spaces

**Personal**
- Focus on understandings of gender and building foundation to build inclusive practices

**Structural**
- Institutional steps that create a foundation for gender inclusive practices

**Interpersonal**
- The various ways we communicate (verbal and nonverbal) and reinforce commitment to gender inclusion

**Instructional**
- Specific ways in which health care is used to instill greater awareness of gender diversity

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Institutional Inclusion: Policies and Procedures
1. Books

2. Discuss the importance of respect
   Names & pronoun

3. Remind youth that it’s OK to be curious but it’s not OK to ask overly personal questions
Sample Policies out of Illinois

- Lurie Children’s Hospital Model Policy
- Chicago Public Schools
  - Addresses that teachers, parents, volunteers could be trans
Supporting Parents: Talking to Children About Gender Identity

It is important to respect differences.
Let the child/adolescent guide the conversation. What specifically are they trying to understand?

- Elementary school: Keep information and explanation basic
- Middle school: Keep information basic but add more detail to the explanation
- High school: Be clear in explanation but also ensure that you understand what specific questions your adolescent has. Are the questions about gender? Transitioning?
“I don’t think that it’s OK to be gay or trans and I don’t want my child to think that it’s an OK option for them.”
Responding to religious questions/objections

- The role of schools is not to get everyone to agree but to foster a climate where there is respect for the diversity of beliefs and families within a community.

- Respect is built by acknowledging the diversity in the community, promoting opportunities for community dialogue and allowing the diversity of families to be visible within the school. Most people can agree that it is appropriate for schools to teach kindness and mutual respect for everyone’s beliefs.
Gender diverse students indicate their schools as the most common place where they first encountered physical abuse.

The National School Climate Survey indicated that 89.5% of transgender students do not feel safe in their schools.

Nearly half of transgender students report regularly skipping school because of safety concerns.

Nearly one in six (15%) of transgender and gender non-conforming students face harassment so severe that they drop out of school.
Reflection
Creating a Gender-Inclusive Environment

1. Reflect on your experiences and feelings about gender.
2. What systems are in place for gender diverse youth at my school/school health center?
3. Is there LGBT curriculum inclusion at my school/school health center?
4. Do I communicate a non-binary understanding of gender to youth through the visuals on the walls, the books on the shelves and the language I use?
5. How do I ensure the safety of gender expansive students?
Thank You!

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773-303-6056
References and Resources
## Organizations providing support to transgender individuals

### Illinois
- Illinois Safe Schools Alliance
- Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children’s Hospital Gender Program
- Howard Brown Health Center
- Center on Halsted
- Youth Outlook

### National
- GLSEN (The Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network)
- The Trevor Project (crisis and suicide prevention)

## Resources for Parents, Educators, and Allies

- Gender Spectrum
- Families in TRANSition: A Resource Guide for Parents of Trans Youth
- Schools in Transition: A Guide for Supporting Transgender Students in K-12 Schools
- Welcoming Schools
- American Psychological Association (q&a packet)
- A Guide For Parents
- Trans Youth Family Allies (TYFA)
- Lambda Legal: Working With Transgender and Gender-Nonconforming Youth
- Gender Creative Kids Resource Library
Discussing Transitioning: Examples
Karen identifies female, is female and will be treated as a girl in every way. Karen wants us to use she/her pronouns and to be called Karen consistently by all staff and students. We will respect Karen and continue to use this name and female pronouns.

Your classmate feels like a boy and he is boy. He has asked us to support him by calling him Bob and use he/him. This is just like how you like for us to call you Marco and use he/him.
- Sam doesn’t feel like a boy or girl and would like to be called they they/them pronouns because that makes them feel good. We want to support everyone at the school by being respectful of names and pronouns.

- While you may have known Jim as Jackie last year, he feels like a boy and identifies as male. We will show Jim support and respect by calling him Jim and using he/him pronouns consistently. Calling Jim by any other name or pronoun will not be tolerated.
Additional Information/Resources
Illinois Safe Schools Alliance
www.illinoissafeschools.org

National Center for Transgender Equality:
www.NCTE.org

GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network) National: www.glsen.org

Gender Spectrum: www.genderspectrum.org

Welcoming Schools: www.welcomingschools.org
Community Resources

**Center on Halsted**
Where: 3656 Halsted, Chicago
When: Everyday, 8:00 – 9:00pm
Contact: (773) 472-6469

**VIDA/SIDA**
Where: 2703 W Division St. Chicago, IL 60622
773.278.6737 (phone)
http://prcc-chgo.org/vidasida/

**Project VIDA**
2659 South Kedvale Avenue
Chicago, IL 60623
Phone: (773) 277-2291
Fax: (773) 277-3543

**Lurie Children’s Gender & Sex Development Program**
Jennifer Leininger
773-303-6056
Jleininger@Luriechildrens.org

**Broadway Youth Center**
Contact: (773) 935-3151
ImaniR@Howardbrown.org

**TYRA: Transgender Youth Resource and Advocacy Group**
At BYC- Wellington
For T/GE youth under 24
615 W. Wellington
Wednesdays, 5-7p
blue@howardbrown.org

**Youth Outlook**
- Drop In Centers in Naperville, Aurora, DeKalb and Sterling
- Transcend program specifically for trans youth ages 13-21
- Parent Group youth-outlook.org

**Illinois Safe Schools Alliance**
illinoissafeschools.org
- Youth Committee
- GSA Network
- Action Camp
- Statewide Advocacy

**Angles Pride Youth Program**
- Drop In Centers in northern suburbs
Mental Health Resources

IntraSpectrum Counseling, Ltd.
180 N Michigan Ave, Suite 1040
Chicago, IL 60601
(847) 363-5088
www.intraspectrum-chicago.com

Live Oak Chicago
1300 W Belmont Ave, Suite 400
Chicago, IL 60657
(773) 880-1310
www.liveoakchicago.com

Valeo Pride Extensive Outpatient Program
Chicago Lakeshore Hospital
Intake: (800) 888-0560

Other therapists
- Deb Brozeweski
- Jamie Pagano
- Deb Wilke
- Barb Getz

Lurie Children’s Gender & Sex Development Program (Drs. Hidalgo, Chen, Coyne, Leibowitz)
Health Resources

Gender and Sex Development Program and Lurie Children’s, 773-303-6056

Howard Brown Health Center, howardbrown.org

Country Care Options, Stroger’s Same Gender Loving Clinic

Open Door Clinic in Aurora/Elgin, opendoorclinic.org

Association of Gay and Lesbian Psychiatrists, aglp.org

WPATH (World Professional Association for Transgender Health), wpath.org

Philadelphia Trans Health Conference, trans-health.org
Legal Resources

National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR), nclrights.org

Lambda Legal, lambdalegal.org

Human Rights Watch, hrw.org

National Center for Transgender Equality, transequality.org

Transgender Law Center, transgenderlawcenter.org

American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) aclu.org/issues/lgbt-rights/transgender-rights

Local:

The Transformative Justice Law Project of Illinois
Phone: (773) 272-1822
Email: info@tjlp.org
Website: http://tjlp.org

TJLP Name Change Mobilization
Where: 12th floor of the Daley Center
Room 1202 50 W. Washington
Chicago, IL
When:  Last Friday of every month
9:00AM-3:00PM
Contact: namechange@tjlp.org

TransLife Center: TransLegal
Phone: 773.248.5200 Ext. 414

Jill Metz & Associates--Carol Jones (Chicago)
Emma Vosicky, evosicky@kggllc.com (Chicago)
Housing Resources

El Rescate – VIDA/SIDA
2703 W Division St.
Chicago, IL 60622
773.278.6737 (phone)
http://prcc-chgo.org/vidasida

The Crib
835 W. Addison
Chicago, IL 60613
Phone: 773-549-4158
thenightministry.org

TransLife Center at Chicago House
http://www.chicagohouse.org/?post_causes=translife-center

360 Youth Services
Transitional Housing Program for 18-24 year old experiencing homelessness
To refer a potential resident, call 331-215-7388
360youthservices.org

Open Door Shelter (night ministry)
1110 n Noble street
773 506 4100 or 877 286 2523 (toll free)
Ages 14-20 interim housing with max 4 month stay. LGBT youth welcome.
Best times to call are before 9am

• Teen Living Programs (more than one program) Ages 14-24
Individual and Family Support/Helplines:

- Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gay/Parents of Transgender Individuals
  - 2 Illinois Chapters of PTI
  - Chicago group: Arlene Collins
  - McHenry group: Toni Weaver
- Trans Lifeline, translifeline.org
  - 877-565-8860
- The Trevor Project, thetrevorproject.org
  - 24/7 Suicide Hotline
  - 866-488-7386
- RAD Database, radremedy.org
- It Gets Better Project, itgetsbetter.org
- Gender Spectrum, genderspectrum.org
- Trans Youth Family Allies (TYFA), imatyfa.org
- Family Acceptance Project, familyproject.sfsu.org
- Inter/Act Youth, http://interactyouth.org/
Chicago Resources
Support/Social Groups

**PFLAG – Parents of Transgender Individuals**
Where: Center on Halsted, 3656 Halsted, Chicago
When: 2nd Thursday 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.
Contact: ptichicago1@gmail.com

**Meet Up Group - Pinwheels**
Where: http://www.meetup.com/Pinwheels/
When: Monthly
Contact: livethethruth@gmail.com

**PFLAG Metro Chicago (LGBT)**
Where: Center on Halsted Senior Room Location
3656 N Halsted, Chicago
When: 3rd Sunday, 2 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.
Contact: pflagchicagometro@pflagillinois.org

**Youth Outlook**
Transcend (ages 14-20)
Where: West Chicago, IL
When: 2nd and 4th Wednesday
Contact: nancy.mullen@youth-outlook.org

**Broadway Youth Center - TYRA**
When: Thursdays, 6-8 PM
Contact: Baylie Roth 773-299-7604
BaylieR@howardbrown.org

**Transcend 2 (ages 18-25)**
Where: Naperville
When: 3rd Wednesday
Contact: nancy.mullen@youth-outlook.org