Trans Allyship Workshop

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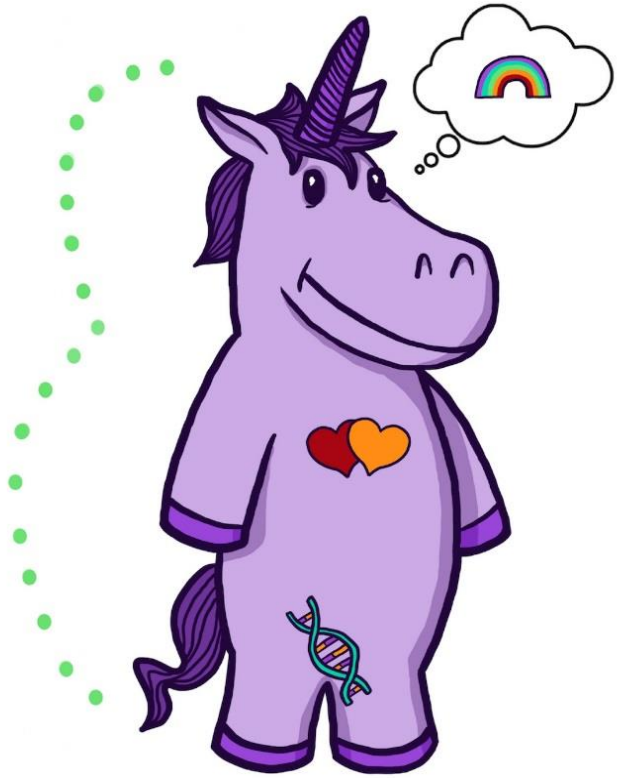
Introductions

Workshop Goals

- To define trans terminology
- To provide data on the number of trans people
- To increase awareness of the ways in which trans people face discrimination and harassment
- To identify strategies you can use to counter genderism and cisnormativity and be better supporters of trans people

The Gender Unicorn

Graphic by:
TSER
Trans Student Educational Resources



Gender Identity

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

Gender Expression/Presentation

- Feminine
- Masculine
- Other

Sex Assigned at Birth

Female | Male | Other/Intersex

Sexually Attracted To

- Women
- Men
- Other Gender(s)

Romantically/Emotionally Attracted To

- Women
- Men
- Other Gender(s)

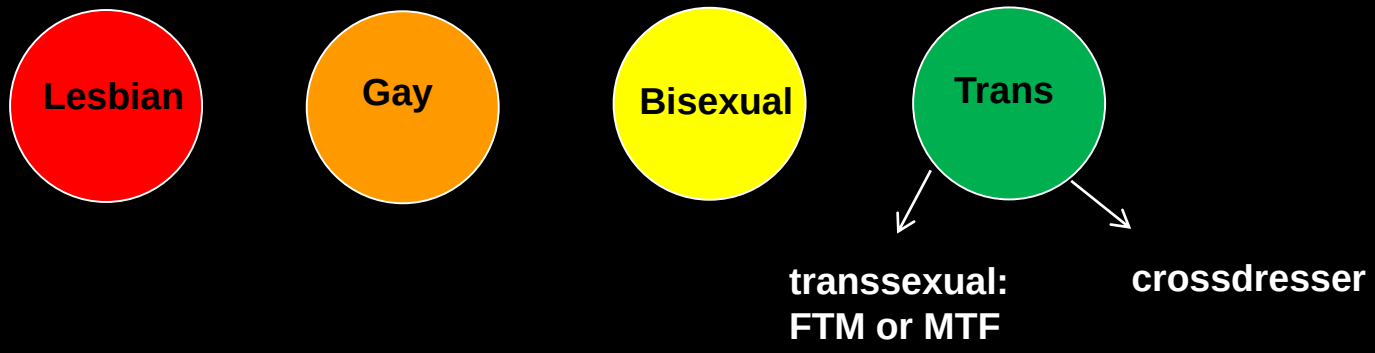
To learn more, go to:
www.transstudent.org/gender

Design by Landyn Pan

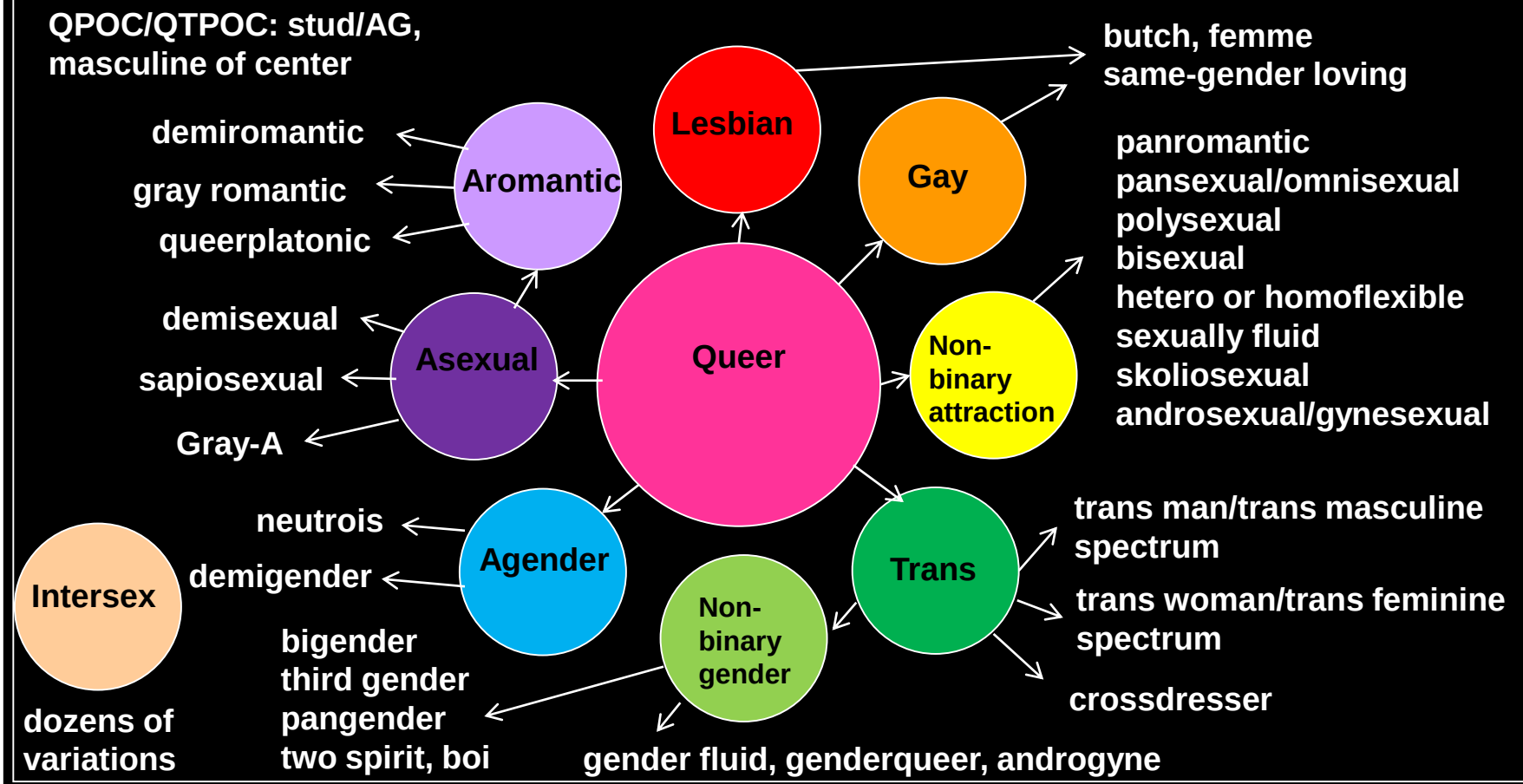
Gender is a galaxy

Melanie Gillman

Supportive Terminology: Late 1980s



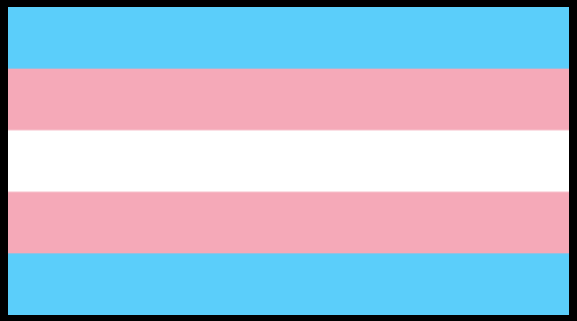
Supportive Terminology: Today



LGBTQIA+ Terminology Handout: www.umass.edu/stonewall/workshops

Transgender or Trans People

- An umbrella term for individuals whose gender identity and/or expression is different from the gender assigned to them at birth (not "transgendered" or "transgenders"). Opposite: cisgender/cis



by Monica Helms, 1999

- Trans people <u>can</u> include trans women and men; individuals who cross-dress or who present androgynously; agender, demigender, and genderqueer individuals; and others who cross or go beyond traditional gender categories.

Trans People

Trans Women: Women who were inappropriately assigned male at birth.

Trans Men: Men who were inappropriately assigned female at birth.

Gender Transition: The social and medical process that some trans individuals undertake to have their gender presentation match their gender identity.

- They may undergo medical procedures, such as hormone treatment and surgeries.
- They may start dressing in differently gendered ways.
- They may change their first name and pronouns.
- Some trans individuals, particularly nonbinary individuals, transition socially but not medically.

Trans People

Gender Nonbinary

- General terms for individuals who do not fit into traditional "male" and "female" gender categories.
- Includes individuals who identify as agender (who identify as not having a gender), demigender (who feel a partial connection to a particular gender identity), gender fluid, genderqueer (who identify as neither male nor female, as somewhere in between/ beyond genders, or as a combination of genders), androgyne (who identify androgynously), and many other genders.
- The majority of trans youth today identify as nonbinary.

What Percent of College Students Are Trans?

1% **3%** **6%** **12%**

2.7 %

From the American College Health Association's *National College Health Assessment*, Fall 2017 (*n* = 26,000+)
includes students who indicated that they are trans (1.6%) and students whose sex assigned at birth does not match their gender identity (1.1%)

These numbers will undoubtedly continue to rise:

- nearly 3% of Minnesota 9th-11th graders on a 2016 study identified as trans
- 27% of California teens in a 2016 survey said that they are viewed by others as gender nonconforming (6% highly GNC, 21% androgynous)

What Were the Most Common Trans Identities?

Genderqueer	.6% (*n* = 149)
Trans man	.2% (64)
Trans woman	.1% (15)
Another identity	1% (260)

From *National College Health Assessment*, Fall 2017

NSSE 2017 (1% trans): gave choices as man, woman, another gender identity, please specify, and prefer not to respond

Most common write-ins: nonbinary, nonconforming, gender fluid, agender, transgender, genderqueer, and two spirit.

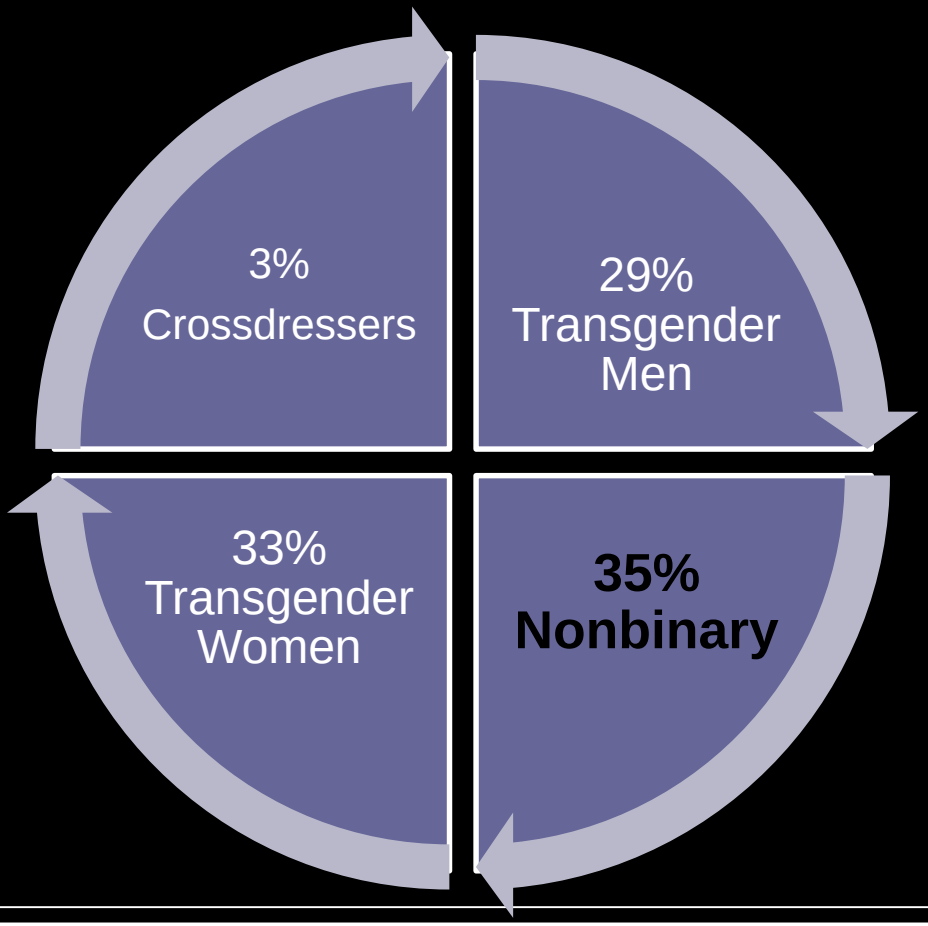
2016 NCHA (1.8% trans):
.9% "another identity," .6% genderqueer, .1% trans man: .1% trans woman

Gender Identity in the USTS

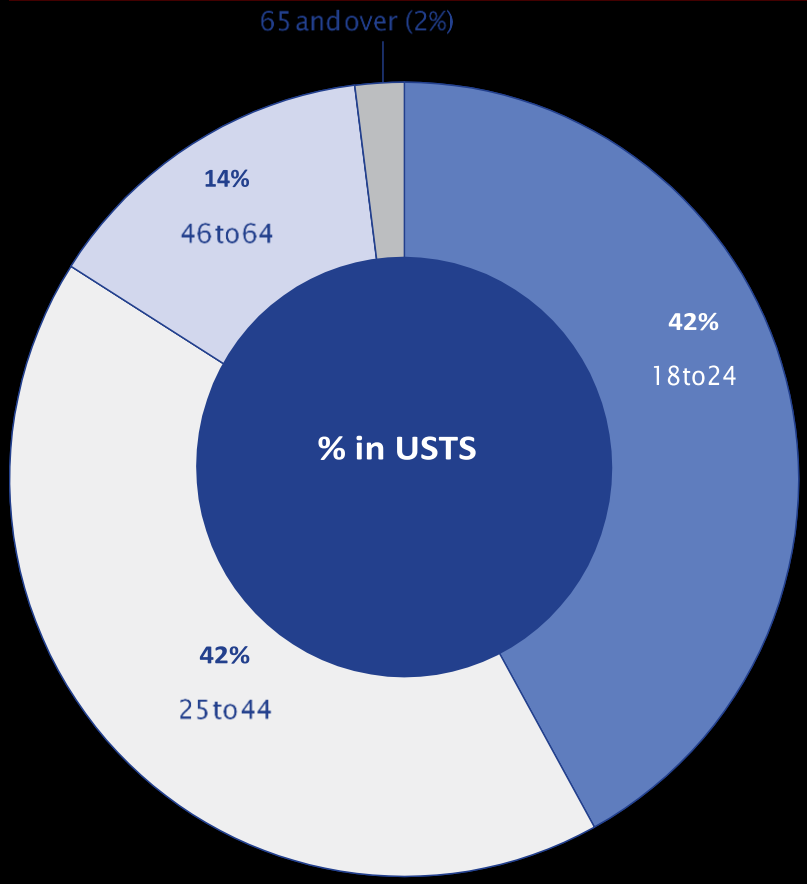
U.S. Transgender Survey

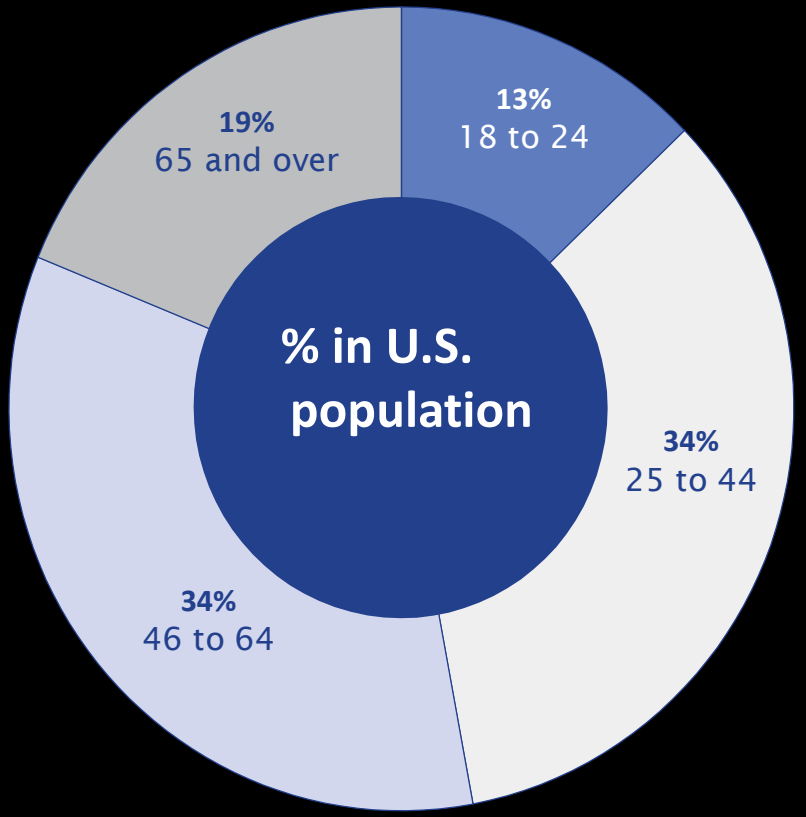
2015, National Center for Transgender Equality

(*n* = 27,715)



Age in the USTS





K-12 Experiences

EXPERIENCES	% OF THOSE WHO WERE OUT OR PERCEIVED AS TRANS
Verbally harassed because people thought they were transgender	54%
Not allowed to dress in a way that fit their gender identity or expression	52%
Disciplined for fighting back against bullies	36%
Physically attacked because people thought they were transgender	24%
Believe they were disciplined more harshly because teachers or staff thought they were transgender	20%
Left a school because the mistreatment was so bad	17%
Sexually assaulted because people thought they were transgender	13%
Expelled from school	6%
One or more experiences listed	77%

College Experiences

46% said that people thought or knew that they were trans in college.

24% of these respondents were verbally, physically, or sexually harassed on campus.

16% of these students left college because of the harassment. Trans people of color, specifically American Indian, Latinx, Black, and multiracial individuals, were more likely than white people to report leaving college because of harassment.

Violence Against Trans College Students

- 75.2% of TGQN* undergrads had experienced sexual harassment, as compared to 61.9% of cis female undergrads.
- 39.1% of TGQN seniors reported experiencing nonconsensual sexual contact at least once during their time at college, as compared to 33.1% of senior cis women.
- Only 15% of TGQN students reported an incident of sexual harassment to campus authorities.

Source: *Report on the AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Sexual Misconduct*, 2015

* “transgender, genderqueer or nonconforming, questioning, or not listed” (n = 1,398)

Violence Against Trans College Students

TGQN* students were the least optimistic that:

- Other students would support the person making the report
- Campus officials would take the report seriously
- Campus official would protect the safety of the person making the report
- Campus officials would conduct a fair investigation
- Campus officials would take action against the offender(s)
- Campus officials would take action to address factors that may have led to the sexual assault or sexual misconduct.

And were the most likely to believe that the alleged offender(s) or their associates would retaliate against the person making the report.

* “transgender, genderqueer or nonconforming, questioning, or not listed” (n = 1,398)

Harassment and Violence

46% of respondents were verbally harassed in the past year because of being trans.

Nearly one in ten (9%) respondents were physically attacked in the past year because of being trans.

47% of respondents were sexually assaulted at some point in their lifetime and one in ten (10%) were sexually assaulted in the past year.

54% experienced some form of intimate partner violence, including acts involving coercive control and physical harm.

Homelessness

23% of respondents experienced some form of housing discrimination in the past year, such as being evicted from their home or denied a home or apartment because of being trans.

30% of respondents have experienced homelessness at some point in their lives.

In the past year, one in eight (12%) respondents experienced homelessness because of being trans.

Psychological Distress and Attempted Suicide

39% of respondents experienced serious psychological distress in the month before completing the survey

Compared with only 5% of the U.S. population

40% have attempted suicide *in their lifetime*

9 times the rate in the U.S. population (4.6%)

7% attempted suicide *in the past year*

12 times the rate in the U.S. population (0.6%)

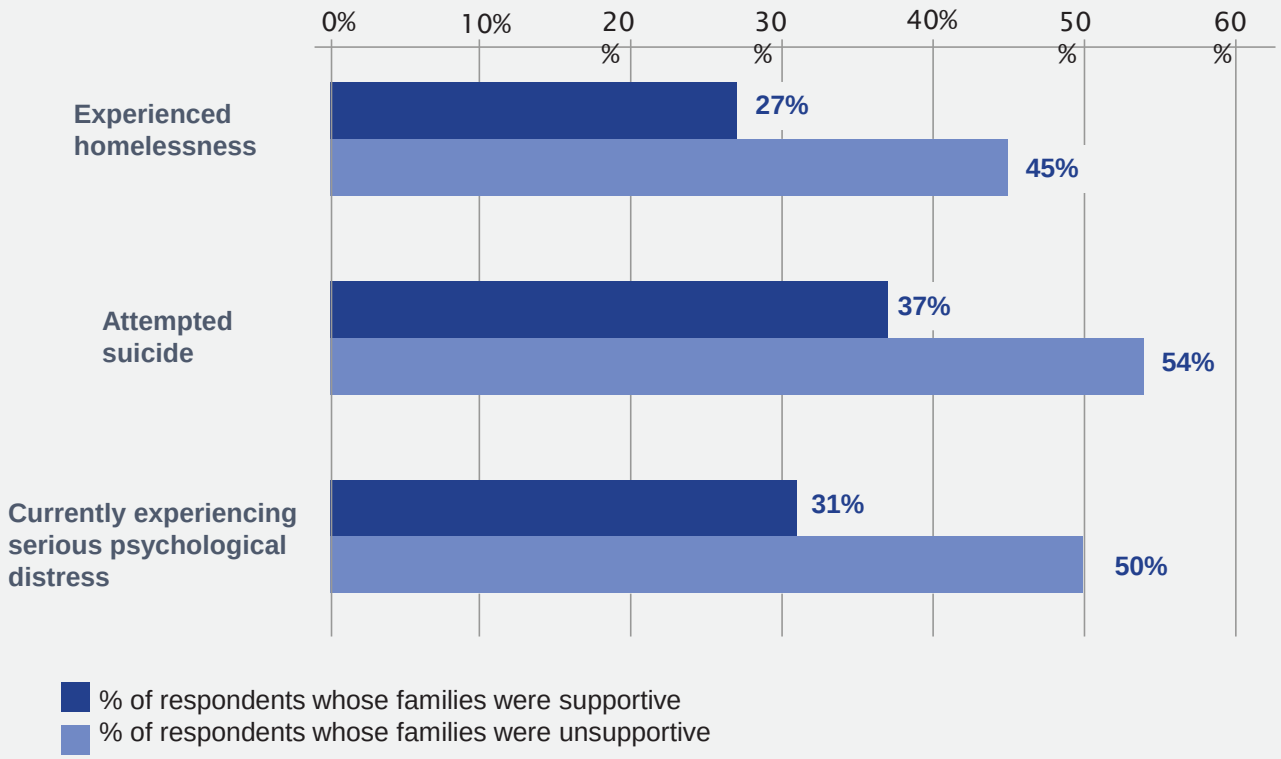
Psychological Distress and Attempted Suicide: College

- 32% of trans students and 30% of LGBQ+ students reported being so depressed that it was difficult to function, twice the percentage reported by cis and heterosexual students.
- 20% of trans students and 17% of LGBQ+ students reported self-injury in the last 12 months, which was three times the rate of their cis and heterosexual peers.
- 25% of trans students and 22% of LGBQ+ students reported that they had seriously considered suicide during the previous 12 months, which was three times the rate of cis (9%) and heterosexual (8%) students.

Meta-analysis of data from the National College Health Assessment, the National Survey of Student Engagement, the Cooperative Institutional Research Program, and the Student Experience in the Research University Consortium (involved 900+ colleges and nearly 90,000 LGBTQ+ students)

Importance of Family Support

Negative experiences among those with supportive and unsupportive families



Fostering Resilience

Resilience, as measured through a scale evaluating a person's ability to recover from stressful situations, has been found to help buffer against:

- the effects of anti-LGBTQ+ institutional and individual discrimination
- is associated with less reported depression and suicidal behavior among LGBTQ+ students

Michael R. Woodford, et al., "Depression and Attempted Suicide among LGBTQ College Students," *Journal of College Student Development* 59, no. 4 (2018), 421-438.

Fostering Resilience

What fosters self-esteem and resilience?
Connection

Trans students are better able to navigate genderism and develop a sense of belonging through creating kinship networks

Sites where trans kinship develops:

- Material Domain: physical spaces on campus and locally
- Virtual Domain: online spaces, which are especially important if there are not physical, on-campus spaces
- Affective Domain: individuals' support systems

Fostering Resilience

How administrators can help foster trans student kinship:

- Assist trans students in connecting with other trans people in both the physical and virtual world
- Support the development of formal and informal trans-affirming spaces, such as LGBTQ+ and trans-specific student groups and an LGBTQ+ center
- Seek the input of trans students on how they are affected by various campus environments and work with them to change unsupportive spaces

Z Nicolazzo, et al., “An Exploration of Trans* Kinship as a Strategy for Student Success,” *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* 30, no. 3 (2017), 305-319.

Changing the Climate

- LGBTQ+ students who are more comfortable in classes are more likely to do well in them, and students see instructors as central to creating these inclusive, welcoming environments

Hannah Furrow, "LGBT Students in the College Composition Classroom," *Journal of Ethnographic and Qualitative Research* 6 (2012), 145-159.

- Enabling trans youth to use their chosen name in institutional contexts has been shown to lead to less reported depressive symptoms, suicidal ideation, and suicidal behavior

Russell, Pollitt, Li, and Grossman, "Chosen Name Use Is Linked to Reduced Depressive Symptoms, Suicidal Ideation, and Suicidal Behavior among Transgender Youth," *Journal of Adolescence.*, 2018.

Sophie Labelle

Changing the Climate

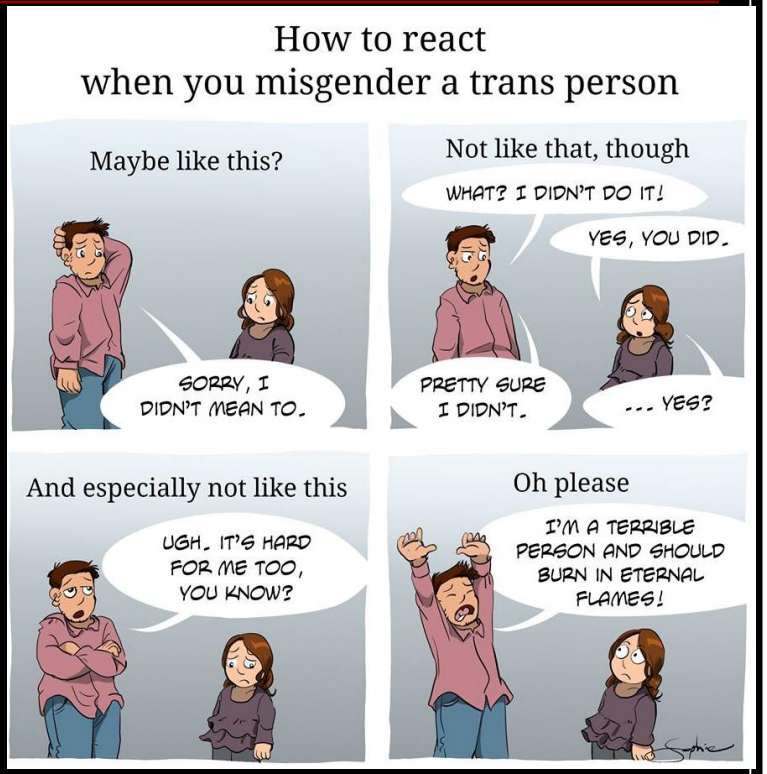
- ✓ Forms need to ask chosen name (not “preferred”); this name should be the only name that appears on non-legal documents (such as ID cards); and individuals should be addressed only by this name
- ✓ Forms need to ask gender identity, and if “legal sex” must also be asked, there should be an explanation as to why
  - Best option: gender _____
  - If choices need to be offered: gender (choose all that apply): man, woman, trans, another identity (please specify)
- ✓ Names and gender markers on records should be changed upon request (i.e., without proof of a legal name change or transition)
- ✓ If legal name (dead name) must remain on records, steps should be taken so that a person’s chosen name is used in interactions

Changing the Climate

- ✓ Forms need to ask pronouns (not “preferred”)
  - Your personal pronouns (examples: she/her; he/him; they/them; ze/hir): _____
- ✓ Train staff to be asking and respecting pronouns and not to be relying on gender assumptions
- ✓ Train staff to avoid using gendered forms of address (Mr./Ms. and sir/ma’am) without knowing how someone identifies their gender and avoid saying “guys” and “ladies and gentleman” for groups
- ✓ Apologize appropriately when you misgender someone and promise to do better (and then do better) in the future
- ✓ Do not tolerate clients misgendering others or making anti-trans comments

What If I Mistakenly Use the Wrong Pronouns for Someone?

- The best thing to do if you use the wrong pronoun for someone is to say something right away, such as “Sorry, I meant they.” Fix it, but do not call special attention to the error in the moment. If you realize your mistake after the fact, apologize in private and move on.
- It can be tempting to go on and on about how bad you feel that you messed up or how hard it is for you to get it right. But please, don’t. It is inappropriate and makes the person who was misgendered feel awkward and responsible for comforting you, which is not their job. It is your job to remember people’s pronouns.



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Adopted from Ohio University’s LGBT Center

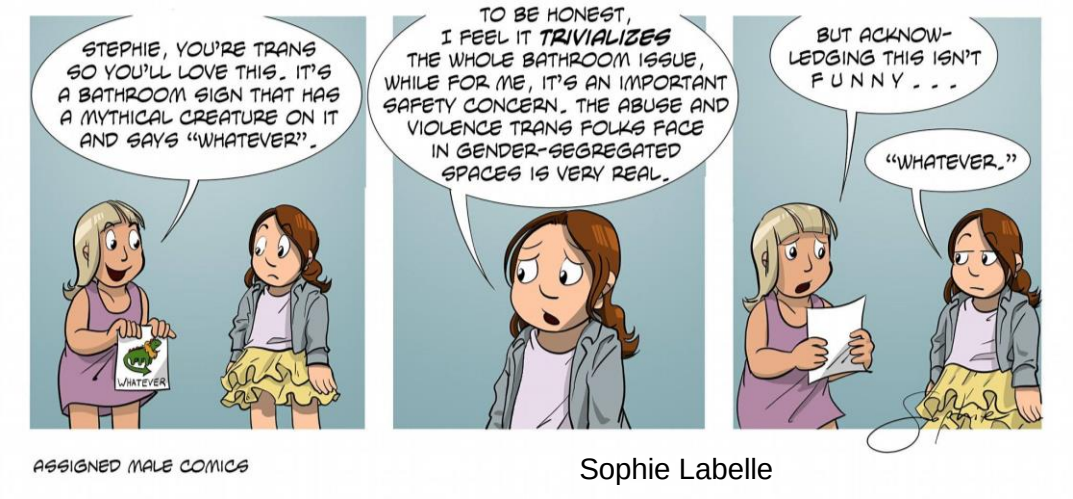
What If Someone Else Mistakenly Uses the Wrong Pronouns for a Person?

- In most cases, the best thing to do if you hear someone misgender another person is to gently correct them without further embarrassing the individual who has been misgendered. You can say something, such as “Actually, Xena uses she/her pronouns for herself,” and then move on. If a person refuses to use the appropriate pronouns for someone, do not ignore it. It is important that the harassment of others not be tolerated. It may be appropriate to speak to the person in private to correct the misgendering behavior.

- It may also be appropriate to check-in with the person who has been misgendered and say something, such as “I noticed that you were being referred to by the wrong pronouns earlier, and I know that this can be really hurtful. Would you be okay with me taking the person aside and reminding them about your appropriate pronouns? I want to make sure that this space is safe for you.” Follow up if necessary, but take your cues from the comfort level of the person who has been misgendered.

Changing the Climate

- ✓ Restroom facilities in agencies should be gender-inclusive and labeled “restroom,” without gendered figures or “cutesy” images



- ✓ Treat trans women and men just as other women and men, respectively, in instances of gender segregation (restrooms, locker rooms, shelters, etc.) and make sure that others do as well

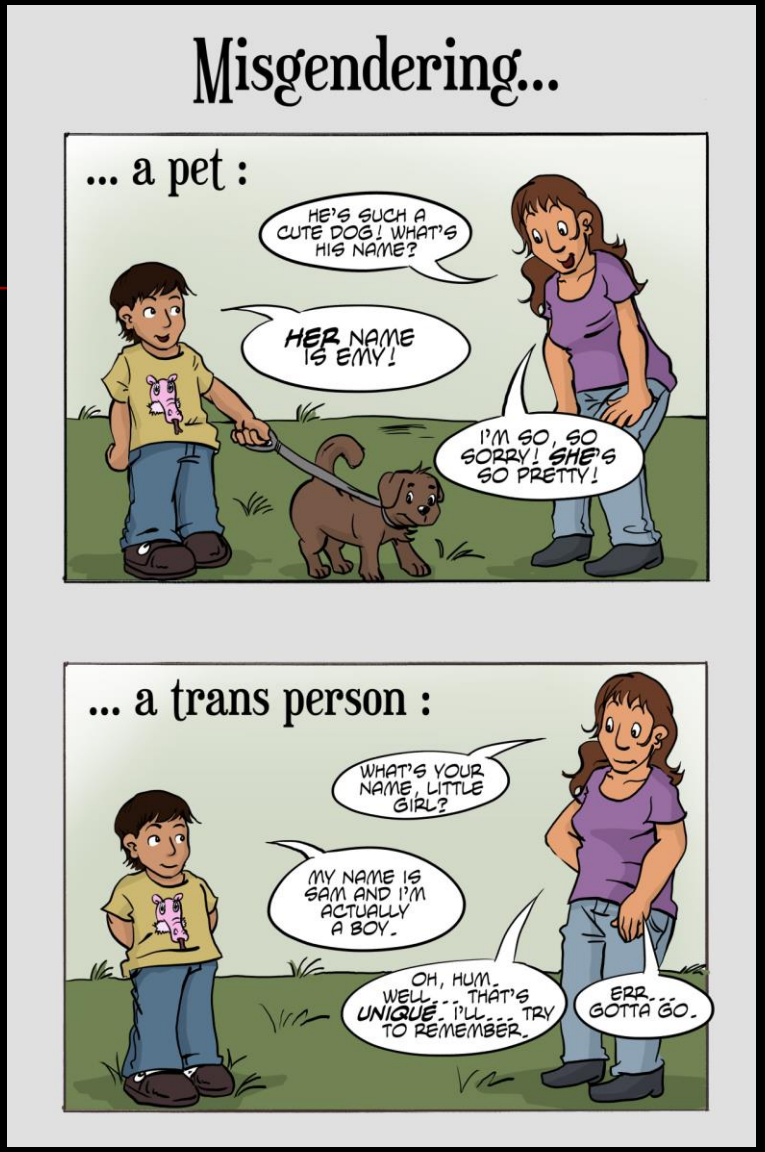
Changing the Climate

- ✓ Agencies should have trans-inclusive information and images in their waiting rooms, on their websites, and in their print materials
- ✓ If you are trans-supportive, display a symbol of trans allyship in your work area
- ✓ Know appropriate terminology to refer to trans identities
- ✓ Educate yourself about the experience of trans people and attend events featuring trans speakers
- ✓ Educate other staff and clients about the experiences of trans people and the need for trans rights laws (repeal of the Massachusetts law on trans access to public facilities is on the ballot in November)

Questions?

Also feel free to email me:

genny@umass.edu



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