

LGBTWho?

While LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer/questioning) activists have made great strides for equality, LGBTQ students still face risks. Almost 30% of LGBTQ youth attempt suicide, with transgender and non-binary students at greater risk. These students are in desperate need of adults who accept them and welcome them in as they are—no ifs, ands or buts. In fact, the presence of even one accepting adult, be it a teacher, parent or community member, in the life of an LGBTQ student reduces that student’s risk of suicide by 40%. These students need our help and our support, if only we can figure out how to provide it.

The most common barriers for teachers wanting to help LGBTQ students are lack of knowledge and lack of exposure. LGBTQ issues are complex and nuanced; the field of queer studies has grown massively in the last 50 years, leading to a deluge of information that can be hard to track. Furthermore, many teachers seeking to learn may find themselves reading contradictory advice and explanations on the regular. It can very quickly start to feel like a hopeless slog that will, inevitably, end with one feeling more confused than when one started.

But all is not lost! Remember: we’re doing this for our students. We can do this, and even better, we can do it together! “LGBTWho?” was created to help teachers, parents and anyone else who works with children learn more about LGBTQ identity. The goal is not to be comprehensive, but to build a foundation for further learning. The QR code on the poster links to a document that contains resources sorted by issue/identity as well as citations for the poster. That document can also be accessed at www.tinyurl.com/LGBTWho. ◀◀

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LGBT Who?: Affirming LGBTQ Students in the Music Classroom

Hannah Fisher - University of Nebraska Omaha

Lesbian, gay, and bisexual students are five times as likely to attempt suicide as their straight peers.

3 out of 4 transgender students feel unsafe at school.

The presence of one accepting adult reduces an LGBTQ student's risk of suicide by 40%.



Terminology



Gender

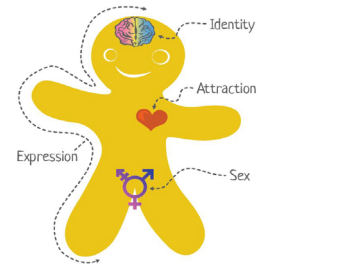
- **Sex assigned at birth:** Male, female, or intersex designation given to an infant at birth. Assigned based on external anatomy.
- **Intersex:** an adjective used to describe someone whose sex characteristics (internal and external anatomy, hormone levels/response, chromosomes, etc) do not place them neatly into a binary sex (male or female).
- **Trans or transgender:** adjectives used to describe someone whose gender is NOT the same as the sex they were assigned at birth. Example: Jessica was assigned male, but she **transitioned** when she realized she is a woman. Jessica is a trans woman.
- **Cis or cisgender:** adjectives used to describe someone whose gender IS the same as the sex they were assigned at birth. Example: Tina was assigned female and still identifies as a woman. Tina is a cis woman.
- **Non-binary:** an adjective used to describe people who identify with a gender other than male or female. Some may identify as in between genders, some identify as completely **agender**, and some may fluctuate between genders and identify as **genderfluid**.
- **Gender-nonconforming:** a person whose **gender presentation** (gendered aspects of appearance and behavior) is different from that which is socially expected for their gender. Many (but certainly not all) LGBTQ people are gender-nonconforming and dress or act in ways not usually associated with their gender. Example: Jonah is a gay man. He chooses to wear makeup, paint his nails, and dress in a more feminine manner as a form of self-expression. Jonah is gender-nonconforming.

Sexuality

- **Gay:** adjective referring to someone who is attracted to people of the same gender. **Lesbian** specifically describes a woman who is attracted to other women. Individuals who identify as gay or lesbian may also be attracted to non-binary individuals, just as a heterosexual person might.
- **Bisexual:** adjective describing someone who is attracted to people of multiple genders or regardless of gender. **Pansexual** and **Polysexual** are two variations on the same idea - "pan" meaning "all" and "poly" meaning "many."
- **Asexual:** adjective describing a person who does not experience sexual attraction. Asexuality is often seen as a spectrum - some asexuals may experience attraction only under specific circumstances.
- Note: many of these terms have been modified to describe different kinds of romantic attraction as well: people may identify as both asexual and **aromantic**, meaning they do not experience sexual or romantic attraction. On the other hand, a person may identify as pansexual and **panromantic**, meaning that they are sexually and romantically attracted to people of all genders.

Activism and Inclusion

- **Queer:** an umbrella term used to describe anyone who is not heterosexual and cisgender. Also the term used to refer to LGBTQ people in academia, as in "queer studies" and "queer theory." Sometimes used as an identity in and of itself. Some LGBTQ people are uncomfortable with the word, as it has been used as a slur by cis and straight people.
- **GSA:** gay/straight alliance or gender and sexuality alliance. A school organization formed to advocate for and support LGBTQ students.
- **Deadname:** a name one used to use, but not longer uses. Example: Jessica is a trans woman. Before she transitioned, she had a masculine name. She likes the name "Jessica" better and no longer wishes to use the masculine name - it is her deadname.
- **Pronouns:** a part of gender presentation. He/him/his, she/her/hers, and singular they/them/theirs are most common. Non-gendered pronouns like they/them/theirs, ey/em/eirs, and ze/zir/zirs, are often used by non-binary individuals in place of gendered pronouns. **Respect the name and pronouns your student asks you to use!**



means a lack of who's on the right side



Identity ≠ Expression ≠ Sex
Gender ≠ Sexual Orientation



For citations, resources, and further reading, scan this QR code with your phone's camera app or visit tinyurl.com/LGBTWho.



Special thanks to Dr. Kristin Jónína Taylor, who pushes me every day to be a better musician, student, and person. None of this could have happened without her. Dr. Taylor, you're a star! Thanks also to the wonderful people of the NAFME Amplify Forum for an amazing discussion thread full of insights, advice, questions, and answers. This project is infinitely better because of their involvement. Specific shoutout to Al Fischer, for invaluable advice and commentary, much of which made it into this poster. Final shoutout to my mom, who volunteered to "straight-person proof" this presentation and continues to be my anchor and my best ally. Thanks, Mom!

Strategies for Active Inclusion

- We love to teach, we love to learn - so do both! **Educate yourself, then talk to your colleagues!** Help build a culture of care.
- **Be clear and consistent in your support.** This can be as simple as hanging a sign or including a line in your studio policies.
- **Implement gender-neutral concert attire.** Gendered clothing can be uncomfortable for trans and gender non-conforming students. One suggestion is to create a list of "concert black" clothing options that gives students room to choose. Another is to just use one uniform for the whole ensemble, like choir robes or marching band uniforms. Try to avoid saying "dresses for ladies, suits for gentlemen" - this reinforces an unnecessary binary and excludes gender-nonconforming students.
- **Try for gender-neutral language.** Remember that not all of your altos and sopranos may identify as women and not all of your tenors and basses may identify as men.
- **Normalize diversity.** Try asking each student for their name and pronouns - it makes it easier for trans students to assert their identity if everyone else is doing it.
- **Provide diverse role models.** Show examples of women who play "masculine" instruments and men who play "feminine" instruments. Include LGBTQ composers and performers in your curriculum. Break down gender stereotypes!
- **Sort vocalists by vocal range, not by gender.** Again, we're emphasizing the role they play in the ensemble over their gender.
- **Stay informed.** Understand that politics affect minority students more than non-minority students. Most states, including Nebraska, have no laws in place to protect LGBTQ children.
- **Be patient.** Figuring out who you are is confusing! Don't be surprised if a student goes through multiple labels and identities before finding one that fits. Give them time!