

COLORS+

YOUTH CENTER

The Gender Spectrum

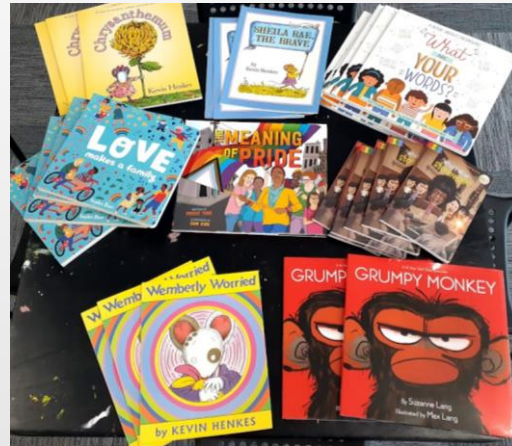
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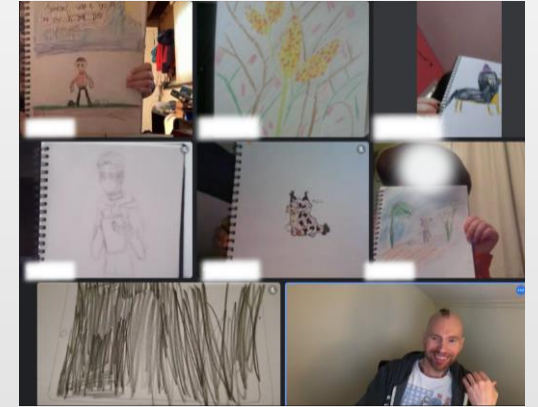
Ages 3-10

- ❖ Drag Story Hour
- ❖ Gender+ Play Groups
- ❖ Create and Connect Art Therapy Groups



Ages 11-19

- ❖ Colors+ Connections
- ❖ TransYou
- ❖ LGBTQ+ Inclusive Sexual Health Classes
- ❖ Dungeons and Dragons
- ❖ Drag Programming
- ❖ Create and Connect Art Therapy Groups
- ❖ Game Night
- ❖ Camp POWER



Parents and Families

- ❖ Monthly Parent Connection Groups
- ❖ Family Yoga Classes
- ❖ Gender+ Play Group





- ❖ Youth ages 3+
- ❖ Family Counseling
- ❖ Individual Counseling for Adults
- ❖ Couples Counseling
- ❖ Health insurance and self-pay options available



Understanding the differences between sex and gender

- Sex is the classification of a person as *male*, *female*, or *intersex*
- Traditionally identified by a persons genitalia at birth
- Someone's sex characteristics are their personal information, and you do not need to know someone's sex assigned at birth to be respectful of their gender identity. Believe others when they share their gender identity with you and support them.



Understanding Gender and Expression

- **You can't tell someone's gender by looking at them**
- *Gender* describes our internal understanding and experience of our own gender identity. Each person's experience of their gender identity is unique and personal.
- *Gender expression* describes the way in which we present or express our gender, which can include physical appearance, clothing, hairstyles, and behavior. We have control over some elements of our gender expression, such as behavior, body modification, or ornamentation.
- Be aware of the expectations you project onto others based on their gender, and strive to support others and validate their experiences.

Remember: Gender identity is a living, growing experience that can change over time.



Visit <https://www.actioncanadashr.org/beyond-basics-sneak-peek-gender-galaxy> to view the Gender Galaxy image.



Language and Labels

Terminology is ever changing, and culturally and generationally specific. Mirror their language.

Labels can be a huge source of self-understanding for some LGBTQ+ people. Because we live in a society where everyone is assumed and most are expected to be straight and cisgender, finding the words to define yourself can be an act of *liberation*.

Labels can help *connect people* to one another, allowing them *to feel less alone* and to create community together.

Labels also allow researchers to study marginalized groups, giving us important information to better understand and support these groups.



Pronouns

Believe others. You do not need to understand it to respect it. Respect is trusting someone when they tell you who they are.

1 in 4 LGBTQ youth use pronouns or pronoun combinations that fall outside of the binary construction of gender.

Be aware of the expectations you project onto others based on their gender, and strive to support others and validate their experiences.



Gender Dysphoria

- A marked incongruence between one's experienced/expressed gender and assigned gender, of at least 6 months' duration, as manifested by
- In Children: a strong desire to be of another gender, preference for wearing masculine/feminine clothing, a strong preference for cross gender roles in play, a strong preference for toys and playmates engaged with another gender, a strong dislike of one's sexual anatomy, a strong desire for the primary or secondary sex characteristics that match one's experienced gender.
- In Adolescents: strong desire to: be rid of one's primary/secondary sex characteristics or to prevent the development of secondary sex characteristics, for sex characteristics of another gender, to be of another gender, to be treated as another gender, and a strong conviction that one has the typical feelings and reactions of another gender.



Gender Dysphoria and Children

- Occurs with children as young as age two.
- Occurs more commonly in AMAB children
- In most children, gender dysphoria will disappear before or early in puberty (12-27% persistence rate).
- It is relatively common for gender dysphoric children to have co-existing internalizing disorders such as **anxiety and depression**, and an increased likelihood for **neurodiverse** children to be referred to clinics for gender dysphoria.



Gender and Children

Gender Creative Parenting acknowledges that trans and intersex people exist and shows a commitment to eliminate **sexism and gender-based oppression**.

To access the video by @drkylmyers visit <https://www.tiktok.com/@drkylmyers>



Gender Dysphoria and Adolescents

- The persistence of gender dysphoria into adulthood appears to be much higher for adolescents.
- Many adolescents and adults presenting with gender dysphoria do not report a history of childhood gender nonconforming behaviors



Supporting one another on the gender spectrum

- Believe others. You do not need to understand it to respect it. Respect is trusting someone when they tell you who they are.
- Mirror their language.
- Do your own research rather than ask others to educate you about gender, people in the gender expansive community have a lot already to think about.
- Get support especially if you are struggling with your feelings around this new experience.



Manage your feelings, Support your child and their family

If you or the family questions your child's identity or wonder if it is "just a phase"

Exploration and experimentation is part of everyone's identity and is especially important to youth navigating this world as they grow and develop. Youth do not casually claim to be LGBTQ, as it carries many challenges and even stigma. You may need time to adjust to it, but don't deny your child's disclosure.

Worry about discrimination or bullying

If your child is being bullied, they are the victim. Showing sympathy and understanding your child's perspective is an important show of support.

Use faith positively if your family is spiritual or religious

It is deeply wounding to tell your child that he/she/they will be a disappointment to God or their religious community. This will likely create self-hate or self-doubt within your child, but it will not create positive change. There are many faiths and denominations that provide supportive information and welcome all families.

Encourage your child's family to include the client in family activities

Ostracizing someone can reduce feelings of belonging, it can lower self-esteem, a sense of control, and a "sense of having a meaningful existence". Ignoring, ostracizing, or marginalizing your child may increase emotional pain and increase the risk of self-harming behaviors and despair.



The Importance of Affirmation

65%

***decrease in suicidal attempts**
when a youth can use their chosen name at home, school, work, and with friends.

* Journal of Adolescent Health

29%

***decrease in suicidal ideation**
when a transgender student's chosen name **and** gender pronouns are used.

* Journal of Adolescent Health

78%

of transgender & nonbinary youth report their health has been "poor" either most of the time or always during the pandemic, indicating increased vulnerability at this time.

*The Trevor Project



Treatment and Social Support is Effective

Create & Connect Art Therapy

Participating youth completed a survey with results stating 100% of youth used art to improve their mood/promote their well-being and 4 out of every 5 youth felt a reduction in nervousness, anxiety or depression after completing the art therapy program.

- TransYou

100% of youth saw an increase in feeling accepted for who they are with more than 50% reporting that they felt better about their future

