



Making Schools Safer

A practical resource for schools on supporting transgender, gender diverse, and intersex students in Aotearoa New Zealand

Published 2021 by InsideOUT Kōaro
138 Wakefield Street, Te Aro,
Wellington 6011
<http://insideout.org.nz/>

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Enquiries should be made to the publisher
ISBN (Softcover): 978-0-473-55146-9
ISBN (PDF): 978-0-473-55147-6

Produced with support from the Ministry of Education.



Copies may be downloaded or ordered from InsideOUT online at
<http://insideout.org.nz/resources/>

Replacement copies may also be ordered from Ministry of Education Customer
Services, online at www.thechair.co.nz/resources/,
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Please quote item number 55148.

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Introducing InsideOUT

Development of this resource was led by InsideOUT, a national charity that works to give rainbow young people in Aotearoa New Zealand a sense of safety and belonging in their schools and communities. These are the goals to which we aspire and the beliefs that sit beneath them.

Our vision

All rainbow young people in Aotearoa New Zealand have a sense of safety and belonging in their schools and communities.

Our mission

To work with young people, whānau, schools, community groups, youth services, government agencies, and other relevant organisations to provide safer schools and communities for rainbow young people.

To foster the building and provision of resources, education, information, hui, and relevant tools which work to improve the health, wellbeing, and safety of rainbow young people.

Our kaupapa

The statements listed below underpin all of the resources we create and inform all that we do in our work with schools.

- Being trans, gender diverse, intersex, or having a diverse sexuality is a natural, positive expression of human diversity. A person's sexuality, gender, or body is not up for debate.
- Gender or sex may be an important part of who a person is, but it is not the only part; our identities can also be shaped by their culture, ethnicity, socioeconomic background, religion, or disability.
- The adults within a school community have obligations to respect students' rights to safety, privacy, and inclusion within their whānau, school, and wider community.
- Respecting students' rights upholds their mana motuhake (self-determination) and mauri (energy, life force).
- Being proactive about creating welcoming learning environments, rather than waiting to react to students' needs or challenges, will make it easier for students to learn and thrive. When all students belong, it makes teaching and learning easier.

I Introduction

Nau mai, haere mai!

InsideOUT is excited to release this second edition of *Making schools safer*, our resource for schools seeking to support transgender, gender diverse, and intersex students and their whānau. In this introduction, we explain its purpose, give an overview of what is covered and discuss how you might use it.

This resource has been developed in collaboration with rangatahi, trans- and intersex-led community organisations, whānau, school staff, and the Ministry of Education. Please see the acknowledgements for a list of these people, whose shared expertise gives it strength.

Purpose of this resource

Every young person has the right to feel safe and know that they can express themselves free from discrimination. *Making schools safer* is intended to strengthen the work being done to ensure the next generation of trans, gender diverse, and intersex students in Aotearoa New Zealand are affirmed and supported to be their amazing selves. Many of its messages are relevant for primary, intermediate, and secondary schools alike.

A lot of positive changes have happened for this diverse group of students since publication of the first edition in 2016. There is growing awareness throughout schools and in government of the need to provide targeted support for trans, gender diverse, and intersex students. Across Aotearoa New Zealand, a growing number of schools are establishing student-led rainbow diversity groups and are running awareness campaigns.

There is still much work to be done. According to the Youth19 survey,¹ for example, trans and gender diverse students in Aotearoa New Zealand experience disproportionately high rates of mental distress compared to their cisgender peers. This includes the distress caused when teachers or school leaders witness discrimination and do not intervene. Often, this kind of response arises from a lack of awareness or people simply not knowing what to do. *Making schools safer* offers adult members of school communities the information and advice they need to make their environment a place of safety, belonging, and empowerment for all their students.

Key messages

These are some of the main messages we would like you to take from this resource:

- If we are to support trans, gender diverse, and intersex students to thrive at school, in their whānau, and in their wider communities, it is best that we take a whole-of-school and proactive approach.

¹ Fenaughty, J., et al. (2021). A Youth19 brief: Transgender and gender diverse students. Available at www.youth19.ac.nz/publications

- Be prepared to have conversations with school community members about gender and variations of sex characteristics, even if these are uncomfortable. Remember there is lots of support out there, and many schools across Aotearoa are going through the same process.
- Respect and maintain students' rights to privacy and self-determination around their gender and sex characteristics. Always make sure to ask the student about who they feel comfortable knowing this information.
- Every person's journey is different. Some young people may be happy for people to know that they are trans or intersex, or even want to share this information. Others may wish to keep their journey private. Always be guided by the student's self-knowledge and wishes.
- Inclusion is not just about solving issues around exclusion. When we address and overcome barriers, we create and share valuable knowledge and experiences. As a result, people across communities have access to different perspectives that can help them learn and grow.

What is in this resource?

This resource has five sections:

Section 1 is intended to build your knowledge about the intersections between sex, gender, variations of sex characteristics, identity, and culture, and how these impact on an individual's sense of belonging and participation.

Section 2 unpacks what is involved in supporting safety, wellbeing, and inclusion for specific groups of trans, gender diverse, and intersex students.

Section 3 looks at how to create an inclusive learning environment. It begins with curriculum and moves on to specific aspects of school that students say are important to them.

Section 4 focuses on the adults at school and at home and what is involved in creating a 'community of care' around each student.

The appendices offer a glossary and information about further training and support to help you create safe and inclusive school environments for trans, gender diverse, and intersex students.

There is a printable PDF copy of this resource on our website at www.insideout.org/nz/resources

You will also find additional resources to help you follow the advice and suggestions offered here. These include:

- a list of resources and support groups across Aotearoa New Zealand
- a gender transition support plan template
- information for whānau and community members
- practical tips on how to make your local curriculum more inclusive of gender diversity and variations of sex characteristics.

Language in this resource

InsideOUT uses *transgender (trans)* and *gender diverse* as umbrella terms for people whose gender is different than that which they were assigned at birth. This includes non-binary people. We use *intersex* and *variations of sex characteristics (VSC)* as umbrella terms for a range of sex characteristics that don't fit medical norms around female or male bodies.

Some trans, gender diverse, and intersex people may also identify as *rainbow*, an umbrella term that encompasses the wider spectrums of gender, sex characteristics, and sexuality. The acronym *LGBTQIA+* is another umbrella term. It stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, and other genders and sexualities. We recognise that people use different words to describe their gender or sex, and these may differ from the words we use throughout this resource.

Language is important, as it can create common understanding and a sense of belonging, or conversely, exclusion. By being conscious of our language and intentional about using it to include, we can grow as individuals and make more positive connections with others. For this reason, we have been deliberate about introducing key terms. Terms that are italicised are also discussed in the glossary on pages 53-56. You can find an extended version of the glossary on our website.²

How might you use this resource?

This resource is designed to be used alongside existing resources for schools in Aotearoa New Zealand. Consider evaluating what your school is currently doing well to support trans, gender diverse, and intersex students and areas for possible improvement. You might like to do this by using an existing tool, such as the Ministry of Education's Bullying-free NZ School Framework³ or its *Inclusive Practices Toolkit*.⁴ *Relationships and Sexuality Education: A guide for teachers, learners, and boards of trustees*⁵ has a whole section on how to take a whole school approach to relationships and sexuality education.

² <https://insideout.org.nz/resources/>

³ www.bullyingfree.nz/schools/a-guide-for-board-of-trustees/a-whole-school-approach-the-bullying-free-nz-school-framework/

⁴ www.wellbeingatschool.org.nz/about-inclusive-practices-tools

⁵ <https://health.tki.org.nz/Teaching-in-HPE/Policy-Guidelines/Relationships-and-Sexuality-Education>

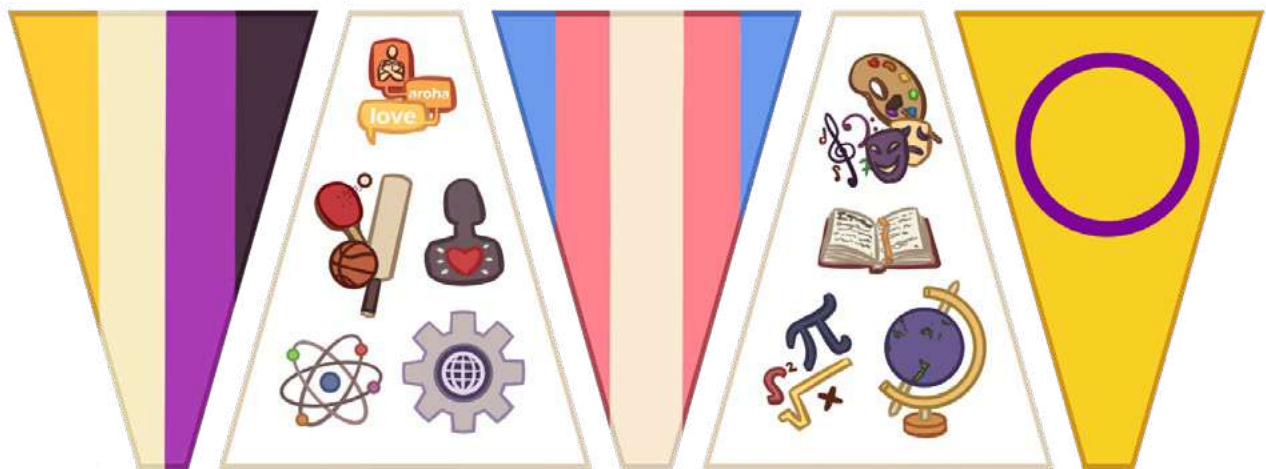
There are other possibilities – a recent entry in the *Local Leading Local Curriculum Design* series has important things to say about connecting a school's strategic aims to students' experiences of teaching and learning.⁶ The *Positive Behaviour for Learning initiatives*⁷ are proving very effective in many schools. You know what is best for your community.

Ideally, you will be using this resource to help generate whole school improvement. As you work through this resource, we trust that you will identify opportunities to work with others to make positive change. These may include students, whānau, and others in the wider community, including in the rainbow community. Together, you might want to advocate for greater inclusion in sports teams, better access to gender-neutral toilet facilities, or a more responsive curriculum. InsideOUT's other resources, including our Schools Coordinators, could help in this endeavour.

You may feel quite isolated in this mahi. If so, please remember that a small action on your part may make the world of difference for a student who is feeling alone, disrespected, or unsafe. Whether you are on your own, working with a small group, or part of a drive to whole-school improvement, there is great value in clearly outlining the approach you and your school will take to creating trans- and intersex-inclusive learning environments. You may not achieve everything you want straight away, but you will know you are doing the right thing and you will get there.

Ngā mihi maioha!

InsideOUT knows how highly students speak of the teachers, guidance counsellors, and school leaders who reach out and support them. Your support makes a very real, positive difference to rainbow young people. It is noticed, appreciated, and remembered.




⁶ See Local curriculum: Strategic planning guide (secondary schools): Creating coherence: Connecting planning and documentation with the lived curriculum. In Strengthening local curriculum guide series. <https://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/Strengthening-local-curriculum/Leading-local-curriculum-guide-series>

⁷ <https://pb4l.tki.org.nz/>

Section 1.

Understanding the intersections of sex, gender, variations of sex characteristics, and culture

Educators have spent a lot of time over the last two decades thinking about inclusion for students of diverse cultures and identities. This discussion brings in the dimensions of sex, gender, and variations of sex characteristics, and discusses how they intersect with a person's cultural identity. It concludes with some guidelines for supporting young people across these intersections.



Prompt for reflection

As you read this section, we invite you to think about your own experience. How do you think about sex, gender, and variations of sex characteristics? What part does culture play in these understandings?

What do you know about how people of other cultures understand these concepts?

You might also ask yourself how other people's perceptions of you affect your own sense of self and your ability to participate in the communities to which you belong.

Pākehā worldviews of sex, gender, and variations of sex characteristics

When we refer to 'Pākehā worldviews of sex, gender and variations of sex characteristics', we are referring to ways of thinking about sex, gender and variations of sex characteristics that originated in northern Europe. These understandings have come to dominate our perceptions in Aotearoa New Zealand and in many parts of the world. Below we discuss some of these understandings.

While the terms introduced here are commonly used, and therefore useful to understand, they are just some of the many ways people in Aotearoa New Zealand understand sex, gender, and variations of sex characteristics. InsideOUT believes that all worldviews should be treated with equal respect and importance. Unfortunately, this does not always happen. We use the term *Eurocentric* to refer to the harmful assumption that the only valid ways of seeing the world are those that originated in Europe.

Common terms and definitions

In Pākehā culture, the terms *sex and gender* are widely used as if they mean the same thing or as if a person's sex always determines their gender. However, while these concepts intersect, they are not the same and not fixed. For many people, they are not binary.

The term *sex* generally refers to our bodies' characteristics, while *gender* refers to the social and cultural roles and expectations we base on a person's sex. When a baby is born, they are designated a sex, usually by a medical professional and on the basis of the baby's external appearance. As the baby grows and develops, they are socialised into the roles and expectations associated with that sex. People typically assume that the sex a person was assigned at birth will always align with their gender, but this is not always the case.

Although sex is often thought of as binary (that is, female or male), sex actually exists along a spectrum of different characteristics such as chromosomes and reproductive organs. Around 1.7% of the world's population are born with variations of sex characteristics (VSC),⁸ and these physical, chromosomal and hormonal variations sometimes do not fit into normative concepts of how 'male' or 'female' bodies are perceived to operate or present. This is commonly known as *intersex*. The term *endosex* refers to people who are not intersex.

Transgender (trans) and *gender diverse* are umbrella terms for people whose gender is different from the one they were assigned at birth. Although some trans and gender diverse people see themselves as changing their sex or gender when they transition, many have always perceived themselves as the gender or sex they are now. While some trans people may also have variations of sex characteristics, being trans and being intersex are different things.

The term *cisgender* refers to someone who is not trans or gender diverse. That is, their gender aligns with the one they were assigned at birth.

Between 1 and 2.5% of secondary school students in Aotearoa New Zealand report they are trans, gender diverse, or questioning their gender.⁹ People can use lots of words

⁸ Blackless, M., et al. (2000). How sexually dimorphic are we? Review and synthesis. *American Journal of Human Biology*, 12(2): 151–166.

⁹ These estimates are combined results from the Youth12 and Youth19 surveys, which each surveyed more than 7,500 students across Aotearoa New Zealand. Find more about it at <https://www.youth19.ac.nz>

to describe their gender, including *trans*, *non-binary*, *genderfluid*, *genderqueer*, *agender*, and *demigender*. The same term may mean something slightly different to the different people who use it.

Gender expression refers to how we present ourselves (for example, in our clothing, speech, or mannerisms). A person's expression of gender does not always align with their gender identity. This may happen, for example, in situations where a person does not feel safe enough to express their actual gender.

People of all genders, trans or cis, can express their gender differently throughout their lives, and even day-to-day. The terms *gender expansive* or *gender nonconforming* are sometimes used to describe people who may not necessarily be trans, but express their gender in ways that differ from the expectations society has about expressing gender in a binary, stable way.

Gender and sex in te ao Māori

Many people in te ao Māori have a deep connection to mauri (energy, life force). It is believed that all people have ira tāne (masculine) and ira wāhine (feminine) mauri, but they manifest in different ways from person to person. For example, the ira tāne of some students who were assigned female at birth may be more present than their ira wāhine. Another student's ira tāne and ira wāhine could combine to create their own, unique mauri. People's relationships with their ira tangata (personal mauri) will differ. Ira tangata doesn't always determine a person's gender, but it can play a large role in how they identify and express their gender.

The term *takatāpui* describes how a person's tikanga and wairuatanga interweave with their diverse gender, sexuality, or sex characteristics. The term was originally used to mean 'intimate companion of the same sex'. Over the last few decades, its meaning has broadened to include trans, gender diverse, and intersex people.

Takatāpui is a Māori identity and cannot be defined by Pākehā definitions of sex, gender, or sexuality. Takatāpuitanga is a gift given from ngā atua (deities) me ngā tupuna (ancestors) and should be treated as such. The term is multifaceted and can mean different things to each person.

Prior to colonisation, gender fluidity was widely recognised and valued in te ao Māori. Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the increasing influence of European ideals led to the introduction of more rigid, binary understandings of gender. Takatāpui experiences were largely erased from Aotearoa New Zealand and it became difficult for some Māori people to conceive of the idea that gender diversity is integral to te ao Māori. This means that takatāpui may experience both racist discrimination from outside of Māori communities and transphobic or interphobic discrimination from within their communities, including from their whānau. While the term takatāpui is becoming more recognised in Aotearoa, it also means that Māori people may not have heard of it or use it to identify themselves.

Understanding takatāpuitanga requires us to understand concepts of whānau and whanaungatanga. Whānau relates to close and extended family and friends, both in the present and past, and whanaungatanga describes relationships more broadly. In this and our other resources, we have chosen to make frequent use of the term whānau to

include parents, grandparents, siblings, family members, and other caregivers who play a part in raising a young person. We think this is important for thinking about how we interact with all young people and those who care for them, but especially those who are Māori and Pacific. We also acknowledge the deep importance of hapū and the role of iwi as kaitiaki (guardians) of their tamariki and rangatahi.

Takatāpui resources

For more information on takatāpui and gender diversity in te ao Māori, see the *Takatāpui Resource Hub*.¹⁰ The hub grew out of Dr. Elizabeth Kerekere's (Ngāti Oneone, Te Aitanga a Mahaki, Te Whānau a Kai, Rongowhakaata, Ngāi Tāmanuhiri) doctoral thesis, the first major research in Aotearoa on takatāpui and their whānau. *Ko tātou tēnei: Voices of Māori rangatahi takatāpui*¹¹ is another important resource that presents pūrākau from rangatahi across Aotearoa New Zealand.

Gender and sex in Pacific cultures

We were all recognised as unique members of society — akava'ine, takatāpui, fakaleiti, fa'afafine — and then colonisation came along and took that part of history away from us. – More Than Four participant

Like in te ao Māori, gender diverse people have always been present and have played a part within Pacific cultures. As each culture is unique, the traditions and customs around gender differ across the Pacific. However, it is almost always the case that a person's relationship with and contributions to their community and family play a big role in how they define or embody their gender.^{12, 13}

The most common terms to describe gender diversity across the Pacific include *fa'afafine* (Samoa), *fakaleiti* or *leitī* (Tonga), *vaka sa lewa lewa* (Fiji), *fakafifine* (Niue), *pinapinaaine* (Kiribati and Tuvalu), *mahu* (Tahiti and Hawai'i), and *akava'ine* (Cook Islands). These terms describe our sisters assigned male at birth who live as women. They loosely translate to 'in the manner of a woman' and can also describe a person's sexuality or *queerness*.

Some Pacific cultures also have words to describe our brothers assigned female at birth who live as men, although they tend not to be as visible as our sisters who were assigned male at birth. These terms include *fa'afatama* (Samoa) and *fakatangata* (Tonga) and loosely translate to 'in the manner of a man'.

The terms we have discussed are unique to the Pacific cultures in which they originate. They do not map one-on-one to equivalent Pākehā terms. For example, being fa'afafine is not the same as being a trans woman.

¹⁰ <https://takatapui.nz/>

¹¹ <https://core-ed.org/assets/Uploads/Ko-tatou-tenei-This-is-us-Doc-20July.pdf>

¹² For more information on approaches to gender and sexuality in the Pacific, see p. 42 of the Ministry of Education's Relationships and sexuality education guidelines, available at <https://health.tki.org.nz/Teaching-in-HPE/Policy-Guidelines/Relationships-and-Sexuality-Education>

¹³ For a personal perspective, read 'When did you first know you were a fa'afafine?' by Ashleigh McFall in E-Tangata, <https://e-tangata.co.nz/reflections/when-did-you-first-know-you-were-a-faafafine/>

As in many indigenous cultures, these identities are being reclaimed as people continue to push back against the negative impacts of colonisation. Pacific people are redefining their conceptions of gender and sex in response to both indigenous and external influences and expectations. These processes are enabling people to tell their own stories and unpack their journeys together.

One of the people doing this work is Phylesha Brown-Acton NZOM. Phylesha developed the acronym *MVPFAFF+* to encompass the diverse gender and sexuality expressions and roles across Pacific cultures. The acronym stands for mahu, vakasalewa, palopa, fa'afafine, akavai'ne, fakaleiti (leiti), fakafifine, and more.¹⁴

Family and religion are the main aspects to consider when supporting Pacific students who are trans, MVPFAFF+, or exploring their gender. Unfortunately, many young people may experience shame around their identity in their family or religious communities

Rainbow Fale

Village Collective's Rainbow Fale,¹⁵ based in South Auckland, supports Pacific young people, including rainbow diversity groups in local schools. If you live nearby, you could reach out for help. Even if not, their website offers links to information and resources you may find helpful, including an e-resource called CONNECT.¹⁶

Gender and sex in Asian cultures

Asian cultures are diverse in themselves, and have many different beliefs and understandings about gender and sex. Pre-colonisation, many indigenous Asian cultures recognised and valued gender diversity. In pre-colonial Philippines, for example, there were babaylans (shamans) assigned male at birth (known as asog, bayoc, or bayog) who took the role of female religious leaders. Cambodian historical records also mention trans women, and hijra is legally recognised as a third gender in India.

As is the case with other indigenous cultures, the understandings and beliefs about diverse genders that traditionally exist in Asian communities have largely been lost through colonisation. Today, some people associate gender diversity with Eurocentric ways of being. These people may be reluctant to embrace gender diversity if they view it as a form of cultural 'invasion'.

The family bond is very important for many Asian families. Families may devote a lot to their children and have high expectations for their success, especially if theirs is an only child. When families emigrate from Asia to places such as Aotearoa New Zealand, they may experience cultural shocks around gender roles and expectations. These differences can exist across generations, too, meaning that a young person's family might have different understandings of gender or sex than the young person themselves.

Asian parents and families may find it challenging to accept their child as trans or gender diverse. Further, they may feel that they will be negatively judged for not having raised

¹⁴ Learn more about MVPFAFF+ and Phylesha's work at <https://finepasifika.org.nz/>

¹⁵ www.villagecollective.org.nz/rainbow-fale

¹⁶ Village Collective's Rainbow Fale Youth Advisory and Action Group (YAAG) created CONNECT "because we need to see more of our community. Pasifika MVPFAFF/LGBTQI+ are flourishing, yet we don't see many depicted in resources available for young people. All of our people highlighted have a story to share and in those stories, you may see yourself or someone you know. While there are a lot of negative things going on around us, we want to share uplifting and positive vibes to everyone." An e-version of the resource can be downloaded from www.villagecollective.nz

their children 'correctly'. The guilt that some Asian parents may feel can stem from cultural concerns that children may not keep to the traditional gender roles that are often strongly expected from their communities. Some parents may put pressure on their children to conform to the gender they were assigned at birth because they feel that it is in the child's best interest.

Developing a sense of self

As my body developed, it felt more and more foreign to me. It was like the changes to my body were speaking a language I couldn't understand. There was a total disconnect between the way I saw myself and my body, and how other people saw and gendered me. People misgendering me was a painful reminder of this. Transitioning has enabled me to come home to my body and imagine possibilities for myself. That brings me joy. – Trans young person



The concepts of selfhood and identity refer to who a person is as an individual (“who I am”) and who that person is as a member of a group (“who we are”). An individual’s sense of self is also impacted by others’ perceptions of them (“who we think you are”). Constructing a strong and positive identity is one of the central and ongoing tasks that a young person faces.

Every person has diverse and overlapping identities. These relate to gender, sex characteristics, and culture, but also to other dimensions of identity, such as community, beliefs, and interests. Some of these dimensions involve personal, conscious choices. Our sense of self can change as we respond to change and take action to make change, both within ourselves and within the worlds to which we belong.¹⁷ Other dimensions of ourselves are simply part of who we are. Our gender is not something we choose – all we can choose is whether and how we act upon our self-knowledge.

Students who are exploring their gender or questioning binary understandings of gender are not being 'trendy'. They are developing in a natural and healthy way. A person who is coming out or transitioning is taking action to align the outward expression of their gender with who they know themselves to be.

Developing and exploring one’s sense of self is closely connected to our concepts about belonging and participating. It can be harmful for a person to be told they do not belong. On the other hand, having a sense of belonging can positively impact upon a person’s wellbeing.

For most of us, identity is closely connected to whānau. The relationship between whānau, sex, and gender can be complex, as the meaning of family and whānau, and

¹⁷ This discussion draws from *Belonging and participating in society*, one of the books in the Building Conceptual Understandings in the Social Sciences series (Ministry of Education, 2008). Available at <https://ssol.tki.org.nz/Social-studies-1-10/Teaching-and-learning/Effective-teaching-in-social-studies/Building-conceptual-understandings>

the rights and responsibilities it entails, differs across cultures and over time. This adds another layer to the tensions experienced by many young people and those who care for them.

If young people are to feel resilient, connected, and positive about themselves, they need to know that the adults around them value them for who they are now, and the person they are becoming.



Reflective prompts

What are the dimensions of identity that most affect your sense of self?

To whom do you belong?

How confident do you feel that your contributions are valued? What experiences have impacted upon your sense of worth and inclusion?

How much of your identity formation do you believe reflects who you are innately?

How much is it impacted by other people's perceptions, values, and beliefs?

Who are you now compared to the person you were 10 or 20 years ago? What has changed and what has held steady?

How to support students across the intersections of sex, gender, variations of sex characteristics, and culture

With all this in mind, we would now like to offer some guidance for reflecting on the intersection between students' sex, gender and variations of sex characteristics, and culture.

We encourage you to think about what you can do to help ensure all students feel that they belong, and that who they are and what they bring is valued.

- Acknowledge the effects of colonisation on students and whānau. For example, when takatāpui students experience discrimination, the trauma from those experiences is felt throughout their whānau, iwi, and hapū, as well as within themselves as individuals.
- Reflect on how racism, interphobia and transphobia may impact students' experiences at school and their engagement in learning. Although students who belong to more than one marginalised group can find strength through their shared experiences, they can sometimes feel unwelcome in spaces because of other dimensions of their identity. For example, Asian students may feel unwelcome in a rainbow diversity group if their ethnicity is not acknowledged or is erased in the space.
- Conversely, be mindful that some double- or multiple-minority young people may be more resilient to transphobia because they have had to learn to cope with other discrimination throughout their life (such as racism or ableism). Avoid presuming that things will always be harder for students on the 'margins'.



- Take time to build trust and relationships with students. Where appropriate, help to find culturally appropriate support for them and their whānau. Be aware that each student will have different needs depending on their values, language, culture, and individual circumstances.
- If appropriate, offer to find a community member to translate or explain any words or concepts when communicating with a student's whānau. Follow up from your conversations with helpful resources, if the whānau is happy to receive them.
- Students from diverse cultural backgrounds deserve the same opportunities and the same level of accountability as other students. It is not the role of the student or their whānau to educate school staff about these issues, including those related to cultural identity. Instead, schools should seek out support and consider contacting relevant professionals or organisations for guidance on appropriate next steps.
- Assure parents and whānau that their child is not gender diverse as a result of their actions. Childhood and adolescence is a time of self-discovery. This process is essential for a person to develop and understand their gender. You may be able to help students and their whānau find community and culturally appropriate support if that is what they would like. For example, you may be able to connect them with other whānau who have trans or intersex children or suggest online resources they could use to better understand gender diversity and variations of sex characteristics.

- Recognise that indigenous words, understandings, and histories of gender diversity and variations of sex characteristics are best understood within their cultural framework. Don't assume that all students or whānau subscribe to the Pākehā framework described on pages 11-12. Make sure that the systems, frameworks, and language your school uses reflect the cultural diversity among trans, gender diverse, and intersex students, and allow students to define their own relationship to their gender and sex.
- Refer to the section on creating an inclusive culture in the resource *Staff supporting rainbow diversity groups*.¹⁸ The ideas there on including ākonga Māori and Pacific students can also be used in other contexts.

Reflective prompts

With all you have read in mind, what is something that you – as an individual or a group – could do differently to make school a safe place for students who are managing their place in the world at the intersection of their gender, sex characteristics, and culture?

What do trans, gender diverse, and intersex students at your school want you to know about? How can you find this out?

How do you respond to people who argue that young people are 'choosing their gender to be trendy'? What support can you put in place to make it safe for young people to explore who they are and express this in how they present themselves to the world?

The *Inclusive Education Guide to LGBTIQ+ students*¹⁹ identifies knowledge-building as one of four key strategies for supporting diversity and inclusion. How might knowledge-building work as a strategy in your school – or even just in your classroom or your school's rainbow diversity support group?

¹⁸ <https://insideout.org.nz/for-schools/>

¹⁹ <https://www.inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/supporting-lgbtiqa-students/#build-knowledge-of-sex-gender-and-sexuality-diversity>

Section 2.

Supporting trans, gender diverse, and intersex students

This section delves deeper into what you can do to help students across the spectrums of gender and sex feel safe, included, and valued. It also addresses bullying, transphobia, interphobia, and discusses ways you can prevent and respond to these behaviours.

My Japanese teacher is a legend – not batting an eye when people in class mention their same-sex partners or when the rainbow people in my class discuss our identities, and helping me with translating stuff to do with my QSA. I love her! She is also consistent and so helpful with my transition at school. – Secondary school student



Students who are transitioning

There is a lot that schools can do to support students and their whānau through transitioning, an experience that can be uncertain, yet exciting and deeply fulfilling.

What is transitioning?

Transitioning refers to the steps many trans and gender diverse people take to affirm their gender. Many people transition to reduce gender dysphoria, the often distressing disconnect between a person's actual gender and the one they were assigned at birth. Some people also like to think of transitioning as achieving *gender euphoria*, positive feelings about their gender.

Transitioning looks and feels different to everyone, and can take different lengths of time. A person who socially transitions might change their name or pronouns, or dress in ways that affirm their gender. Many, but not all, trans people also medically transition. This often involves accessing gender-affirming healthcare, such as hormone therapy, puberty blockers, voice therapy, or one or more types of gender affirmation surgery.

Transitioning can greatly improve a person's wellbeing and quality of life. However, many young people do not have access to resources and support because of high costs for transition-related healthcare, lack of whānau support, or because they don't know how to access legal or medical systems. Having strong support networks in place, such as supportive whānau, friends, and connections to community groups, can make transitioning easier.

Transitioning is a journey for whānau, as much as it is for the individual person. Just as whānau are involved in their child's education in various ways at different ages and stages, they will also be involved in and support their child's gender transition in different ways. For more information on working with whānau to support trans and gender diverse students, see pages 49-51.



How to talk about transitioning

Sometimes, we hear people talking about a trans or gender diverse person “wanting to be” another gender, rather than simply being their affirmed gender. This way of talking about trans people can invalidate their self-determination and suggest that being trans is a phase or choice. Many trans people feel they have always been the gender they say they are, even when the world saw them as the gender they were designated at birth.

To take a more affirmative approach, you could simply say, “[Name] is transitioning” and, if needed, explain what transitioning means. If a trans girl says she is a girl, make sure to affirm this by avoiding language around her “wanting to be” a girl, no matter where she is in her transition.

How we talk about a trans person’s past is also important in ensuring their privacy and autonomy. Unless the person has told you to use the birth name or gender assigned at birth, always use the name, gender, and pronouns the person currently uses, even when talking about their past. This will prevent you from misgendering them. Instead of saying things like “when she was a boy”, or reverting back to using he/him pronouns, you could say, “Before she started transitioning”. A trans person’s body is the sex or gender they say it is, and should be talked about using language that affirms this.

Gender-affirming healthcare

Some, but not all, trans and gender diverse young people may start medically transitioning while at school. Depending on the young person’s age and development, gender-affirming healthcare may involve taking puberty blockers or gender-affirming hormones.

Puberty blockers ‘pause’ the development of a young person’s secondary sex characteristics (for example, facial and body hair, breast tissue, and thickened vocal cords).²⁰ Some young people use puberty blockers to prevent or alleviate distress or dysphoria caused by bodily changes, and to have time to consider starting gender-affirming hormone therapy.

Gender-affirming hormones are different from puberty blockers. They can affirm a person’s gender by feminising or masculinising their body. In Aotearoa, some trans and gender diverse people first work with a mental health professional to help them make an informed decision about starting hormone therapy.²¹

If you are supporting a young person and seeking medical or legal advice, it is important to ensure reputable sources of information are used. The most important thing you can do is make sure the young person and their whānau feel supported in any decisions they make about their transition. For more information on puberty blockers and gender-affirming healthcare in general, see the Aotearoa National Guidelines for Gender-affirming Healthcare.²²

²⁰ For more information on puberty blockers and gender-affirming healthcare in Aotearoa, see the Aotearoa National Guidelines for Gender-affirming Healthcare (Oliphant et al., 2018). Available at <https://researchcommons.waikato.ac.nz/handle/10289/12160>

²¹ de Vries et al. (2021). Bell v Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust [2020] EWHC 3274: Weighing current knowledge and uncertainties in decisions about gender-related treatment for transgender adolescents, *International Journal of Transgender Health*, 22(3), 217-224.

²² The guidelines are available at <https://researchcommons.waikato.ac.nz/handle/10289/12160>

Respecting students' right to privacy when transitioning

Privacy and freedom of expression are both basic human rights. However public or private a student's transition is, they should never feel pressured to disclose their sex or gender if they do not want to. Respect for privacy is a legal and ethical issue and part of what is necessary to create a physically and emotionally safe environment at school.

Some students will want to keep information about their gender or sex private. Respect and maintain the student's right to privacy by not telling other students, staff, parents, or whānau unless the student has clearly communicated that this is what they want. Telling someone else about a student's gender or sex could cause the student to experience harassment, exclusion, or bullying from peers, staff, whānau, or other people in the wider community.

In general, keeping a student's information private will reduce the risk of them being unintentionally misgendered. Misgendering happens when someone is referred to as the incorrect gender. It can be highly distressing and endanger a trans person's wellbeing.

Other students may wish to be open about their transition, as it enables them to be more comfortable at school. You can offer support through the trusting relationships you build with them, the language you use, and the behaviours you model.

*Creating rainbow-inclusive school policies and procedures*²³ is another InsideOUT resource that is worth considering when thinking about privacy and confidentiality. It includes references to legal obligations and guidance on how to ensure the school meets them.

Privacy legislation

Under the Privacy Act 2020, a student's personal information, including their gender and sex, cannot be disclosed by a school.²⁴ Any move by a school to 'out' a student without their consent could amount to an interference with privacy under the Privacy Act.

²³ <https://insideout.org.nz/resources/>

²⁴ This is unless one of the listed exceptions to Information Privacy Principle 11 applies. It is rare that any of these exceptions would apply in the context of school.



Students who are intersex

Intersex is an umbrella term used to describe people born with a range of natural bodily variations, or variations of sex characteristics (VSC). There are over forty different variations that fall under the intersex or VSC umbrella. These variations may be evident prenatally, at birth, during puberty, or become present later in life. Sometimes, they are never noticed.

People use a variety of words to describe their experiences and identities. While some people identify with the terms ‘intersex’ or ‘variations of sex characteristics’, many only know the medical diagnostic terms that have been used by their doctor, or they may use no identifiers at all. The umbrella medical terms (though largely deemed offensive by human rights advocates) are *disorders of sex development* or *differences in sex development (DSD)*. For some intersex people, this is the only language they have been given in relation to their body.

Variations of sex characteristics are a natural part of human diversity, and intersex people are valued in some cultures. Dr Rangimarie Turuki Rose Pere said that intersex people in te ao Māori were considered tōhu (signs or symbols) and “sent to teach people something”. Dr Elizabeth Kerekere adds that intersex people are the modern day embodiment of tīpua, magical creatures that could change gender and form.²⁵ The narrative about intersex people and trauma and silence is slowly changing for the better, as stories emerge of intersex communities and whānau empowering their young people to opt for natural bodily development.

Around 1.7% of the world’s population are born with variations of sex characteristics, yet being intersex is not something we hear much about. The lack of public discussion and knowledge about VSC can be traced back to the 1960’s, when medical authorities framed people’s variations of sex characteristics as ‘problems’ that needed to be fixed.²⁶

²⁵ See <https://genderminoritiesaotearoa.files.wordpress.com/2017/10/all-about-intersex-flier.pdf>

²⁶ Karzakis, K. (2008). *Fixing Sex: Medical Authority and Lived Experience*. London: Duke University Press.

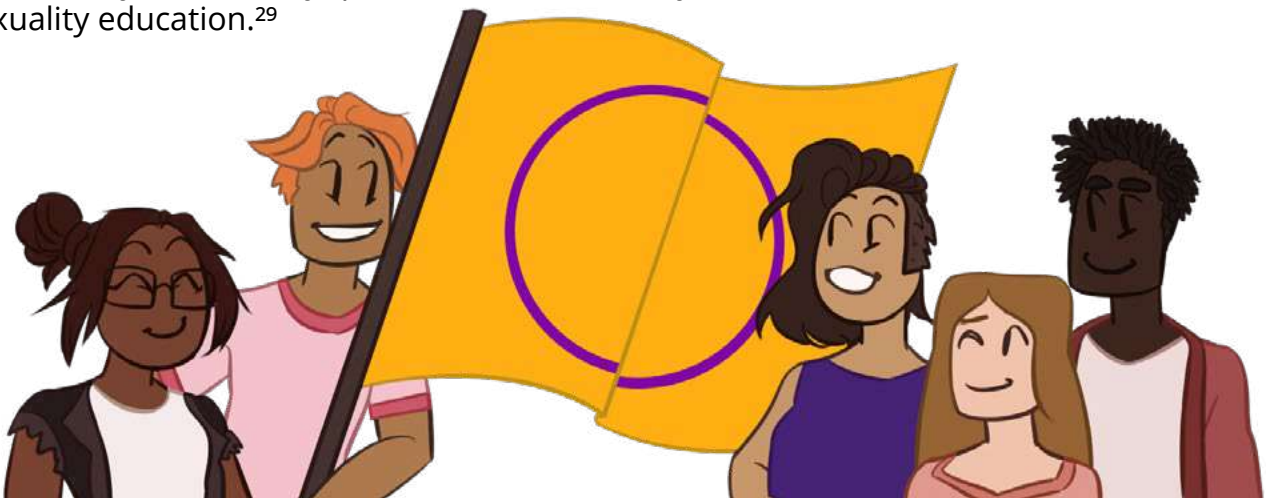
Intersex people around the world, including in Aotearoa New Zealand, are still affected by this medical model of binary sex characteristics. For example, many infants with non-life-threatening intersex variations are subject to so-called 'normalising' surgical procedures. These medical interventions can result in a culture of secrecy, with some intersex people growing up not knowing about their VSC until later in life or sometimes, not at all.

While 'normalising' surgical procedures have often been framed as a matter of medical emergency, the majority of these procedures are undertaken only to align bodies with social stereotypes of male and female functions and aesthetics. Patients and whānau are often discouraged from discussing their intersex 'diagnosis' with others. There are many intersex people and activists all over the world who are breaking the silence by sharing their stories, celebrating bodily diversity, and working to end harmful 'normalising' surgeries on intersex people's bodies.

Intersex people, like endosex people, can identify with a range of different genders, independent of their VSC. Having an intersex variation is not a gender or identity. Some people with variations of sex characteristics are cisgender and some others may be trans or gender diverse. Some parents of intersex children may choose to raise their child as either a boy or a girl, but the child might feel strongly that their gender is different than the choice made by their parents and/or doctors. Sometimes intersex variations naturally bring about a form of transition in their puberty, due to changes in their hormones. For these people, it is up to them if they identify as trans.

Intersex people are subject to invisibility in many spaces through a lack of public education, even within rainbow spaces. Some intersex people who are cisgender and heterosexual find the inclusion of intersex as part of rainbow communities difficult. This is because many people confuse and conflate sex, sexuality, and gender. This can lead to assumptions about an intersex person's sexuality or gender.²⁷

Like trans and gender diverse students, intersex young people face many challenges at school. Many of the challenges are similar, such as bullying and the lack of an inclusive curriculum while other challenges are unique, such as the impact of medical interventions.²⁸ Research indicates that as many as one in five intersex people leave school early without any qualifications, and many do not receive intersex-inclusive sexuality education.²⁹



²⁷ Garland, F., and Travis, M. (2020). Queering the Queer/Non-Queer Binary: Problematizing the "I" in LGBTI+. In S. Raj and P. Dunne (Eds.). *The Queer Outside in Law*. Palgrave Socio-Legal Studies.

²⁸ <https://ihra.org.au/discrimination/>

²⁹ Jones, T. (2016). The needs of students with intersex variations. *Sex Education*, 16(6), 602–618.

Preventing and responding to bullying, transphobia, and interphobia

Young people in Aotearoa New Zealand experience bullying at higher rates than in most OECD countries.³⁰ The situation is even worse for trans and gender diverse students in Aotearoa New Zealand, who are bullied at school at four times the rate of their cisgender peers. One in five trans secondary school students are bullied at least weekly, and over half of these students report that this bullying is based on their gender identity or expression.³¹

Under the Education and Training Act 2020³² schools have a legal obligation to provide a physically and emotionally safe environment for all students and staff, and to cater for students' individual needs. In line with this, to ensure transphobia and interphobia related bullying is effectively prevented, identified and addressed schools should ensure their bullying prevention and response policies and approaches contain measures specifically aimed at supporting students who are gender diverse and/or have variations in sex characteristics.³³ Teachers and school leaders also have professional responsibilities under the *The Code of Professional Responsibility and Standards for the Teaching Profession | Ngā Tikanga Matatika mō Haepapa Ngāiotanga me ngā Paerewa mō te Umanga Whakaakoranga*.³⁴ The statistics tell us that we have a way to go before we can say these responsibilities have been met.

The discussion below suggests ways to address transphobia, interphobia, and bullying based on these forms of discrimination. Schools can use InsideOUT's resource *Rainbow-focused bullying prevention and response workbook* to address these issues. Further, *Creating rainbow-inclusive school policies and procedures* offers suggestions for establishing formal frameworks to prevent and respond to bullying.³⁵

What is transphobia?

Transphobia is a form of discrimination based on negative stereotypes and attitudes towards trans and gender diverse people. Transphobic beliefs and norms can underpin intentional, harmful, and repeated bullying behaviours. This type of bullying and discrimination, based on someone's perceived or actual gender diversity, is different to *homophobia* or *biphobia*, which is based on someone's sexuality or who they're attracted to. However, because gender and sexuality are often conflated, there can be overlaps between transphobia and sexuality-based forms of discrimination.

As well as being harmful to trans and gender diverse students, transphobia also affects students who don't conform to gender norms, who are perceived to be questioning their gender, or who have whānau members and friends who are gender diverse. Some examples of transphobia include:

³⁰ OECD. (2019). Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) Results from 2018. Available at <https://www.education.govt.nz/news/2018-pisa-survey-findings-published/>

³¹ Veale, J., et al. (2019). Counting Ourselves: The health and wellbeing of trans and non-binary people in Aotearoa New Zealand. Transgender Health Research Lab, University of Waikato: Hamilton NZ. Retrieved from <https://countingourselves.nz/>

³² See the Education and Training Act 2020. In line with the Tomorrow School's recommendations, Clause 127 refocuses boards on a wider range of primary objectives, with educational achievement sitting alongside three others that are equally important. Schools are told to ensure they are physically and emotionally safe places for all students and staff, uphold student rights, and take all reasonable steps to eliminate racism, stigma, bullying, and discrimination.

³³ The Education and Training Act 2020 (s127(1)(b)(iii)) states that "one of a board's primary objectives in governing a school is to ensure that the school 'takes all reasonable steps to eliminate racism, stigma, bullying, and any other forms of discrimination within the school'".

³⁴ <https://teachingcouncil.nz/content/our-code-our-standards>

³⁵ You can find both resources at <https://insideout.org.nz/resources/>

- asking a trans student invasive questions about their transition or body such as, “What body parts do you have?” or “Who are you attracted to?”
- using derogatory slurs like “tranny”, “he-she”, or “she-male”
- denying that trans or gender diverse people exist
- misgendering someone on purpose, referring to them as “it”, or addressing them by a name or pronoun they no longer use
- physically harassing or abusing someone based on their gender.

Transphobia can also occur through *microaggressions* – subtle, sometimes unintentional comments or actions – that can still cause harm or reinforce hurtful stereotypes about trans people. For example, a person might tell a trans man, “Wow, I never would have never guessed you were once a girl!” While this comment might not be intended to make the person feel uncomfortable, it invalidates their gender and reinforces that there is a certain way to look or be trans. Microaggressions can be seen as part of a continuum that normalises marginalising people with diverse identities.

How to prevent and respond to transphobia

All forms of transphobia and related bullying behaviours are unacceptable and should be challenged appropriately and in a timely way. The suggestions for combatting transphobia listed below signal the need for a nuanced approach. Ideally, your community will work towards creating a culture in which this sort of behaviour does not occur and everybody feels safe and respected.

- When you witness transphobic behaviour or microaggressions, let the student/s know that it is never okay to use someone’s gender to put people down, and that it is inappropriate to ask invasive questions about someone’s gender. You might ask the student/s to think about the gendered assumptions behind what they say or do.
- Be careful not to inadvertently ‘out’ students or make any student feel whakamā or embarrassed. You may need to signal your support to the student being bullied, but wait for the right moment for direct intervention.
- Trust and listen to the student affected by bullying without assuming or judging. If they feel this would be helpful for them, they could call OUTline.³⁶ Let them know about other trans-friendly support services, such as those listed on the InsideOUT website.
- Take appropriate disciplinary action. This might look different, depending on your school’s policies and procedures and the severity of the transphobia and/or bullying. Whatever action is taken, make sure the student affected by bullying never feels the transphobia or bullying is their ‘fault’.
- If it is necessary to involve the student’s whānau, make sure you respect the student’s right to privacy around their gender. To avoid accidentally outing the student, check in with them about the name and pronouns they use at home.
- Name and define transphobia in anti-discrimination and bullying prevention and response policies, procedures, and programmes.³⁷

³⁶ OUTline (0800 688 5463) is a confidential support line and face-to-face counselling service offering rainbow-affirming support. The support line is answered by trained volunteers who are part of the rainbow communities themselves. For more information, see <https://outline.org.nz/>

³⁷ <https://insideout.org.nz/resources/>

- Take a proactive teaching and learning approach that demonstrates to students the positive opposite of transphobic and interphobic behaviour.
- Include positive representations of gender diversity in your curriculum. This could include teaching about trans and intersex history and role models.

What is interphobia?

Interphobia refers to the violence and discrimination intersex people face. We see it when medical specialists make decisions to 'correct' the body of an intersex child and promise the parents a 'better life' for their child. We also see interphobia when people bully or shame someone whose body does not conform to the prescribed medical or social stereotypes of how 'normal' is meant to look and operate.

Interphobia is underpinned by a fear of bodily difference that mean intersex people and their experiences are kept invisible. Invisibility, the most pervasive form of interphobia, creates environments where abuse and secrecy can happen. As a result, intersex people can experience shame and self-loathing.

Interphobia stigmatises variations of sex characteristics through labelling them as abnormal, unhealthy, unnatural, a pathology, anomaly, or mutation. Though obviously scientifically incorrect, these concepts align with Eurocentric *heteronormative* stereotypes. Some of the early drivers that still influence medical pathology today, reflect a presumption of heterosexual sexual and biological states, and maintain that all bodies should look and operate in these pre-prescribed "normal" ways. These psychosocial drivers justify irreversible and traumatic genital and internal surgeries based on aesthetic or heteronormative concepts of functionality.³⁸ This is a clear example of ableism, homophobia, and a fear of bodily difference.

Interphobia can be evident in sexuality education, when students are taught that sex is binary and that, in order to fall into the two categories of female or male, a person must present in a particular way. This information can make around 1.7% of a school population invisible. Other examples of interphobic behaviour and comments, which can reinforce body-shaming, include:

- making derogatory comments about people's bodies not fitting into gender 'norms'
- bullying female-presenting students with body hair or male-presenting students with breasts
- assuming all people are fertile
- degrading comments regarding whether a person can pee standing up
- making jokes or comments about the size of people's genitals.

How to prevent and respond to interphobia

Here are some suggestions for how you can combat interphobia at your school:

- Teach about the diversity of sex development across the curriculum, and that variations of sex characteristics are natural and healthy.
- Avoid using words like 'disorder' or 'abnormal' when talking about diverse bodies.

³⁸ Carpenter, M. (2020). Intersex human rights, sexual orientation, gender identity, sex characteristics and the Yogyakarta Principles plus 10. *Culture, Health & Sexuality* 23(4), 516-532.

- Use teaching and learning examples of intersex activists, models, and athletes who have a public profile.
- Read the Darlington Statement³⁹ with your class. This is a joint consensus statement by Australian and Aotearoa New Zealand intersex organisations and independent advocates. You can affirm the statement and make a declaration to stand up for intersex human rights and bodily autonomy.
- Read YOUth&I⁴⁰ with your students, an anthology of creative writing by intersex young people.
- Use what you've learned to educate your colleagues. These conversations could be integrated into day-to-day conversations about curriculum and management, or more formally into the school's review cycle or professional discussions about the responsibilities of teachers and school leaders.

Coming out at school

The term 'coming out' refers to the process a person goes through when disclosing that they are trans, gender diverse, or have an intersex variation. Many people have a complex relationship with the concept of coming out, as there are many factors that influence whether a person wants or needs to disclose their sex, gender, or variations of sex characteristics.

Coming out and confidentiality

Coming out is a continual process, and young people must often evaluate their social environment to determine how safe it is to disclose their gender or intersex variation. If students perceive their school as an inclusive environment, they are likely to feel more comfortable being themselves at school.

Coming out as intersex can be difficult due to the general lack of understanding and knowledge around variations of sex characteristics. Any young person can feel vulnerable about their changing bodies, and this may be amplified if their body does not seem to fit or develop into what they have been told is 'normal'. Additionally, the secrecy traditionally encouraged by medical professionals can become a strategy that intersex young people and their whānau use to cope with a VSC. This can result in serious mental health challenges, including feelings of isolation and shame.

Some people may not come out at all. This can be for a range of reasons, including cultural norms around being trans or intersex or safety concerns. It may also be because of the view that if cisgender and endosex people don't have to come out about their gender or sex, then trans and intersex people shouldn't have to, either. A trans or gender diverse student may have already enrolled at school as their affirmed gender and choose not to come out again.

How to respond to a student's disclosure

If a student chooses to disclose their gender or sex to you, it can mean that they trust you. You may be the first or only person they have told, and your response could affect whether or not they feel comfortable talking to other people about their gender or intersex variation.

³⁹ <http://darlington.org.au/statement/>

⁴⁰ <https://darlington.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/YOUthAndI-Layout-Final-Web.pdf>

Here are some ways to respond to a student's disclosure in a safe and affirming way:

- Thank them for telling you and acknowledge that it can be a big step to talk to someone about this. Take their experiences and wishes seriously, regardless of their age or current gender expression. Respect their right to self-determination.
- Let them know you will keep this information confidential, unless they tell you they would like you to tell other people on their behalf. Always check with them in a clear way about this. However, let the student know that if they indicate that they are in physical harm or danger, including if they are having thoughts about self-harm or suicide, you will need to ensure that they receive appropriate support. While the potential harm may be related to their gender, their gender is not something relevant to this disclosure to the appropriate person or service and should not be disclosed without the student's explicit consent.
- Check in to see what types of support the student would like or if there is anything you can do to support them, such as finding online resources or a peer support group. Let them know about the support, rather than telling them what to do or where to go. For example, you could offer to go with them to talk to a guidance counsellor if that's what they want, but try not to assume they will want or need to do this.

Changing names and pronouns at school

I remember when I got an award at the end of the year 11 and it was me standing on stage with my deputy principal [...] she was using the right pronouns the whole time and it was just incredible because I didn't think that was possible. It was just really nice to have this authority figure just using it without struggle. It wasn't even like a big deal and it was really cool because it was in front of my whole community.

– Secondary school student



In my conversations with colleagues [...] sometimes I pick up things in the report writing and I say, "Instead of saying 'a lovely girl', can we use maybe gender neutral ones? Because they might not identify as a girl.

– Primary school teacher

A student may choose to use a name and/or pronouns that are different from those they were given or assigned at birth.

Understanding why people change names and pronouns

There are many reasons a person might change their name or pronouns. For many trans and gender diverse students, this choice is often about affirming their gender.

Whether or not a student is trans, using their chosen name or pronouns is about respecting their right to self-determination. Self-determination is especially important in

this context, given that trans and gender diverse people often feel that the binary gender boxes they have been placed in are constricting, false, or simply uncomfortable.

Using a person's chosen name and pronouns can have positive impacts on their mental health. One study found that using a trans young person's chosen name and pronouns can significantly reduce depressive symptoms and suicidal behaviour.⁴¹

Trans and gender diverse students might use different names and pronouns in different spaces within the school if they have not disclosed their gender to everyone. Similarly, if they have not told their whānau about their gender, they may use different names and pronouns at school than at home.

Students might try out different names or pronouns to find language that feels right for them. This is a normal part of gender exploration. Trans and gender diverse young people tend to have fewer role models than cisgender young people on whom to base their growing sense of themselves. This can make exploring one's gender harder to navigate.

Upholding students' right to self-determination

When a student changes their name and/or pronouns, check with them about the name and pronoun they would like you to use around other people in your school community. Every student will have different wishes and needs around this. If a student would like everyone, or only some people, to know their chosen name and pronouns, this should be communicated to those identified in a respectful way. If appropriate, the details of the students' wishes may be outlined in a confidential gender support plan. There is a support plan template you are welcome to use on InsideOUT's website.⁴²

Like learning any new skill, using a student's name and pronouns will get easier over time. Everyone makes mistakes sometimes! If this happens, briefly apologise to the student, correct yourself, and move on. There is more information about pronouns on InsideOUT's website.⁴³

Student management systems

In Year 13, I went to one of our DPs [deputy principals] about using 'they' in consent forms instead of 'she/he', and she was super onto it with changing everything. I think schools can do better by generally using less gendered language.

– Secondary school student

My ako [form class] teacher has been really lovely and got my name changed on the roll for me – I didn't know that was something I could do.

– secondary school student



⁴¹ Russell, S. T., Pollitt, A. M., Li, G., & Grossman, A. H. (2018). Chosen name use is linked to reduced depressive symptoms, suicidal ideation, and suicidal behavior among transgender youth. *The Journal of Adolescent Health: Official Publication of the Society for Adolescent Medicine*, 63(4), 503–505.

⁴² <https://insideout.org.nz/resources/>

⁴³ <http://insideout.org.nz/pronouns/>

Having robust and streamlined student enrolment and information systems can minimise the risk of a student being misgendered when their birth name, or gender assigned at birth, appears on school rolls or reports that teachers or other students can see.

Students may want to use a different name or pronouns in different records and documents. This can happen, for instance, in situations where parents or caregivers are unaware or unsupportive of their child's gender or transition. To maintain a student's privacy, check with the student about the name and/or pronouns they want to be used in the records that parents or caregivers may see, as they might be different to the ones they use at school. If appropriate, make sure the relevant teachers are informed about the student's wishes around this. You might like to designate a staff member to check over students' documents before they are sent home to ensure the correct information is included.

Make sure your school's student management system includes additional write-in options or notes for students to state their name, pronouns, and gender. Ideally, your student management system will already have a 'diverse' or 'X' gender marker option, and students can record whichever option aligns with their affirmed gender.

See InsideOUT's resource *Creating rainbow-inclusive school policies and procedures*⁴⁴ for comprehensive information on how to change a student's name, pronouns and gender marker on student management systems, ENROL and NSI, and how to maintain students' privacy in the process.

Students who are disabled or neurodiverse

Like all students, those who are disabled⁴⁵ and/or neurodiverse⁴⁶ will thrive if they have access to safe, inclusive, and supportive environments. While many schools are working hard to provide such environments, many disabled and neurodiverse trans, gender diverse, and intersex students in Aotearoa New Zealand still encounter significant barriers and discrimination in their educational settings. For example, their needs may not be adequately recognised or accommodated or positive representations of their gender, bodily diversity, or neurodiversity may be absent.

A person's gender diversity may be incorrectly viewed as having a causal relationship with their disability or neurodiversity, resulting in a unique form of discrimination. For example, some people falsely believe that a person's autism has caused them to be trans or gender diverse, or that being trans exemplifies attention-seeking behaviour. Similarly, a person's actual gender and need for gender-affirming support might be disregarded because of their different abilities.

How to support students who are disabled and/or neurodiverse

Here are some important considerations for working with trans, gender diverse, and intersex students who are neurodiverse or disabled:

- Consider how a student might communicate, manage, and express their gender and emotions differently as a consequence of their different abilities.

⁴⁴ <https://insideout.org.nz/resources/>

⁴⁵ See The New Zealand Disability Strategy 2016–2026 for more information on language and goals for disabled people in New Zealand. It is available at: www.odg.govt.nz/assets/New-Zealand-Disability-Strategy-files/pdf-nz-disability-strategy-2016.pdf

⁴⁶ The Education Hub provides a good overview resource on neurodiversity at <https://theeducationhub.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Neurodiversity-An-overview.pdf>

- Although a trans student's different ability may affect how they express themselves, always trust that the student is the expert on their own gender. Give neurodiverse students the space to explore their gender if that's what they need.
- Pay attention to young people who are trans and/or intersex, disabled, and experiencing mental health challenges. What are some respectful ways of supporting them?
- Proactively review and monitor the impact of your school's inclusive policies and practices (for example, through a survey or audit).⁴⁷ As always, this will be easier and more effective if connected to your regular self-review cycle.
- Consider the benefits of taking a Universal Design for Learning⁴⁸ approach when developing support for students. For example, are your gender-neutral spaces accessible for people with mobility and sensory impairments?
- Ensure the delivery of relationships and sexuality education is accessible and inclusive⁴⁹ so all students have equal access to information. Consider who is in your classroom.

Younger students

People can sometimes be hesitant to talk about gender diversity or variations of sex characteristics with younger children, as it can be seen as inappropriate or complex. However, research shows that most children begin developing an awareness of their own and others' gender between the ages of two and four. This includes trans and gender diverse children who may persistently express their gender during childhood.⁵⁰

How to support younger students

Affirming gender diversity and variations of sex characteristics helps trans, gender diverse, and intersex children of all ages to explore and know who they are. Conversely, children's stress can be heightened if their gender or body is not represented and affirmed in their social environment.

It's important to always listen to and believe in children's expression of gender. At the same time, try not to assume that a child who is exploring their gender is trans, unless they use this term to describe themselves. Some children know from a very young age that they are not their gender assigned at birth. Other children may explore their gender more creatively or fluidly, but may not necessarily identify as trans.

Age-appropriate ways of making primary and intermediate schools safer for trans, gender diverse, and intersex students include using books and other literacy materials with trans and intersex characters⁵¹ and calling out gender 'policing'. This is when,

⁴⁷ See the Inclusive Practices Tools at www.wellbeingatschool.org.nz/about-inclusive-practices-tools; Creating rainbow-inclusive school policies and procedures: at <https://insideout.org.nz/resources/>; and the TKI inclusive education guidelines: www.inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/

⁴⁸ www.inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/universal-design-for-learning/

⁴⁹ See Relationships and sexuality education: A guide for teachers, leaders, and boards of trustees (Ministry of Education, 2020), available at <https://health.tki.org.nz/Teaching-in-HPE/Policy-Guidelines/Relationships-and-Sexuality-Education>

⁵⁰ For example, see Gülgöz, S., Glazier, J. J., Enright, E. A., Alonso, D. J., Durwood, L. J., Fast, A. A., Lowe, R., Ji, C., Heer, J., Martin, C. L., & Olson, K. R. (2019). Similarity in transgender and cisgender children's gender development. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 116(49), 24480–24485.

⁵¹ For more resources and ideas on books to read at all levels, see InsideOUT's campaign, Out on the Shelves: www.outontheshelves.insideout.org.nz/

for example, a student might tell a boy with long hair that “only girls have long hair”. Challenging this type of comment may seem small, but it models to students that there is no ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ way to be any gender.

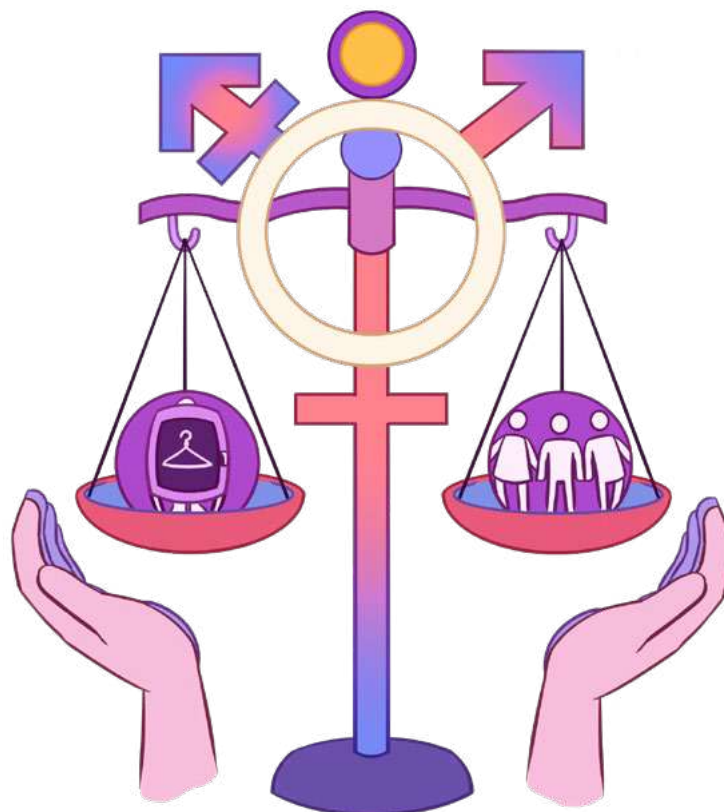
Discussing gender diversity and variations of sex characteristics with children and young people of all ages can help challenge the harmful assumption that there is something ‘wrong’ with being trans, gender diverse, or having variations of sex characteristics. This visibility can prevent challenges later on in a young person’s life, such as increased mental distress or disengagement from school or family. Further, it can help all students to develop awareness and empathy towards gender diverse and intersex students.

Reflective prompts

As you read this section, what thoughts came to your mind about your own development as an individual and a member of different social groups?

Did this section raise questions for you? Who is there within and beyond your school community who can help you find answers?

How can the task of making school a place of safety and belonging for your trans, gender diverse, and intersex students be integrated into your everyday way of doing things?



Section 3.

Creating an inclusive learning environment

The school and classroom environments offer wonderful opportunities for learning about diversity. Having inclusive school-wide support systems will help your school to prevent transphobia and interphobia, and respond effectively if it happens. It can create safer spaces within which to challenge and overcome the gender, relationship, and body norms we often take for granted. These spaces benefit everyone.

Gendered aspects of school, such as uniforms, sports teams, sexuality education, school camps and dances, uniforms, toilets, and changing areas can be difficult or impossible for some students to navigate. They may find that they cannot safely access the parts of school that reflect their gender, or do not identify with either part. On the other hand, allowing students to use facilities and dress in ways that affirm their gender can increase their sense of comfort and belonging at school, enabling them to learn and positively contribute to their school community.



Creating an inclusive environment is obviously good for students' sense of wellbeing, but can also be great for their academic outcomes. For example, research shows that sexual minority students who feel a sense of belonging, and whose teachers have high expectations of them, are almost four times more likely to achieve academically than sexual minority students who do not have this sense.⁵²

This part of the resource outlines some important issues to address as you and your school community work towards creating a trans- and intersex-inclusive learning environment. Because teaching and learning is at the heart of what schools do, it begins with curriculum and creating inclusive learning communities. It then moves on to specific issues that students say matter to them. Many of these require attention to school policies. InsideOUT's resource *Creating rainbow-inclusive school policies and procedures*⁵³ offers specific suggestions on this.

Creating an inclusive curriculum

The topics, issues, and people we learn about at school play a big part in shaping our knowledge of the world and how we relate to other people. Making gender and bodily diversity visible in the curriculum gives students positive role models. Learning about trans, gender diverse, and intersex people's achievements, or simply communicating the message that gender diversity and variations of sex characteristics are natural and positive, can give students language to express themselves. They might not have these opportunities in other parts of their lives.

Trans and intersex people often do not see themselves in the curriculum. It's very important to identify opportunities for weaving their history and experiences throughout the curriculum. Pay attention to the stories you bring into the classroom, what students think is important, how they explain the world and relationships within it, and the values they set or affirm. Here are some ideas for learning experiences that could be part of an inclusive curriculum:

- Encourage your students to critically examine the stories that have been made available to them at school or in other contexts, such as the local library or bookshop. Check whose stories are told and whose are missing. Who is centred, and who is on the sidelines? Where are the stories that represent people who are trans or intersex? What is the impact of reading such stories?
- Encourage students to inquire into cross-cultural differences in gender and variations of sex characteristics, and how and why perceptions of gender have changed over time. For example, examine how language shapes the way we understand gender and sex, and how gender shapes languages.
- Encourage students to find examples of intersex inclusion in past and present media.
- Use gender-neutral language or include diverse relationships in problem-based learning examples, in context such as mathematics and technology.
- Prompt students to critically examine scientific and non-scientific statements about gender and sex and discuss how to distinguish between these statements.
- Examine how different materials and designs shape, or have been shaped by, gendered assumptions and expectations over time.

⁵² Fenaughty, J., Lucassen, M. F., Clark, T., & Denny, S. (2019). Factors associated with academic achievement for sexual and gender minority and heterosexual cisgender students: Implications from a nationally representative study. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 48(10), 1883–1898.

⁵³ <https://insideout.org.nz/resources/>

While the ideas above could be integrated into day-to-day learning, there are also campaigns and events that celebrate trans and intersex people, like Schools Pride Week,⁵⁴ Out on the Shelves,⁵⁵ Pink Shirt Day,⁵⁶ and Intersex Awareness Day.⁵⁷ Keep an eye out for when they are happening and consider how you might integrate them into your teaching and learning programme. Some of them offer associated learning activities and resources that you could use and adapt to your environment. For example, the Mental Health Foundation supplies free resource packs⁵⁸ to support Pink Shirt Day. Sparklers has developed a superhero activity⁵⁹ designed to help students think critically about prejudices and blindspots. These celebratory events could provide a great opportunity for co-constructing your curriculum with trans and gender diverse students, especially if your school has a rainbow diversity group that has an interest in this area.

You can find lots more ideas on InsideOUT's website. In addition, the Ministry of Education's *Relationships and sexuality education guidelines*⁶⁰ offer a valuable starting point for generating ideas on integrating age-appropriate, trans- and intersex-inclusive content that aligns with *The New Zealand Curriculum*.



My school could have made it easier for me by having more diverse topics or people represented in the resources that we used [...] and just kind of the language that teachers would use to talk about different things.

– Former secondary school student

Reflective prompts

How can you meaningfully include positive representation of gender diversity and variations of sex characteristics across the curriculum?

How might such learning opportunities help align your curriculum with your community's values and aspirations and with the big ideas of the New Zealand Curriculum?

What resources can you access to enable this? What are the implications for staff professional development?

⁵⁴ <https://pride.school.nz/>

⁵⁵ <https://insideout.org.nz/out-on-the-shelves-2/>

⁵⁶ <https://pinkshirtday.org.nz/>

⁵⁷ <https://intersexday.org/en/>

⁵⁸ <https://events.mentalhealth.org.nz/shop/category/psdresources>

⁵⁹ <https://sparklers.org.nz/activities/superheroes-and-colour-pink/>

⁶⁰ See pp. 28–29 in the years 1–8 guide, and pp. 31–33 in the years 9–13 guide, available at <https://health.tki.org.nz/Teaching-in-HPE/Policy-guidelines/Sexuality-education-a-guide-for-principals-boards-of-trustees-and-teachers>.

Health and physical education

Allow [students] to miss swimming if their gender dysphoria is overwhelming, even when wearing the preferred attire. My trans son wasn't yet 'out' and despised wearing close-fitting clothes in the pool where everything clings. It just wasn't worth the lessons. Minimise their discomfort by permitting them to change in a single stall bathroom or nurse's/counsellor's bathroom. He was so proud of himself when he went on a school adventure camp and managed to finally have a shower.

– Parent of trans young person

I always pretended I was sick or that I hated sport at school because I was terrified of the changing rooms, and was scared someone would see my intersex body. This was hard for me because I was naturally athletic and wanted to join in deep down.

– Secondary school student



In health and physical education, key areas of learning such as relationships and sexuality education, mental health education, body care and physical safety, and sport and fitness, offer many opportunities to discuss gender diversity and variations of sex characteristics. Despite this, most trans, gender diverse, and intersex young people report that their experiences and health needs are not represented in health education.⁶¹ As a result, students are left to figure out for themselves how their experience of gender and sexuality relate to the normative examples they are taught about.

Here are some ways you can make your health and physical education classes and programmes more inclusive:

- Use gender-neutral language to acknowledge bodily diversity and the differences between sex and gender. This is especially important when discussing bodies and relationships. For example, you could simply use the names of body parts and their functions rather than referring to them as 'male' and 'female' parts. Have a go at referring to a person's 'partner', rather than 'girlfriend' or 'boyfriend'.
- Discuss the health needs and outcomes of different populations including trans, gender diverse, and intersex people.
- Hold an anonymous survey asking students for guidance on ways to help them participate in health and physical education.
- Acknowledge that not everyone will be interested in having romantic or sexual relationships throughout their life. If a student talks about this, make sure to validate their experiences rather than assume they are 'joking'.

⁶¹ Thursdays In Black. (2017). In our own words, p. 20. Available at <https://library.nzfvc.org.nz/cgi-bin/koha/opac-detail.pl?biblionumber=5557>

- Provide all students with the option to wear loose-fitting physical education gear (including swimwear) and to be excused from activities that make them uncomfortable. Tight-fitting clothes or movement that reveal certain parts of the body can cause some students to feel dysphoric. If a student does not feel comfortable participating in physical activity for these reasons, offer other roles, such as scoring, coaching, refereeing, or managing teams.
- Provide accessible private changing areas for students who don't feel comfortable changing in gendered spaces. Keep in mind that intersex people who have had surgical interventions may find physical movement uncomfortable.

There's stuff that could change. In high school health class, it's not just an intersex thing but generally just making sure that the understanding of health is not so stale and archaic. We already knew stuff, we had that stuff on the internet, the internet in our hands. School should be more inclusive of mental health, sex and gender, sexuality and identity – it should encompass a wider view rather than a stock standard binary of gender. Quite often you don't get more health education outside of school, so you don't get to look at this more broadly in a social perspective.

– Intersex/VSC young person



Approaches to curriculum design and development

The design, implementation, and review of curriculum is increasingly understood as a collaborative and co-constructed process. You might consider the reflective questions below as you work with your community to design, implement, and review your local, school, or classroom curriculum:

- Whose identities and experiences are represented in our learning material and teaching practices? Whose experiences are not included?
- Are there opportunities to include diverse representations of gender and variations of sex characteristics?
- How might our students respond to learning about variations of sex characteristics and gender diversity?
- What resources or support might we need to feel confident in leading conversations around variations of sex characteristics and gender diversity?

We know that schools are working hard to hear the voices of all students and build their agency. This is wonderful, but we need to acknowledge that for some students, it carries risks and is better done in ways that avoid singling them out. With this in mind, another set of questions might include:

- To what extent do rainbow students at our school have a voice in curriculum design? How much agency do they have in what actually happens? What are some safe ways of finding the answers to these questions?

- What do rainbow students and their whānau want to ask us? What do they want us to do?
- To what extent do we include rainbow people in the local community within our community of learning? How might their strengths and resources become part of our school curriculum?

Creating an inclusive learning community

We had an incident where a teacher was dismissing the class by gender, there was a feminine boy and the children used to tease him and make fun, saying he should leave when the girls leave. This type of thing can happen without thinking of the consequences. – School community member

In recent years, a lot of work has been done on creating inclusive learning spaces where everybody's contribution is valued and teachers model fairness and respect for all students.

These are some actions you might take as you strive for greater inclusion in your setting:

- When setting kawa with your students at the beginning of the year, state that you expect all students and visitors to the school to be treated with respect, regardless of their gender or sex. Discuss what this means in relation to gender diversity and variations of sex characteristics (VSC), including what sorts of behaviours would be considered transphobic or interphobic.
- Display visual representations celebrating gender diversity and VSC, such as posters depicting same-gender couples or messages that affirm intersex and gender diverse people.
- Build empathy by connecting your learning about gender diversity and variations of sex characteristics to learning about other diverse groups. For example, ask students to think about how a better appreciation of gender diversity and VSC can help us understand the experiences of disabled, ethnic, or religious groups who might also be marginalised.
- Call out any discriminatory behaviour, comments, or put-downs around someone's gender or VSC. For more information on how to identify transphobia or interphobia in the school environment, see pages 25-28.
- If appropriate, use moments in the classroom to challenge gender norms. For example, ask students to reflect on what they mean when they say things that reinforce gender stereotypes, such as remarking that a boy looks like a girl because he is wearing pink. What impact might hearing this comment have on the student to whom it is directed or others who hear it? What is the impact on any who are questioning their gender?
- Reflect on why body shaming is a common experience for intersex students, especially for those whose bodies may not develop 'normally' throughout puberty. Consider how challenging body norms and celebrating bodily diversity would help all students develop healthy relationships with their bodies.

If you know you have trans, gender diverse, or intersex students in your class, or students with trans and intersex whānau, it's important to consider their safety and the impact that classroom conversations about sex and gender could have on them. You may want to check in with students and their whānau before having these conversations. Some students might value having this representation in the classroom, whereas they may make others feel uncomfortable. Remind people about your class kaupapa before discussing topics that could be sensitive for some students, such as variations of sex characteristics.

Grouping and addressing students

She [the Deputy Principal] tries not to use gendered language in class or make assumptions about things that students will like based on them being boys and girls, such [as] colours and hobbies.

– Parent of intersex/VSC child



On pages 29-31, we discussed how important it is for students to be named and identified in ways that align with their gender.

Gender is often used to group students at school. Teachers may use greetings like, “Good morning, boys and girls” to address a class or group of students according to gender. Splitting students up like this can reinforce stereotypes about girls and boys. Trans, gender diverse, and intersex students may experience distress if they are made to sit with a group based on the gender they were assigned at birth.

There are many alternative gender-neutral ways of addressing and grouping students. For example, you could use greetings in te reo Māori (such as “Tēnā koutou”) or use gender-neutral language to address your class (such as “folk” or “everyone”). Group students by their birth month or number them off. Your school could consider renaming roles or adding inclusive leadership roles such as Head Student and encouraging trans students to run for leadership positions that affirm their gender.

Neutralising school uniforms and dress codes

I wasn't aware I was able to wear the shorts as an AFAB [assigned female at birth] person, before the gender-neutral uniform change, until I complained in a meeting and the deputy principal was like, “You know you can wear them, right?”.

– Secondary school student

Clothing is part of how we express our gender and how other people see us. According to the Human Rights Commission, students have the right to wear any uniform their school provides, as long as it complies with their school's uniform rules and dress code.⁶²

⁶² <https://www.hrc.co.nz/files/3914/2378/4856/TGI-Fact-Sheet-A.html>

Consider listing your school's uniform by the type of clothing (for example, 'shorts' or 'skirts') instead of by gender. Girls' schools that provide skirts only could consider adding shorts or pants to the uniform options. Boys' schools could add a lavalava or skirt to their options, an addition that would also make uniforms more inclusive for Pacific students. If cost is an issue, your school could first order the uniform items according to demand, rather than bulk-buying them.

Similarly, your school could enforce dress codes equally, regardless of gender. For example, if your current dress code states that girls are allowed to have long hair or wear make-up, consider changing this to apply to all students.

Gender-neutral dress codes challenge the stereotype that only boys wear pants and girls wear skirts. They can benefit all students in a safe and supportive school, as cisgender students may also be affected by these stereotypes.

Neutralising your school's dress code, and preventing and monitoring bullying related to students' clothing or uniform choice, can help to make students' transitions easier (see pages 40-41). It will help existing students to transition, and ease stress for new students who enrol. Additionally, some current students may want to wear another uniform, but may not be aware that their school allows it. Ensure that all students are reminded about uniform options at the beginning of the year.

You can find more information and suggestions on this topic in *Relationships and sexuality education: A guide for teachers, learners, and boards of trustees*⁶³ and in *Creating rainbow-inclusive school policies and procedures*.⁶⁴



Making toilets and changing areas safe

We bring up about our son being intersex and his needs. A lot of that is to do with bathroom[s]... Kids talk and as he's grown up we've been more sensitive to make sure that his privacy is supported, particularly in school bathrooms and in the summer when the boys all get changed for swimming. – School community member

Everyone has the right to use toilets and changing areas in safety and in private. Currently, however, many trans, gender diverse, and intersex students do not feel safe using the facilities that affirm their gender.⁶⁵

Students who wish to use a toilet that aligns with their gender should be supported to do this. They should also have the option of changing in the facility that aligns with their gender, in a private space such as a single stall or cubicle within a larger changing room, or in a separate space or bathroom nearby. Each student should be able to make their own decision about the facilities they use.

⁶³ <https://health.tki.org.nz/Teaching-in-HPE/Policy-Guidelines/Relationships-and-Sexuality-Education>

⁶⁴ <https://insideout.org.nz/resources/>

⁶⁵ Veale, J., et al. (2019). Counting Ourselves: The health and wellbeing of trans and non-binary people in Aotearoa New Zealand. Transgender Health Research Lab, University of Waikato: Hamilton NZ. Retrieved from <https://countingourselves.nz/>

Gender-neutral facilities should be located in areas of the school that are practical to access and do not require a key or special permission to use. Where possible, schools should provide several options for gender-neutral toilets. This is especially important in large schools, as a student should not have to walk from one end of the school to another just to find a safe toilet. Gender-neutral toilets will ideally be separate from accessible toilets, which should remain available at all times to students with accessibility needs.

It is understandable that a temporary solution (such as using the sick bay toilet) might be necessary in some instances. However, this should only be temporary while an equitable solution is reached.

Gender-neutral facilities should be factored into the design process of any new school builds. Ensure that these comply with the Ministry of Education's *Toilet Reference Design Guide*, which requires that new toilets are capable of being made gender-neutral in line with the *New Zealand Building Code*.⁶⁶

Consider outlining the rules and processes around gender-neutral facilities at your school and communicating these to the wider school community, so that everyone is aware about the school's approach and the options it provides.

How to talk with students about toilets and changing areas

Some students might wonder about the point of a gender-neutral toilet or changing area or whether trans, gender diverse, and intersex students can use the facility that aligns with their gender. This is a good opportunity to talk with your students about gender diversity and variations of sex characteristics, inclusion, and challenge the assumptions we make based on people's gender and sex.

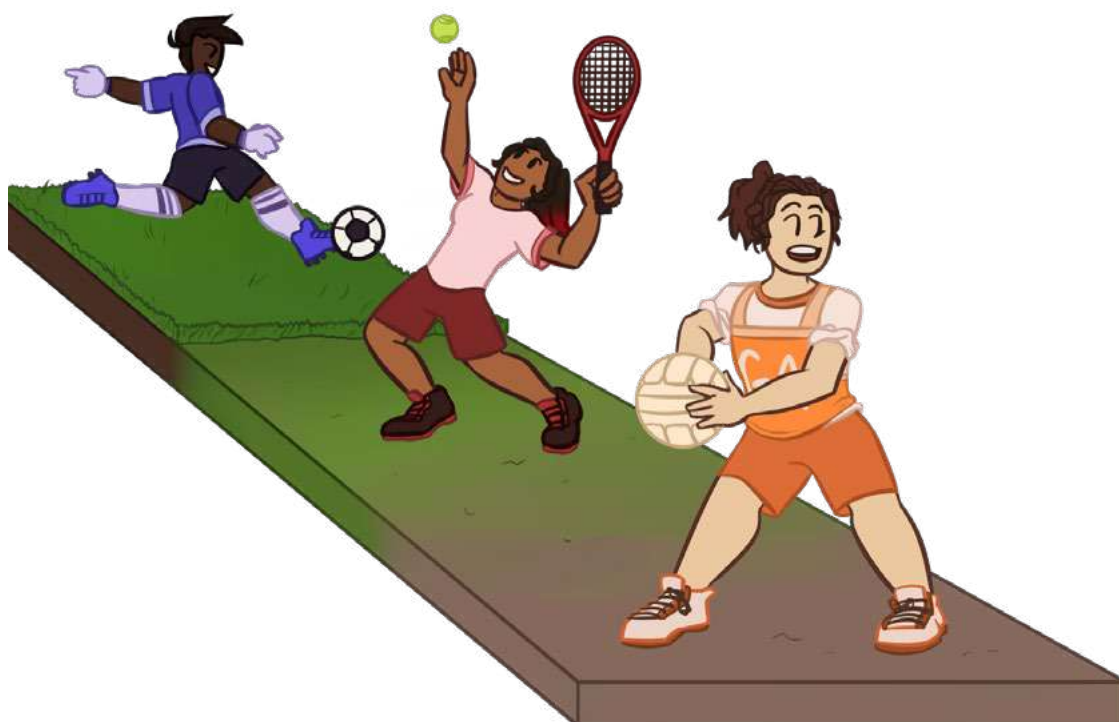
You might encourage students to place themselves in a trans, gender diverse, or intersex student's position. How would it feel to enter a space where they might be harassed for not being the 'right' sex or gender? It's important for all students to have spaces they feel comfortable in. We all have a role to play in creating a non-judgmental environment to enable students to use facilities in safety and privacy.

If students express concern for cisgender students' safety, you could discuss how allowing trans students to use the bathroom they feel comfortable in is entirely different from allowing a boy to go into the girls' bathrooms, for example. Explain that there is no evidence to suggest that allowing students to use the bathroom of their choice compromises other students' safety. You might also use this as an opportunity to talk about the need to create a safer school climate where a student's gender or sex is not seen as a threat to any student's safety.

Establish clear behavioural expectations to foster safe and respectful environments regarding toilet and changing facilities, and to address transphobic and interphobic discrimination that might still occur in these spaces.

The great thing about gender-neutral toilets and changing rooms is that all students can use them. Cisgender students may choose to use gender-neutral facilities for many reasons beyond gender. It can help to normalise these facilities, reducing the likelihood that students will be teased or singled out when using them.

⁶⁶ This code states that each gender-neutral toilet must be a self-contained unit with a toilet, basin, and sanitary disposal bin. See more at <https://www.building.govt.nz/building-code-compliance/g-services-and-facilities/g1-personal-hygiene/>



You can find more information and suggestions on this topic in *Relationships and sexuality education: A guide for teachers, learners, and boards of trustees*⁶⁷ and *Creating rainbow-inclusive policies and procedures*.⁶⁸

Breaking down barriers to sport

Sport is a big part of the school experience for many young people in Aotearoa New Zealand. For some, it's an important part of the future they imagine for themselves.

School sports teams

School coaches and adults involved in school sports have a responsibility to make sure that all students feel safe and included in sports settings. This includes breaking down barriers to trans, gender diverse, and intersex students' participation. Affirmative actions include calling out any transphobic, interphobic, or sexist discrimination on the sports field or in training, and ensuring all students have safe facilities to change in.

Students should also be allowed to participate in the team that corresponds with their gender or whichever team they feel comfortable in when engaging in school sports and physical education. Having mixed-gender sports teams available to all students at co-educational schools is a great way of including students who might feel less comfortable in gendered sports teams. Students should be able to sit out or be part of a mixed-gender sports team if they wish, rather than being forced to play on a gendered sports team.

Maintain a student's right to privacy by not outing them to other students, team members, or coaches without their consent. If other people were to find out that a student is trans or intersex, the student could be put at increased risk of bullying and exclusion. This could cause them to withdraw from participating in sports.

⁶⁷ <https://health.tki.org.nz/Teaching-in-HPE/Policy-Guidelines/Relationships-and-Sexuality-Education>

⁶⁸ <https://insideout.org.nz/resources/>

Competitive inter-school sports

When entering competitive inter-school sports, students should be also allowed to participate in the team that aligns with their gender. Inclusive school sports associations will allow trans and gender diverse students to participate, regardless of whether they are taking gender-affirming hormones.

Currently in Aotearoa New Zealand, there are no laws or official best practice guidelines for trans young people in competitive sports. If sports associations or management resist your student's request to play on the team that aligns with their gender, it's a good idea to have resources available to support and advocate for the student. This might include the latest research about trans youth participation in sport, and on the benefits of gender-inclusive sports environments for everyone.

Trans women have successfully played on women's teams without any disadvantage to other teams or teammates for years, but these cases receive little to no media attention. It's important to remember that there is significant variation in strength, ability, hormone levels, and physiology among cisgender or endosex girls and women, and cisgender or endosex boys and men respectively.



Future pathways for intersex athletes

Regulations for intersex women athletes in competitive sports perpetuate discrimination against intersex people. These regulations require athletes to undergo medically unnecessary ‘feminising’ treatments, such as hormone therapy and gonadal removal in order to compete as women. One example is Caster Semenya, the middle-distance runner who was told she must take hormone-lowering agents or undergo surgery in order to compete as a woman in her sport.⁶⁹ The fact that these regulations persist – despite studies showing that even the sporting bodies’ own medical experts have been unable to find evidence that high levels of functioning testosterone give intersex women a competitive advantage – is based on interphobic attitudes that have historically framed intersex people as in need of punishment.

Reflective prompts

How can schools be part of making a change so that all young people who aspire to participate in sports, now and in the future, start from an equal footing?

Every now and then, issues surface in the media around the participation of intersex and trans people in sports. The discussion can get tense or difficult. How might you support students through conversations that maintain each person’s mana?

Making balls, formals, and dances fun for everyone

There’s a farewell event for Year 6 in 2019 which [name] is already dreading and says she won’t go to. There is a dress code where girls have to wear dresses and boys have to wear pants. You can see that [name] is quite the tomboy and likes to dress casually in shorts and t-shirts. You’ll never get her into a dress, she hasn’t worn a dress for years. For her she identifies as female but does not by any means express a feminine side in how she dresses. I’d like to see that the kids could be supported to dress how they like to best suit their personal identities.

– Parent of intersex/VSC child

School events, such as dances, balls, and formals can be an exciting time for school staff and students. Schools should always allow same-gender or gender diverse couples to attend events together.⁷⁰ Every person in Aotearoa New Zealand has the right to wear and express themselves however they choose, including at school balls and dances, as long as this aligns with their school’s code of conduct and dress code.

⁶⁹ <https://theconversation.com/ten-ethical-flaws-in-the-caster-semenya-decision-on-intersex-in-sport-116448>

⁷⁰ Failure to do so is discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, and is in breach of the NZ Human Rights Act 1993.

When organising these events, consider how you can minimise the risk of transphobic or interphobic behaviour at or around the event. For example, you might put up posters with affirming messages about gender diversity or about not tolerating discrimination of any kind. Make sure that all adults attending the ball are aware of the school's procedures around addressing discriminatory behaviour in case of any incidents.

Preparing for school camps, overnight trips, and noho marae

When planning an overnight school trip, such as a camp, keep communication clear between students, whānau, and teachers. Keep in mind that some students might not be out to all teachers. Parents or other adults on the trip do not need to be told about a student's gender or transition unless the student requests that this information is shared.

Also consider the needs of menstruating students on camp, including for trans and intersex students.⁷¹ Make sure there are suitable bins for students to dispose of used period products, including in the male toilets if gender neutral toilets aren't available. Before camp, talk with students about what toileting facilities are available and how to manage having a period on camp. This discussion should involve all students attending camp. If toilet facilities are limited (for example, if you're on a remote overnight tramp), explain how people can find privacy during a trip, and share a range of toileting and menstrual management techniques that can help participants have more control over their experience.

Ensure that there is a safe toilet, changing area, and sleeping area for all students. Most importantly, teachers should consult with the student before the trip on whether they feel most comfortable sleeping in an area with people of their self-determined gender, having a private sleeping area and bathroom, or sharing a space with close friends.

When attending noho marae, it's important to remember that marae will have different tikanga around trans, gender diverse, takatāpui, and intersex people. For example, some marae have tikanga around sleeping arrangements, such as splitting the room into taha wāhine and taha tāne (a girls' side and a boys' side). Where possible, the school should consult with the marae manager/s or iwi affiliated with the marae before the visit to discuss options for trans and intersex students and, reach a solution that upholds the mana of everyone involved.

Reflective prompts

What can be learned from schools' journeys towards inclusion for other groups of students that could be applied to inclusion for those who are trans, gender diverse, or intersex?

What are specific considerations for these students?

What is the impact for the whole community when all students are made to feel safe and that they belong?

⁷¹ You can find a resource on menstruation in the outdoors here: <https://www.eonz.org.nz/resourcespublications/>

Section 4. Caring for the wider school community

People that care and people that want to help, even if they don't know the lingo or don't know all the terminology [...] if there's that want to help and want for people to feel safe, then I think that could be the biggest dream that we could ever think of.

– Secondary school student



In this final section, we widen our discussion to consider some of the people who play a role in young people's lives, and how they can work together to ensure every young person feels safe and included. We like to think of this as a community of care, and we believe that for such a community to work well, the people within it need to look after themselves as well as others.

Getting the support you need

As a school staff member or trustee, you play an important role in helping students to feel safe and thrive. However, it can be overwhelming to address gender diversity and variations of sex characteristics at school if you haven't engaged in conversations around these topics before. It's okay to feel nervous about not wanting to say the wrong thing to students or their whānau. This simply shows that you care about their safety and wellbeing.

You might have many questions about how other students or whānau will respond or how to have important conversations with the student. You are not alone in this, and there are many places you can find resources to help you better support trans and intersex students and their whānau.

Here are a few things to help you to support trans, gender diverse, and intersex students:

- Reflect on how your own identity, beliefs, and worldviews influence the ways you support students. This can help you to identify your strengths and knowledge, as well as things you wish to learn more about.
- Educate yourself on gender diversity and variations of sex characteristics. It's okay not to know what every term means, but having a basic understanding of transitioning and how to talk with and about trans and intersex people will make it easier to have conversations about these topics.
- Practise not assuming a student's gender or variations of sex characteristics. Instead, ask the student what names and pronouns they use and if there are any other words they use to describe themselves. The language young people use to describe themselves and their gender is constantly evolving. This means that trans, gender diverse, and intersex youth might use different words than were common ten or twenty years ago. Words can also mean different things to different people.
- Celebrate and acknowledge students' developments in their exploration. As well as celebrating strengths, be aware of the *minority stress* trans, gender diverse, and intersex young people might face. This is not because they are gender diverse or have a VSC. It is caused by beliefs and attitudes that reinforce the harmful message that difference is not 'normal' or that this difference should be punished. Some youth may recognise various forms of discrimination they face, including family violence, mental distress, homophobia, transphobia, biphobia, interphobia, racism, and sexism.
- Consider attending or holding professional development training sessions led by rainbow organisations around variations of sex characteristics and gender diversity. If appropriate, you could invite whānau to attend these workshops with school staff.
- Get in touch with other schools or teachers who are also supporting trans and intersex students. InsideOUT can help connect you to other schools that are doing great things to support their trans and intersex students.

Tips for school counsellors and mental health professionals

The guidance here is more specific to the practice of school counsellors (including guidance counsellors) and mental health professionals. It is additional to the advice above and below.

- Taking an affirmative approach to therapy and guidance can greatly benefit the students you support. Affirmative therapy is an approach that validates people's lived experiences of gender and sex, rather than not talking about it or treating their experiences as a 'problem'.⁷²
- Seek a cultural supervisor who can help you or your team manage cultural issues that fall outside of your clinical knowledge. It is important to understand the enduring effects of colonisation on indigenous young people's expressions of sex and gender. Make sure that the research and models that guide your practice relate to the culture of the student you are supporting.
- When presented with issues you are not able to answer or understand, be open with the student and ask if it is okay to make enquiries about the matter outside of the session. Do not expect the student you are supporting to educate you.
- Work with your team and other professionals to link students and their whānau with trans- and intersex-friendly health and social services, if appropriate.
- Consider that an intersex young person may have experienced or could be experiencing medical trauma. Many hospitals and health professionals do not provide psychosocial support for trans and intersex young people or their whānau.

For more information on supporting students seeking your help as a mental health professional, check out the resources *Supporting Aotearoa's rainbow people: A practical guide for mental health professionals*⁷³ and *Te Pakiaka Tangata*⁷⁴

Working with whānau

Students' caregivers and whānau play a crucial role in their education and transition. Despite wanting to do their very best for their children, they may experience inner conflict that affects their ability to do this. The impact of this is evident in the Youth19 survey findings,⁷⁵ with just over 64% trans students saying that at least one of their parents cared about them "a lot", compared to 93% of cisgender students. Only 31% had told their parents about being transgender or gender diverse.

As the discussion in Section 1 demonstrates, it's important to consider how a student's cultural background might influence their own and their whānau's views on gender and sex and their role in the student's transition. Sometimes, the student's whānau will have different understandings about gender than their child. In some cultures, a person's transition might be viewed as a collective process involving whānau or community members in the person's decision-making.

These differences mean it's important to work with whānau in a culturally safe way that acknowledges both the student's rights and culturally-specific needs and the

⁷² Fraser, G. (2019). *Supporting Aotearoa's rainbow people: A practical guide for mental health professionals*. Wellington: Youth Wellbeing Study and RainbowYOUTH, pp. 24–25. Available at www.rainbowmentalhealth.com/

⁷³ Fraser, G. (2019).

⁷⁴ Available at <https://www.education.govt.nz/assets/Documents/School/Supporting-students/Pastoral-Care-Guidelines-Te-Pakiaka-TangataNov2017.pdf>

⁷⁵ See findings from the Youth19 survey. Fenaughty, J., et al. (2021). *A Youth19 Brief: Transgender and gender diverse students*.



whānau's role in their gender transition. Begin by taking time to get to know about the student, their whānau, and home life. From here, figure out a way of communicating with the student and their whānau in a way that respects the student's right to self-determination.

A student's caregivers may not be aware or supportive of their child's gender, new name, or pronouns. As a staff member, it's natural to feel conflicted about wanting to respect a student's gender, while also wanting to communicate openly with their parents. Students who choose not to tell their whānau about their gender are not keeping their gender a 'secret'. Rather, they are likely keeping themselves safe in case their whānau reacts negatively. In fact, school might be one of the only safe spaces for the student to explore their gender. By respecting a student's name and pronouns at school, you are supporting their wellbeing.

To maintain the student's safety, a trusted staff member could regularly check in with the student about how their home life is going and if they need any support. They could also ask the student if they have a supportive whānau member who would be willing to help the school support the student.

If parents or caregivers approach your school with concerns that staff have not told them about their child's gender, you could respond by clarifying the boundaries between students' rights and caregivers' rights as legal guardians. Again, it's important to respect the student's privacy in relation to their gender, regardless of whether a parent or caregiver insists on school disclosure. There are lots of great resources available to help with this, including:

- *Legal rights at school*⁷⁶
- *Creating rainbow-inclusive school policies and procedures*⁷⁷
- *Rainbow rights in Aotearoa*⁷⁸
- the *Student Rights*⁷⁹ legal help website.

⁷⁶ <http://insideout.org.nz/legal-rights-at-school/>

⁷⁷ <https://insideout.org.nz/resources/>

⁷⁸ <https://rainbowrights.nz/>

⁷⁹ <https://studentrights.nz/problems-at-school/Transgender-agender-non-binary-and-gender-non-conforming-students.html>

It can be a good idea to ask whānau members how you can work together to support their child. This can provide an opportunity for them to express their concerns and perspectives. It also shows that you are open to listening to them. Emphasise to whānau that gender diversity is one part of their child's identity, but it doesn't define everything about them.

If and when whānau are ready to discuss their child's transition with the school, you could invite them to meet with the principal, guidance counsellor, or another trusted staff member to work through a gender support plan.⁸⁰ The student should always be invited to be part of this meeting to make sure all decisions are guided by their needs and preferences. You might also like to arrange professional development for staff on gender diversity and variations of sex characteristics, and invite the student's whānau along to this.

Parents or caregivers who are already supporting their child's transition may approach the school on behalf of their child. Parents may already have information to help their child transition at school or have questions about how your school supports trans, gender diverse, and intersex students. It's okay to not have all the answers, but it can help to let parents know you are willing to help find answers to their questions.

If a student has siblings at the same school, consider checking in with them to make sure they feel safe and supported, too. Siblings tend to be supportive of their trans siblings, but there is a risk that they could experience transphobic discrimination from their peers by association.

You can find advice for parents, caregivers, and whānau on supporting their child in the resource *Be There*.⁸¹

Supporting student-led rainbow diversity groups

A rainbow diversity group, or queer-straight alliance (QSA), is a school-based space open to all students. One of the main roles of this group is to provide peer support for rainbow students. Research shows that having a rainbow diversity group at school can help amplify rainbow students' voices in the school and wider community, and increase students' wellbeing.⁸²

Although these groups are generally student-led, your support as a staff member can make a huge difference to the group. For example, you might offer your classroom as a space to hold these meetings, or act as a liaison between the group and staff.

For more information on starting and setting up a group, check out InsideOUT's resources:

- *Starting and strengthening rainbow diversity groups*⁸³
- *Staff supporting rainbow diversity groups*.⁸⁴

⁸⁰ <https://insideout.org.nz/resources/>

⁸¹ <https://be-there.nz/>

⁸² For example, see Ioverno, S., et al. (2016). The protective role of gay-straight alliances for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and questioning students: A prospective analysis. *Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity*, 3(4), 397–406.

⁸³ <https://insideout.org.nz/resources/>

⁸⁴ <https://insideout.org.nz/resources/>

Appendix 1. Glossary

Language is constantly evolving, and words will also mean different things to people who use them. The following list should be used as a reference guide.

Agender

A term that means 'without' gender. Agender people may feel they have no gender identity and/or no gender expression.

Akava'ine

A Cook Islands Māori term describing a person assigned male at birth, who embodies female roles and traits. The term's meaning is best understood within its cultural context, and may mean something different to each individual. This term does not have an English equivalent but is usually translated to mean 'in the manner of a woman'.

Bigender

A bigender person can be any two genders at the same time or go back and forth between the two. Some bigender individuals use different names and/or pronouns for each gender.

Cisgender, cis

A term used to describe someone whose gender matches the sex they were assigned at birth (for example, a person who was assigned female at birth and identifies as a girl or woman).

Cisnormativity

The widespread assumption that everyone is cisgender. This positions being cisgender as the 'default' or 'normal' and being trans or gender diverse as 'not normal'. It is a positioning that results in gender diverse people being marginalised.

Cross-dresser

A person who sometimes wears clothing that is considered by society to correspond with another gender. Crossdressers are not usually transgender, but crossdressing can be a part of exploring gender.

Demiboy

Someone who partially, but not fully, identifies as male or masculine.

Demigender

Someone who partially, but not fully, identifies or connects with a particular gender.

Demigirl

Someone who partially, but not fully, identifies as female or feminine.

Drag

The act of dressing in gendered clothing as part of a performance or for entertainment. Drag queens typically perform in highly feminine attire, drag kings tend to perform in highly masculine attire, and some drag artists perform in less binary ways. While some trans people do drag, many drag artists are cisgender.

Endosex

A person who is not intersex or not born with variations of sex characteristics.

Eurocentric

A term describing a worldview that places Europe and European culture at the centre and assumes their superiority over the histories and cultures of non-European cultures. It grew out of critiques of the impact of colonisation and the harm caused when European values, beliefs, and knowledge systems are imposed upon other societies.

Fa'afafine

A Samoan and American Samoan term describing a person assigned male at birth who embodies female roles and traits.

Fa'atama

A Samoan and American Samoan term describing a person assigned female at birth who embodies masculine roles and traits.

Fakaleiti, leiti

Tongan terms describing a person assigned male at birth who embodies female roles and traits.

Gender

How we identify and describe ourselves based on the roles, expectations, and assumptions we are socialised into. We are designated a gender at birth based on our sex characteristics, but not everyone's gender aligns with the one they were designated. Gender is understood differently across cultures and throughout history.

Gender-affirming healthcare

Healthcare and medical procedures that some trans people undergo to change their body in a way that affirms their gender. This may include taking puberty blockers for younger people, gender-affirming hormone therapies, or undergoing gender-affirming surgery.

Gender diverse

An umbrella term adopted in recent years in addition or as an alternative to the word 'transgender'. It has been developed in response to young people whose gender does not align with the sex they were assigned at birth but do not use the term 'transgender' to describe themselves.

Gender dysphoria

The often distressing disconnect between a person's body and their gender. Everyone experiences dysphoria differently, but dysphoria can often cause anxiety, depression, or trauma. These feelings are influenced by social factors, too, such as the disconnect between how a person sees themselves and how others see or refer to their gender (for example, being misgendered). The discomfort of dysphoria can be so intense that it interferes with a person's ability to function in normal life (for example, school, work, or social activities). Gender dysphoria is also a medical diagnosis that trans people have historically been required to get before accessing some forms of gender-affirming healthcare, although this requirement is changing as gender diversity becomes less pathologised.

Gender euphoria

The positive feelings associated with alignment between the way a trans person knows

their own gender and body to be and how others see or refer to their gender. The opposite of gender dysphoria.

Gender expansive, gender nonconforming

Terms used to describe someone whose gender is broader than, or does not conform to, traditional or commonly understood gender roles and expectations.

Gender expression

How someone expresses their sense of masculinity and/or femininity (for example, through their clothes, mannerisms, and voice). Gender expression does not always align with a person's gender identity. (For example, a cisgender boy might wear typically 'feminine' clothing.)

Genderfluid

Someone whose gender is not fixed, but instead moves along a gender spectrum or changes their gender over time.

Gender marker

The letter or word representing a person's gender or sex (that is, M, F, X) recorded on their official identity documents such as birth certificates and passports.

Genderqueer

A person whose gender is neither a boy/man/tāne nor a girl/woman/wahine. It can also refer to feelings of being neither male or female, both, or somewhere in between.

Heteronormativity

The widespread assumption that heterosexuality is the 'default' or 'normal' sexual orientation, instead of being just one of many possible experiences of sexuality.

Interphobia

A fear or hatred of, or discrimination against, people with variations of sex characteristics.

Intersex, variations of sex characteristics (VSC)

An umbrella term describing people born with variations of sex characteristics, such as chromosomes, gonads, reproductive organs, and hormones. There are many different variations that fall under the intersex/VSC umbrella and make up around 1.7% of the population.

LGBTQIA+

An acronym that stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, and more sexuality and gender diverse identities. It is used in a similar way to 'rainbow', but is often critiqued for centring Eurocentric understandings of gender and sexuality.

Mahu

A Tahitian or Hawaiian term describing a person assigned male at birth, who embodies female roles and traits.

Minority stress

A term used to denote the high, often chronic, levels of stress that members of marginalised groups in society can face. The stress is typically caused by factors such as social discrimination, lack of access to support or healthcare, or unsupportive whānau and friends. People belonging to more than one marginalised group may experience compounding levels of stress.

Misgendering

Referring to a person by a gender they are not (for example, by using a person's birth name, pronouns, or gendered language, such as 'ma'am' or 'sir'). Misgendering is sometimes accidental but can also be done on purpose to 'out' a trans person or invalidate their gender. Prolonged misgendering is a form of abuse, especially if it is done by multiple people. It can be highly distressing, endanger trans people's mental health and wellbeing, and cause trauma.

Neurodiversity

A term that refers broadly to a range of natural variations in brain function and traits across the human population. These variations can impact on the way an individual thinks and learns and are often (but not always) diagnosed as neurological conditions, such as ADHD, autism/takiwātanga, dyslexia, and Tourette syndrome. These diagnoses describe highly variable clusters of characteristics. There is much variation and overlap within and across the diagnostic bands. The idea of neurodiversity supports a shift away from a focus on challenges to a focus on strengths. Some people see neurodiversity as part of their identity.

Non-binary

An umbrella term and gender describing people who do not strictly identify with one of the two binary genders (boy/man/tāne or girl/woman/wahine).

Pronouns

The words used when referring to someone in the third person. Common pronouns include she/her/hers, he/him/his, they/them/theirs. In some languages, pronouns are gender-neutral (for example, in te reo Māori the pronoun 'ia' refers to any individual person). Some people prefer that people use their name instead of pronouns or pronouns that are less commonly known, such as ze/hir/hirs.

Queer, queerness

A reclaimed word and umbrella term encompassing people of diverse sexualities and genders. Some people might find this word hurtful, as it has historically been used to put down LGBTQIA+ people. However, others prefer this term as it has a less fixed meaning than some other identity terms.

Rainbow

An umbrella term, similar to LGBTQIA+, that describes people of diverse sexualities, sex characteristics, and genders.

Sex

A medical way of categorising people's bodies based on sex characteristics, such as genitals, chromosomes, hormones, and reproductive organs. People often conflate sex and gender, but sex does not always determine a person's gender.

Sexual orientation

A person's sexual identity in relation to the gender or genders they are attracted to. Sexual orientation and gender are different things.

Tāhine

A relatively new Māori term, roughly translating to non-binary (tāne and wahine). This term is used broadly and can be used to describe a transgender woman, a transgender man, or a non-binary or genderfluid trans person.

Takatāpui

Takatāpui is a traditional word that was first interpreted as ‘intimate friend of the same sex’. It has since been adapted to encompass all Māori who identify with diverse genders, sex characteristics and sexualities, such as whakawahine, tangata ira tāne, gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer. Takatāpui is a self-standing identity and denotes a spiritual and cultural connection to the past.

Tangata ira tāne

A Māori term describing someone who was assigned female at birth but is a tāne/boy/man.

Trans boy or trans man

A person who was assigned female at birth but is a boy/man/tāne.

Trans girl or trans woman

A person who was assigned male at birth but is a girl/woman/wahine.

Transfeminine

An adjective some people who were assigned male at birth use to describe their gender.

Transgender (trans)

An umbrella term used to describe someone whose gender does not fully align with the gender they were designated at birth.

Transitioning

Steps taken over time by trans and non-binary people to affirm their gender. Transitioning may include social, medical, and legal processes (for example, using a different name and pronouns, dressing in affirming clothes, changing one’s name and/or sex marker on legal documents, hormone therapy, puberty blockers and a range of gender-affirming surgeries). Everybody’s transition looks and feels different.

Transmasculine

An adjective some people who were assigned female at birth use to describe their gender.

Transphobia

A fear or hatred of, or discrimination against trans and gender diverse people.

Transsexual

A term originally used to describe a trans person who has had gender-affirming surgery. This term is used more commonly among older trans people. The majority of trans young people would use the term ‘transgender’ instead, regardless of whether they have medically transitioned.

Vaka sa lewa lewa

A Fijian term describing a person assigned male at birth who embodies female roles and traits.

Whakawahine, Hinehi, Hinehua

Māori terms describing someone assigned male at birth but who is a wahine/woman/girl.

Appendix 2.

Further training and support

InsideOUT resources are constantly being updated. Please check the InsideOUT website for the latest information: www.insideout.org.nz

InsideOUT offers a range of professional development options, as well as consulting support for areas such as policy and school culture. Please contact your local Schools Coordinator or hello@insideout.org.nz for more information.

If something difficult comes up and you need support and a chance to debrief, please feel free to contact InsideOUT. Alternatively, you could access PPTA's Rainbow Taskforce for Safe Schools,⁸⁶ NZEI's Rainbow New Educators Network - Kaiako Takātapui,⁸⁷ EAP Counselling Services,⁸⁸ or any other assistance that your school may offer.

Professional development that is not rainbow-specific but that could help you in this role, such as mental health first aid, may also be beneficial.

Working with an InsideOUT Schools Coordinator

InsideOUT Schools Coordinators work in many regions of Aotearoa New Zealand. No matter where you live, we'll be able to offer support. We prioritise 'new' schools – schools that are starting to think about trans, intersex and rainbow inclusivity and schools who are in the process of forming a new QSA. Schools Coordinators are often working a small number of hours in large regions, so it can be hard for them to keep on top of what is happening in every school. Please reach out to ask for whatever support your school may need.

Learning from each other

InsideOUT is always interested to hear from schools about what has worked in creating a safe environment, both general insights and in terms of the support we provide. It works two ways – InsideOUT offers advice on the basis of experiences schools have shared with us, and we use what we learn to inform future work with schools.

I Acknowledgements

This resource development was led by Alex Ker, with the help of many rangatahi and pākeke, their whānau, friends, groups, and organisations who generously shared their experiences and knowledge with us and gave their extensive feedback to create this resource.

- Hariata, lead contributor to gender and sex in te ao Māori
- Elizabeth Kerekere, contributor to gender and sex in te ao Māori
- Daedae Te Waka, lead contributor to gender and sex in Pacific cultures
- Jjabao Zhao, lead contributor to gender and sex in Asian cultures
- Seaklay (Pi) Say, contributor to gender and sex in Asian cultures
- Fatima Hael Martin, contributor to gender and sex in Asian cultures
- Jelly O'Shea, lead contributor to intersex/VSC content
- Tabby Besley, InsideOUT Managing Director
- Jaye Barclay, illustrator
- Jack Faulkner, designer
- Zoe Braithwaite, designer
- Kate Dreaver, editor
- Kate Potter, editor
- Vanessa Summers
- Linda Parker-Wendt, primary school teacher
- Sandy Hastings, Principal/Tumuaki, Beckenham Te Kura o Pūroto
- John Fenaughty, Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Education and Social Work, University of Auckland
- Maggie Shippam, disability rights advocate
- Nic Dorward, disability rights advocate, InsideOUT former staff
- Stella Ivory, InsideOUT Board
- Julia de Bres, InsideOUT Board
- Emmett Roberts, InsideOUT staff
- Bronwyn Kerr, InsideOUT former staff
- Brock Stobbs, InsideOUT Board
- Tommy Hamilton, OUTline NZ counsellor
- Joris de Bres, grandparent and proofreader
- Intersex Trust Aotearoa New Zealand
- Project Youth Kāpiti
- Anamata Diversity Group
- Gender Minorities Aotearoa
- RainbowYOUTH
- Parents of Transgender and Gender Diverse Children in Aotearoa

**Thank you for reading this resource, and
for the work you are doing to support
transgender, gender diverse, and intersex
students at your school!**

Head to our website www.insideout.org.nz for a list of helpful
resources and support groups across Aotearoa New Zealand.

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ISBN (Softcover): 978-0-473-55146-9

ISBN (PDF): 978-0-473-55147-6