



LGBTQIA+

Survival Guide for Young People

EXIT GUIDE

Created with the voices and experiences of children and young people from Investing in Children and partner organisations across the North East.

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INTRODUCTION



WHO WE ARE

We are a group of young people involved in the LGBTQIA+ Group from Investing in Children. The project was set up to support the voice of LGBTQIA+ children and young people. The group meets regularly and has identified the areas they would like to improve or change when it comes to the support and services they receive.

Children and young people possess the same human rights as the rest of humanity.

INVESTING IN CHILDREN believe that:

- Children and young people are citizens now (they are rights bearers) and as such have the right to participate in decisions that affect them.
- Children and young people know about what is happening around them (what has been described as their 'lived lives').
- Organisations that provide services for children and young people (duty bearers) must recognise their right to participate, and engage children and young people in dialogue that is aimed at bringing about improvements in their 'lived lives'.
- The means of engaging children and young people must be inclusive and respect the democratic rights of all.



WHY A SURVIVAL GUIDE?

LGBTQIA+ young people shared how tough it can feel to balance being out and not being out. They often need to search in many different places to find the right information. Creating one clear guide felt like the best way to support others who may be going through the same thing. We know things may change. This is version 1 of the guide, published May 2026.

RESEARCH

Over the past year, the group looked up information, connected with other young people in LGBTQIA+ support spaces, and gathered everything needed to shape this guide. We would like to acknowledge the resources the group have drawn information from - full references can be found on pages 90-91.

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO HELPED!

EXIT GUIDE



TOP TIPS FOR COMING OUT



5 STAGES OF COMING OUT



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TIPS FOR COMING OUT

Coming out can feel scary and uncertain. It's normal to wonder where to begin, and everyone's path looks different. These 10 tips are here to offer support as you find your way.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO COME OUT!

You never have to come out unless you want to. Some people keep their identity private, while others feel lighter after sharing it. There's no right order or right way to do it.

COMING OUT CAN BE A REALLY POSITIVE EXPERIENCE

It can feel good to be who you are with family and friends but it is totally up to you who you trust. You may even inspire others. Choose people you trust.

MANY PEOPLE WORRY ABOUT OTHER PEOPLE'S REACTIONS

It is ok to worry about how others might react. The unknown can feel scary, so think about who you feel safest with first.

WORRIES AND CONCERNS MAY DIFFER

Everyone has different worries. These can change with age and life experiences, so take things at your own pace.

ALLOW PEOPLE TO BE SHOCKED

It might take a little time for them to take in the news. Give people time if they seem surprised. They may need space to think and learn more.





TIPS FOR COMING OUT

IF FAMILY OR FRIENDS REACT IN A HURTFUL WAY AT FIRST...

It doesn't mean they will always feel that way. People often need time to take in the news. First reactions can change with time.

IF YOU ARE REALLY NERVOUS ABOUT COMING OUT TO FAMILY OR FRIENDS,

Writing a letter can be a gentle way to share your news. There is no rush or it may feel it is never the right time. It's at your pace so do it when you feel it's right.

STAYING IN CONTROL OF THE NEWS

Think about what feels safest and most comfortable for you. You can choose to talk face-to-face, phone call, text, email or share online (only with people you feel safe). Some people prefer private conversations, so keep that in mind.

IF YOU'RE UNSURE HOW SOMEONE IMPORTANT WILL REACT

It's a good idea to build a support network around you first. You could always join a support group in your area. This could mean coming out to one person who you trust (like you) and are confident they will be supportive. If necessary, have that person with you when you come out to others. If this is the first time you are telling someone, you may want to have a general conversation with them about LGBTQIA+ to gauge how they might react.

IF YOU SUSPECT SOMEONE YOU KNOW IS LGBTQIA+

Remember that you cannot – and should not – force them to come out, but you can help them feel comfortable and supported. Remember how you felt.

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5 STAGES



OF COMING OUT

“Coming out is a personal choice. You get to decide the order, the moment, and the way that feels right for you.”

BEING YOU!

It is important to accept and feel happy with who you are. There is nothing wrong with you.

INVITING IN!

You own your story- Share when you are ready! Think about the people you can trust to tell. Think about telling just one person first. You don't have to come out instantly.

FINDING YOUR PEOPLE!

Finding support groups, taking the next step to meet other people like you.

SELF-LOVE

Looking after yourself is really important. There are lots of ways you can do this like... listening to music, drawing, cutting out toxic people, gaming, spending time with friends, crocheting, keep your hands busy, conscious stimming, Focus on the X,Y and Z and making nice food etc...

JUST SIMPLY LIVING!

Living how you want to live... Don't take people's opinions to heart, sometimes there may be negativity. Walk away from bad situations and enjoy life as much as you can.

“There's nothing wrong with you, it's their problem”



PRONOUNS



GENDER IDENTITY



AND SEXUALITY



WHY DO PRONOUNS MATTER?

Pronouns are a key part of how people share who they are. Using the pronouns someone asks for shows you see and respect their identity.

This care is especially meaningful for transgender and non-binary people, who may experience deep discomfort when their pronouns are ignored.

GENDER PRONOUNS

Gender pronouns are words used to talk about someone without using their name. Using the right pronouns shows care and respect for their gender.



GENDER-NEUTRAL PRONOUNS

Gender-neutral pronouns are pronouns used when referring to someone whose gender is unknown. The most common example of gender-neutral pronouns is the singular 'they/them/theirs' pronouns.

ROLLING PRONOUNS

Some gender non-conforming and transmasculine or transfeminine people use more than one set of pronouns. These are known as rolling pronouns and can be used in turns within a sentence or across different sentences.

Some people also switch pronoun sets on different days based on how they feel. This is common for people who are genderfluid or whose gender shifts over time.

Just Me

NEOPRONOUNS

Neopronouns are another way for people to share who they are.

While many use "they" as a gender-neutral option, some people feel more at home with newer pronouns. These can include sets like ey/em/eirs or ze/zir/zirs.

SHARING PRONOUNS – MEETING NEW PEOPLE

Share your pronouns when meeting someone new. Many people think this is only for LGBTQIA+ folks, but it's something everyone can do. When we share our own pronouns, we help make the practice feel normal. This simple step makes it easier for transgender and gender-diverse people to share theirs and feel more at ease.

HE/HIM



THEY/THEM



APOLOGISE WHEN YOU USE THE WRONG PRONOUNS

It takes time to learn someone's personal pronouns, so slip-ups can happen. If you use the wrong ones, keep your apology simple and quick.

This shows you care without putting anyone in an uncomfortable spot.



IF YOU ARE MISGENDERED/CALLED YOUR DEAD NAME

If you are misgendered or someone uses your dead name, you may feel hurt. Try not to panic or take it personally.

If you are comfortable, correct the person.

A good tip to do at first is practice using your pronouns with the people you trust and getting used to it.

HE/HIM



SHE/HER



HOW TO BE RESPECTFUL OF OTHER PEOPLE'S PRONOUNS

Always use the pronouns someone shares with you. It helps everyone feel seen.

Don't guess pronouns. Ask instead of assuming.

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PRONOUNS, GENDER IDENTITY AND SEXUALITY



TABLE OF USED PRONOUNS

The image shows a table of personal pronouns, including traditional and gender-neutral/neopronouns.

She	Her	Her	Hers	Herself
He	Him	His	His	Himself
They	Them	Their	Theirs	Themselves
Ze	Zir	Zir	Zirs	Zirself
Xe	Xem	Xyr	Xyrself	Xemself
Ze	Hir	Hir	Hirs	Hirself
Per	Per	Per	Pers	Perself

Neopronouns (like ze/zir, xe/xem, per/per) are used by a much smaller number of people compared to they/them.

SEXUALITIES AND GENDERS EXPLAINED....

"As a young person, and even as an adult, you may identify with whichever term you feel fits you best. There is no right or wrong way for you to identify and you may identify as multiple"

The language around sexuality and gender keeps growing and shifting, with new words appearing and others being reclaimed.

WHAT IS SEXUALITY?

Sexuality is about who someone is attracted to romantically, emotionally, or physically. It's a meaningful part of who a person is.

Many people know terms like lesbian, gay, bi, pan and straight. But there are many other identities that describe more specific attractions and help people understand themselves better. For lots of people, exploring these words is an important part of coming out and feeling included in the LGBTQIA+ community.

Some identities are less known, and some act as broad terms that include several experiences.

Here is a list of more recent identities and their flags to help you explore and understand them.

LOUD & PROUD

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SEXUALITY AND FLAGS



ABROSEXUAL

Someone who feels their sexuality shift over time. They may feel drawn to different genders at different moments, and these changes can happen quickly or slowly.

ANDROPHILIC / ANDROSEXUAL

Androphilic or Androsexual means someone is mainly attracted to masculinity—this can be in a sexual way, a romantic way, or just liking how someone looks.

For example, both heterosexual women and homosexual men can be referred to as Androphilic or Androsexual.



ASEXUAL

An Asexual person is someone who does not experience sexual attraction. They may experience romantic and/or aesthetic attraction, but not sexual attraction.

AROACE

Aroace is short for Aromantic Asexual, which means someone who experiences little or no romantic and sexual attraction.





AROMANTIC

Aromantic is someone who does not experience romantic attraction. They may experience sexual and/or aesthetic attraction, but not romantic attraction.

AROFLUX

Aroflux means someone's feelings about romance can change over time, but they usually don't feel much romantic attraction. Some days they might feel very aromantic, and other days a little less.

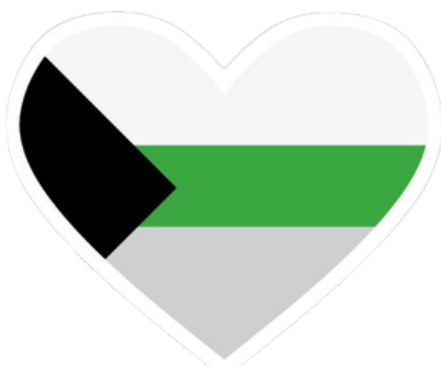


BISEXUAL

Bisexuality refers to sexual attraction to more than one gender and is inclusive of ALL genders, therefore Bisexuals can be attracted to people from right across the gender spectrum.

DEMISEXUAL

Demisexual people only experience sexual attraction to someone once they have created a romantic or platonic relationship with them.



DEMIROMANTIC

Similarly to Demisexual, Demiromantic is someone who does not experience romantic attraction until they have formed a strong connection with a partner.

FINSEXUAL

The exclusive attraction to those who are feminine in nature (F|N).



GAY / HOMOSEXUAL

Someone who is attracted to the same gender as themselves. The rainbow flag is also used to represent the LGBTQIA+ community as a whole.

GAY MALE / VINCIAN

Vincian is a term used to describe gay men or men-aligned people.



GREYSEXUAL

Greysexual refers to people who experience limited sexual attraction. They experience sexual attraction very rarely or with very low intensity.

GYNEPHILIC/GYNESEXUAL

Someone who is mainly romantically, sexually or aesthetically attracted to femininity.





LESBIAN

Women who are solely attracted to other women however some non-binary people can also identify as lesbian.

LITHOSEXUAL

Lithosexuals may experience sexual attraction but do not want it reciprocated. Also known as Akoisexual.



LITHROMANTIC

A Lithromantic person is someone who may experience romantic attraction but does not want it reciprocated. Also known as Akoirromantic.

MINSEXUAL

Minsexual refers to the exclusive attraction to those who are masculine in nature (M|N). This can include men, masculine aligned and/or masculine presenting non-binary people, and potentially masculine women.



MULTISEXUAL

Multisexual is a broad term describing attraction to more than one gender. Also known as Plurisexuality.

NEPTUNIC

Neptunic refers to the attraction to women, feminine non-binary people and neutral non-binary people. It can also be described as attraction to all except men and/or masculine-aligned non-binary people.



NINSEXUAL

Ninsexual refers to the exclusive attraction to those who are non-binary in nature (N|N). This includes people who are non-binary, neutrois, androgyne, agender, and anyone whose gender or presentation is androgynous.

OMNISEXUAL

Omnisexuals are attracted to all genders or any gender, while still having a preference.

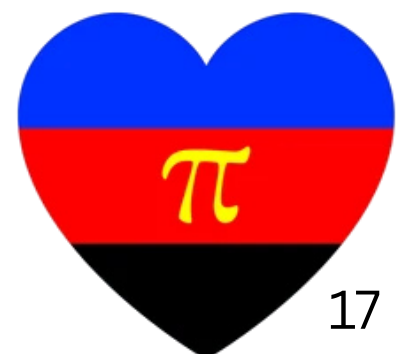


PANSEXUAL

Someone who is attracted to all genders, the prefix "pan" meaning "all" in Latin. Many Pansexual people also describe themselves as being attracted to others based on their personality, not gender.

POLYAMOROUS

Someone who is, or desires to be in, a consensual relationship with multiple partners. Polyamory is the opposite of monogamy.





POLYSEXUAL

Polysexual is someone who is attracted to multiple genders, but not all genders.

QUEER

A general term for someone whose sexuality and/or gender is not heterosexual, cisgender and/or allosexual.

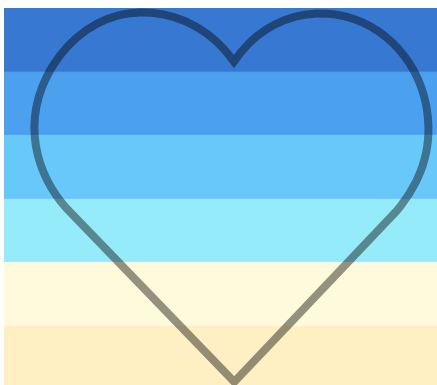
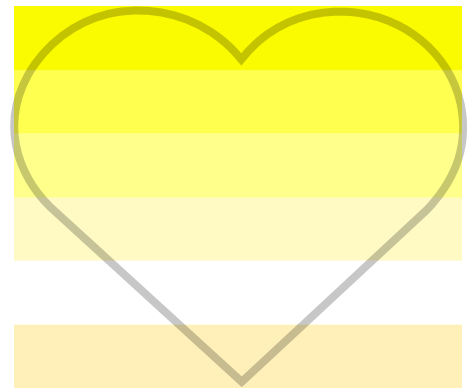


SAPPHIC

Sapphic refers to a woman or woman-aligned person who is attracted to other women or woman-aligned people. Also known as woman loving woman (WLW).

SATURNIC

The attraction to androgynous-aligned non-binary people. Mostly used by non-binary people to describe their attraction without relying on the gender binary.



URANIC

Uranic refers to the attraction to men, masculine non-binary people, and neutral non-binary people. Can also be described as attraction to all except women and/or feminine-aligned non-binary people.

Smile
each
Day



be
your
self

LGBTQ+

you
ARE
BRAVE

Just Me

GENDERS AND WHAT THEY MEAN...

Gender is how someone understands and sees themselves. It can match the sex given at birth or be different. Sex is usually assigned at birth based on physical characteristics.

INTERSEX

Intersex means someone is born with body traits that don't fit the usual male or female categories. This can include things like chromosomes, hormones, or body parts. Some people know they are intersex from birth, some find out later, and some may never know.



CISGENDER

Cisgender means someone's gender matches the sex they were called when they were born.



TRANSGENDER

Transgender means someone feels like a different gender than the one they were called when they were born.

Some trans people might change their name, take medicine, or have surgery to match how they feel, but some might not do any of those things. Being trans doesn't depend on what changes they make to their body.



NON-BINARY

A Non-Binary person is someone who does not identify with the binary genders of male and female.

Other terms such as 'agender' and 'genderqueer' may be used.



GENDERFLUID

Genderfluid means someone's gender can change. They might feel more like a boy sometimes, more like a girl at other times, or somewhere in between. Their feelings about gender can change day to day, week to week, or depending on where they are.

GENDERQUEER

A term used by those who identify outside of the binary genders of male and female.

Genderqueer can be used as a generic term for people whose gender expression and/or identity rejects the gender binary.



GREYGENDER

Greygender refers to someone who is unsure about their gender and who usually identifies outside of the gender binary. Greygender people are not entirely without a gender identity, they may just not be invested in the concept of gender and therefore feel less likely to express it.



GENDERFLUX

A Genderflux person is someone whose gender varies in intensity over time. Genderflux can be seen as a form of gender fluidity and Genderflux people may also identify as transgender, genderqueer, or non-binary.





BOYFLUX

A Boyflux person is someone who mostly identifies as male but also experiences variations in their gender identity. For example, sometimes they may feel very masculine and other times less so. 'Other terms for Boyflux include Guyflux and Manflux'.

GIRLFLUX

A Girlflux person is someone who mostly identifies as female but whose gender intensity varies. Sometimes they may feel strongly feminine and other times less so. 'Girlflux can also be referred to as Womanflux'



DEMIGENDER

Demigender refers to someone who experiences only a partial connection to a specific gender identity. Many demigender people also consider themselves to be non-binary.

DEMIGIRL (DEMIWOMAN OR DEMIFEMALE)

Following on from Demigender, a Demigirl is someone who partially identifies as a woman or girl, but not solely.

They may also identify as non-binary, genderqueer or transgender.



DEMIBOY (DEMIMAN OR DEMIMALE)

Similarly, a Demiboy is someone who partially, but not solely, identifies as a man or boy.

Again, they may identify as non-binary, genderqueer or transgender.

DEMIANDROGYNE

Demiandrogynous refers to someone whose gender identity partially connects to being androgynous. A demi-androgynous person may also identify as non-binary, genderqueer or transgender.





TRIGENDER

A trigender person is someone who experiences three distinct gender identities, either simultaneously or moving fluidly between them. The three genders can be both binary or non-binary and trigender people can also identify as transgender, non-binary, or multigender.

AGENDER

A person who identifies as not having a gender identity.

Some agender people may identify as non-binary, whereas others may identify as gender lacking, gender neutral or as not having a gender at all.



NEUTROIS

A non-binary gender identity that is associated with having a neutral or null gender. It is a general term with each person experiencing neutrois differently.

ANDROGYNE

A person who identifies as both male and female at the same time or in between male and female. Androgyne is an identity under the non-binary umbrella.



BIGENDER

Someone who identifies as two distinct genders. They may identify as both genders at once or they may switch between the two.

METAGENDER

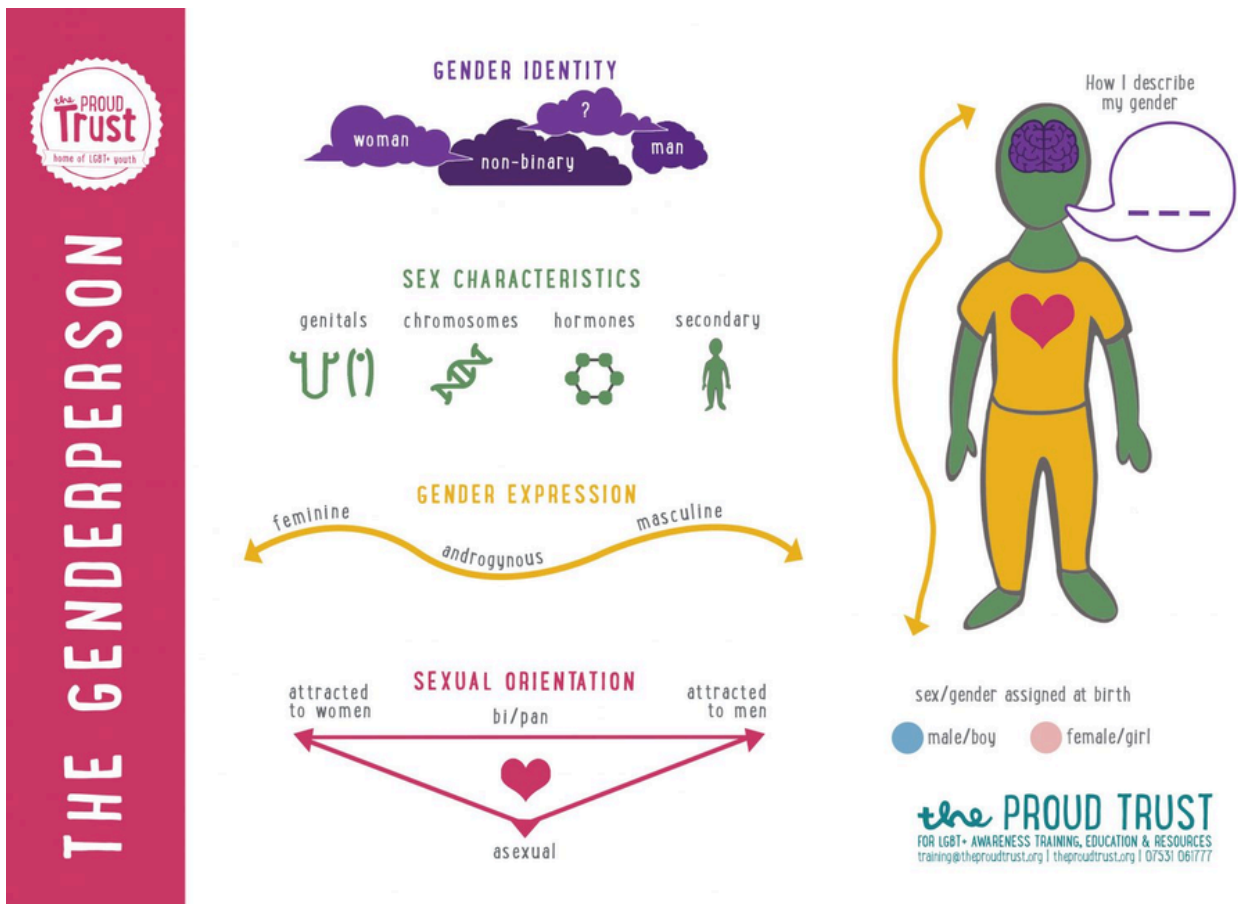
Metagender has carried different meanings over time. It first described identities that sit outside or go beyond the gender binary. Today, it's often used by people who don't identify with the gender they were assigned at birth but also don't see themselves as transgender.



This is not an exhaustive list and more can be found:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_gender_identities

FIGURING OUT YOUR GENDER IDENTITY

From the moment we are born, most of us are treated like (and told) we are either a girl or a boy. This is called gender assignment. This can make things difficult to figure out when our gender identity doesn't match the gender we were assigned or given.



HOW DO YOU KNOW...

The only person who knows how it feels to be you, is you! You could ask yourself questions like, "Do I feel comfortable with the gender I was assigned at birth? Would I be happier if people referred to me as a different gender? Does being a boy/girl feel right to me?"

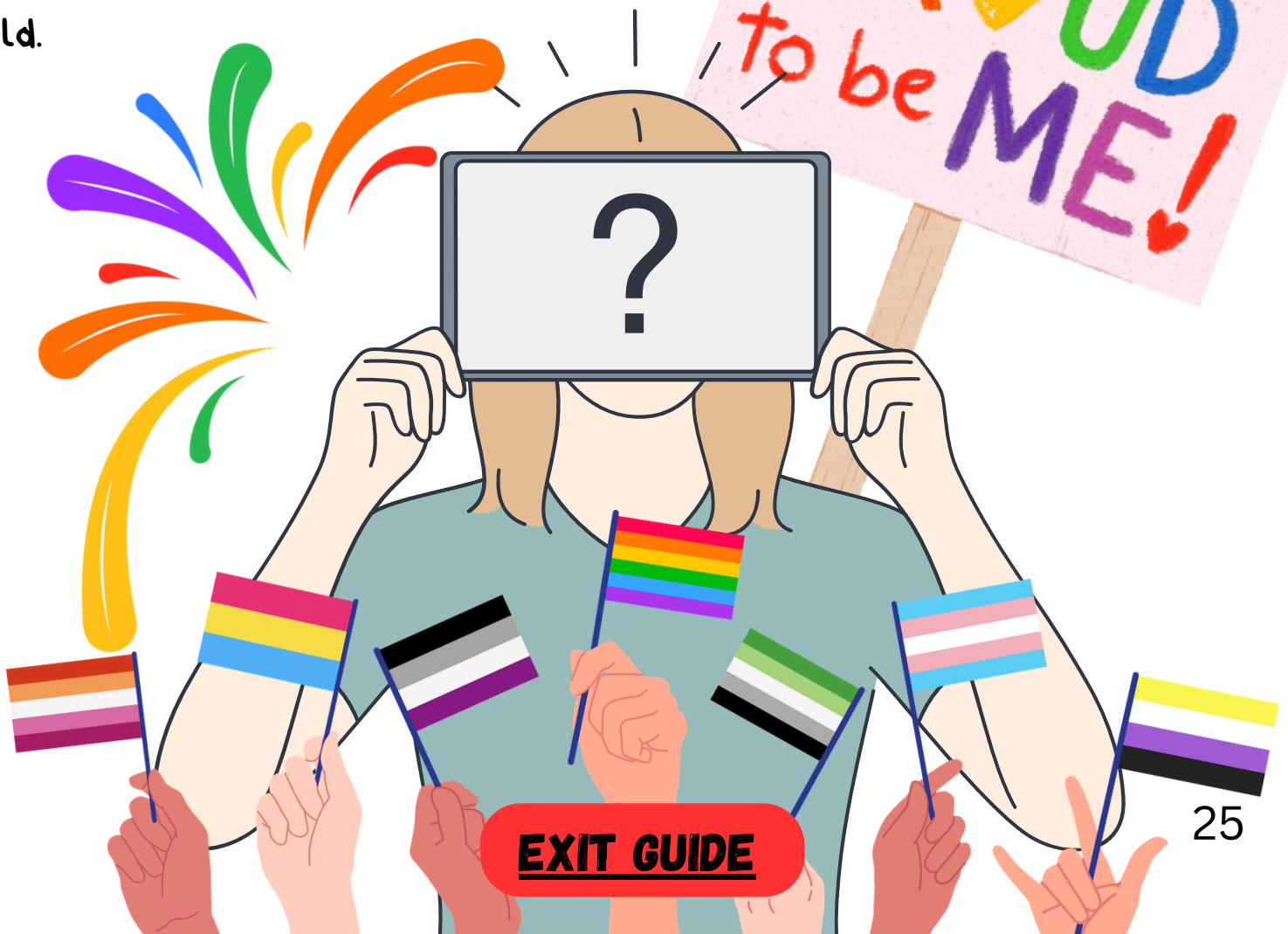


WHAT IF I GET IT WRONG AND CHANGE MY MIND LATER?

That's fine! It's ok to change your mind. Sometimes it takes some exploring before you discover what fits best for you.

AM I TOO YOUNG?

You're never too young to be yourself. We usually become aware of our gender around the age of three or four years old.





PERSONAL

“COMING OUT

STORIES”

FROM CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE



COMING OUT STORIES

"I don't really have a story and I never really came out, I just started dating a girl and my mam never cared or asked about it. The End." – E (14)



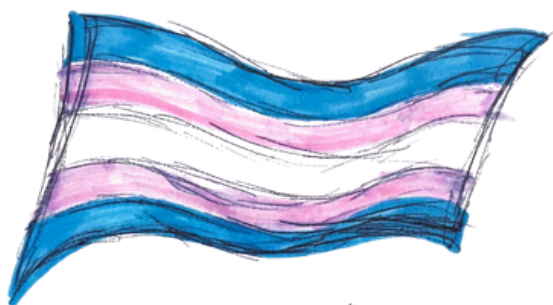
"Coming out to my foster carers was difficult because it was after 2 months being with them and my real family blamed my carers for me being trans and I felt like rubbish after hearing what they said to my carers. I kicked off and said things about my real family that I later regretted, but my carers understood how I felt." – S (17)

"my mum came out to me first then I said me too... that was it!" – A

"Nothing really happened when I told my mam!" – A (20)

"I came out to my parents as bi-gender at 14 and they basically said it made no sense. When I got older I realised that yeah it didn't make sense, so I came out later as non-binary. With my personal experience being just myself, not a man or a woman, but I just tell people I'm non-binary because that's a word lots of people are familiar with." – A (17)

"I'm not out (officially), but if I was out, I think it would be boring and I think they would guess I was gay or something because they know I'm dating E."- L (14)



"In 2018 at 10 years old I walked up some stairs and say to myself 'would I look the same as the opposite gender?' Then in 2022, I was 14 years old and on a Centre Parks trip- I came out and I felt like I wanted to dance as a girl. Also wanted to try mascara too." - S (16)

"At first, I didn't know what I was, then I realised. When I found out I liked girls I freaked out. But then I talked about it all. I told staff and then the teacher at school started to notice too." - M 14

"Coming out as bi was easy, just didn't bother telling anyone till I was asked. No backlash from it. I was outed as trans which nobody remembers now, but I got a lot of backlash so I can't be bothered to be out."



"I came out to both of my sisters first and then my parents. I also have Brothers but I forgot to tell them.

My Dad and Sister took it well and just responded that it was obvious, and my other sister and Mum just didn't really care.

I had a pretty good experience, but at first it was really scary and I wasn't sure how they were going to take it"

"I have come out to my friends but I haven't come out to my family.

My friends are supportive. I would make mini LGBTQ+ flags. I have talked about it around my teachers so a few of my teachers know."



"I came out to my Parents first when I was really young and it was all ok.

It felt really good to get it off my chest.

My siblings did acknowledge it but they didn't bring it up or talk about it much.

I have come out to some of my friends, but they never really talk about it either. My best friend still tries to set me up with boys and asks who I think looks nice. I feel like i just have to go along with it because i don't want to lose my friends. But i do feel like some people don't have to know. It's my buisness!"

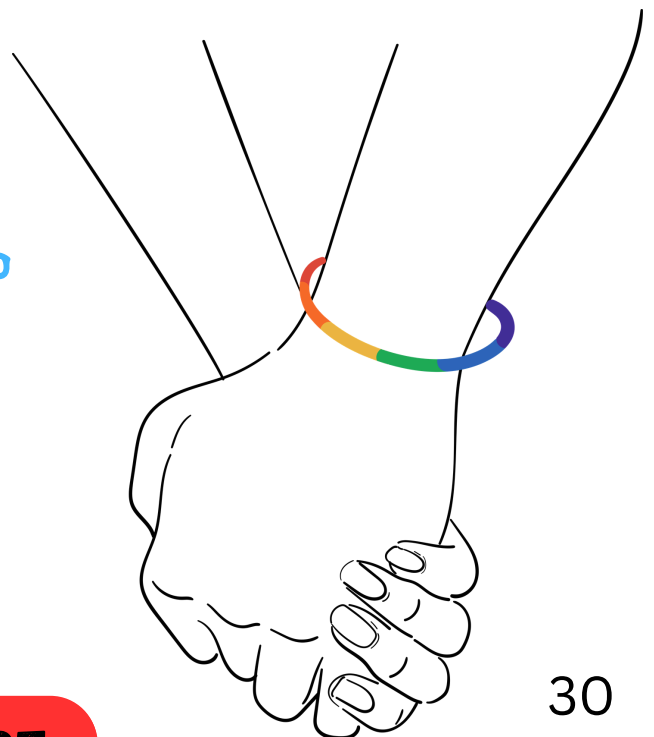
"I went downstairs and my mum was watching great British bake off. I told her I had to tell her something. She paused it and I said 'I think I'm trans' she said ok and went back to watching TV.... Don't just say its ok!"



"I was really scared to come out and I asked my mam to come to the bathroom. I told my mam and she was like 'ok' and she patted me on the head and said that's nice and walked out. I told my grandma and she was so happy and she called me 'an amazing gay person', and then she took me to pride the next year."

"I was worried and didn't know how to talk about it. When I first came out about being Bisexual (at first) I was crying to my Mam. But she was really accepting. (my Mam cried too though)

It was stressful because I didn't know how she would react".



“My mam and dad asked me if I was dating this girl (I also identified as a girl then, and I cried saying yeah. My parents just said ‘ok’ and I said ‘are you mad at me’ and they told me no. The next year I came out to my friends as trans on the 20th November 2023. I said that I’ve been going as M** and he/him for a while and she just said ok and again I cried. When I came out to my parents, I sent my mam a text message, stating that I had been going by M**. they immediately said that it was kinda obvious and started calling me by M** immediately.” – M



“A few months before I decided to come out to my mother, I pretended to have a boyfriend as to not cause suspicion I was into girls. I had heard a lot of bad things that people went through for being gay/lesbian, so I just decided not to say anything. Until one day I blurted it out in front of my mother and broke down in tears, thinking she was going to say something bad about it. Fortunately, she was supportive and when I told my father he told me he always suspected I was into girls and said that he couldn’t be happier for me. After that day I have never been scared about being gay or even telling people about my sexuality.”

"I realised when I was about 11/12 that I was different to other girls. I didn't find boys attractive like they did. I thought girls were pretty but I couldn't be who I wanted to be, as I couldn't be anything but straight in the village I lived in. I would sit in the back of the car and try to work out which parent I got it from.



Looking back it was silly, I would question things like that as I couldn't tell anyone. For years the only time I opened up about being gay was to my dog. It took several months of panicking to eventually pluck up the courage and tell my mum. When I told her she cried, but after and ever since she has always been really supportive and accepts who I am."



"Coming out... almost all of my friends were supportive (the ones that weren't I dropped). My teachers were also supportive, but I was outed as trans to my parents. Unfortunately, my parents thought I was being brainwashed or groomed. I also faced a lot of backlash by peers, being bullied and called slurs until I eventually hid my identity and DE transitioned. I still struggle to be who I am."



“My mam went through my phone and saw chats between me and my friends and she found out I was a part of the LGBTQ+ community. She asked me about it and I said I was a lesbian as that is how I identified at the time. She told me I was angry and confused which upset me at the time. My sister brought me into her bedroom to question me about my mental health and she went through my phone and found out I was lesbian. She then forced me to tell her how I identified which was quite upsetting as I didn't want any of my family to know as I was so scared of how they would react.

My Dad was actually supportive which surprised me so much as he was very open about being homophobic. He said that it really surprised him and it took a lot of time to get used to but it never changed how much he loved me.

My aunties and nanna asked me if I had a boyfriend and I replied I have a girlfriend, they weren't really phased by it.

My mam says she is supportive now but her reaction when she found out made me think otherwise.”



"I remember when I was about 10/11 that I felt different. I didn't know what it was that made me different. For a long time I didn't understand what Homosexuality or being gay was. I remember my classmates laughing and making fun of the word Homo, and I didn't understand. It wasn't until an RE lesson that I eventually understood what being gay was. A conversation on whether gay marriage was right or wrong. All of my classmates thought it was wrong and disgusting.

I remember feeling overwhelmed and confused. I just realised that I liked both boys and girls and everyone around me was just mocking it. I was about 14 then. I eventually started to make friends who were also LGBT+ and I slowly got the courage to come out. I came out to my brother first and I remember my Mam being upset that I hadn't told her first. It was a relief to know that my family accepted me. However she couldn't understand Bi-sexuality. It took many years for her to eventually understand and I ended up identifying as Lesbian for many years, just because it made it easier for everyone around me to understand. I moved away from Durham to Lincolnshire at 15. I was being severely bullied and was even attacked because I cut my hair short and looked like a Lesbian. I didn't come out in school then, but I did when I moved to Lincolnshire. It was a new start for me. I told all of my old friends who were upset I didn't tell them before I moved.

It wasn't until I was 23 that I fully accepted myself as Bisexual, and I came out for a second time!!

I felt like a weight had been lifted from me!"

Stories were brought together by the young people from the various projects and the staff who supported them. Some of the stories can be upsetting to read, speak with someone you trust if you need to.



BE KIND

BE BRAVE

BE SILLY

BE HONEST

BE HAPPY

BE YOU





TOP TIPS FOR 'BEING OUT'



TOP TIPS FOR 'NOT BEING OUT'





(Advice from children and young people)

TOP TIPS FOR BEING



You don't choose what you want to be, it's how you feel



You don't have to come out instantly



Start small- name change or change of pronouns.



You don't need to tell everyone

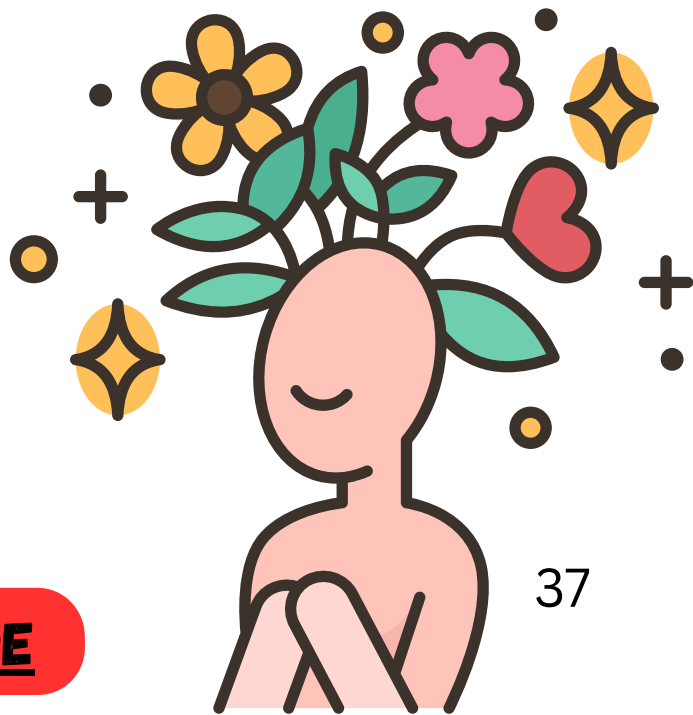


You don't need a label



You don't need to rush

**BELIEVE IN
YOURSELF**





You don't have to conform to stereotypes to 'prove' gender or sexuality. Do whatever feels right for you!



Don't let someone destroy your confidence
Just be you, be yourself, don't worry what others think!



Relax. You've done the hard part!



Sometimes people may not take you seriously. Try not to overthink that.



Get your message across, don't hide it.



Time is a healer!



Give people time to understand, do their research and accept who you are. Maybe they don't understand.



Coming out can be dangerous, but its about finding out and being who you truly are.



You don't just come out once, there can be multiple coming out stages



Trust your gut if you don't feel safe



If you want to come out, think about how you want to do it. Some people do it through text, while others do it publicly or one to one. You will know what is right for you though.



"I don't wish to be asked that question" is a fine response if someone asks you something you don't like or don't want to answer





TOP TIPS FOR **Not** BEING OUT:

(Advice from children and young people)



Use a nickname to start (trans/identity)



Go with your feelings



Try not to hide, if you can



Be who you are but be safe



Come out only when you are ready



Steer away from anti-LGBT places, stay safe!



Self-care and love



You don't have to conform to gender stereotypes to prove a gender or sexuality.



Do whatever feels right for you.



Safety first



Use small labels



You don't need to rush to come out



Find and access online/face to face support group. Meet people like you!



Do your own research



Small steps



Start by being an ally



Know its not wrong and learn how to not hate yourself



It's ok to change your mind



Take time to figure out who you are and what you want



Tell people that you trust



Just be yourself



Surround yourself with friends and family who understand and accept you



Do some research before you come out



Buy yourself stuff at Christmas so people don't know



Don't feel the need to label yourself with one thing or any



Take time and come out on your own terms



You don't need to tell people



Watch LGBTQIA+ positive shows



Have a diary, journal, or drawings



Know that its not wrong and learning to love myself more and not hate myself



Find support and help





Subtle ways to celebrate **PRIDE MONTH**

For those who aren't out yet, coming out and or for supporters of Pride and LGBTQ+ communities

- Use an old symbol- the greek symbol for Lambda (once used by secret LGBT groups)
- Write a letter to yourself about all the reasons to be proud of you!
- Find Local and online LGBTQ+ support groups
- Wear something rainbow-like socks!!!



Wear one colour of the rainbow- each colour represents something- pick one that represents you!

- **PINK- LOVE**
- **RED- LIFE**
- **ORANGE- HEALING**
- **YELLOW- SUNLIGHT**
- **GREEN- NATURE**
- **TURQUOISE- HARMONY**
- **VIOLET- SPIRIT**



QUOTES FROM YOUNG PEOPLE:

“SOMETIMES IT’S EASIER TO FIND SOMEONE LIKE YOU TO ENCOURAGE AND/OR TO TELL”

“THERE’S NOTHING WRONG WITH YOU, IT’S THEIR PROBLEM.”

“IT’S UPSETTING, NOT HAVING TO BE YOU!”

“IT’S BECAUSE OF YOUR TRAUMA, YOU’LL GROW OUT OF IT!... IT’S BEEN 4 YEARS, I’M NOT GOING TO GROW OUT OF IT.”

“WHEN YOU MEET SOMEBODY DO NOT LOOK AT THEM AND THINK THEY ARE A BOY OR A GIRL. DO NOT IDENTIFY THEM BY HOW THEY LOOK OR DRESS!”

“CHOOSING WHO TO COME OUT TO IS IMPORTANT.”

“AS LONG AS YOU KNOW SOMEONE IS THERE, IT DOESN’T HAVE TO BE NEGATIVE.”





STAYING SAFE AND BEING HEALTHY



STAYING SAFE & BEING HEALTHY



- Staying safe online
- Bullying and LGBTQIA+ phobia
- Hate crime
- Protecting your sexual orientation
- Protecting your gender identity





STAYING SAFE ONLINE

DO NOT SHARE YOUR DETAILS WITH ANYONE

If you are unsure who you are talking to, or you are talking to someone you have never met, do not share with them your full name, address, school/college or photos of yourself. You cannot be sure what the other person may do with this information.



THINK CAREFULLY ABOUT WHAT YOU POST

Once you post something online, if you change your mind and decide to remove it, it's near impossible to guarantee it has gone from the internet forever.

CHECK YOUR PRIVACY SETTINGS ON YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA

Be aware of the information strangers can find about you online. Change your privacy settings so people you don't know cannot see your photos, your location or any of your information.

ARE YOU IN A TRICKY SITUATION?

Talk to someone you trust. If you don't feel you have someone you trust, call Childline or report your concerns through CEOP Safety Centre



NEVER AGREE TO MEET SOMEONE YOU HAVE MET ONLINE

Meeting somebody in person that you have only previously met online should be done with a great deal of caution.

It is very easy for somebody to create a false identity for themselves online, and to tell you information that is not true. Can you be certain that the person you have been talking to online is who they say they are? Can you be sure that you will be safe? Can you be sure that they are really your "friend"?





*never
give
up*

BULLYING AND LGBTQIA+ PHOBIA

IF YOU'RE BEING BULLIED ONLINE, TRY THESE STEPS:

- **Stay calm and don't reply.** Being unkind back can make things worse and could get you in trouble. Use a coping strategy like a breathing exercise to help stay calm.
- **Save screenshots** of any messages so you have proof if you need it later.
- **Report and block the person.** Many sites and games let you do this, and they will look into what you've reported.
- **Share what's happened with someone you trust.** It can feel upsetting, so looking after your wellbeing is important. This could be a family member, a teacher, or a support organisation.

IF A PERSON IS SENDING YOU ABUSIVE MESSAGES AND YOU FEEL THEIR HATRED IS BECAUSE OF THEIR PREJUDICE TOWARDS YOUR LGBT+ IDENTITY, THIS IS A HATE CRIME.



WHAT IS A HATE CRIME?

A hate crime is a crime that has been committed where the victim believes their attacker was motivated by their hatred of and prejudice towards their race, religion, sexual orientation, trans identity or disability.

Hate crime in any form is wrong. That is why it is important that if a hate crime happens to you or someone you know, you should report it.

Hate crimes and incidents come in many different forms. Any abusive behaviour that expresses prejudice can be a hate crime, and this can include:

- Verbal abuse.
- Acting in a threatening or intimidating way.
- A physical attack.
- Stealing or damaging your belongings.
- Sending abusive or offensive messages.
- Blackmail.
- Encouraging others to target people who have a shared identity, for example, LGBTQ+ people, wheelchair users, BME, etc.



WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I WITNESS A HATE CRIME?

SEEK HELP.

If you think the person being attacked may need immediate police or medical help, call 999.

To speak directly to your local police, you can call 101.

Find a nearby, responsible adult. If you are in school, find a teacher. If you are somewhere like a train station, find a staff member.

TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION.

Physically or verbally attacking the abuser could result in you getting into trouble or you getting hurt. If it is safe to do so, speak to the victim and pay attention to them. Chat with them, ignore the abusers and walk away from the situation and stay in public spaces until you find a responsible adult or a safe space.

REPORT IT.

You do not have to be the victim of a hate crime to report one. Speak to the police and make a statement about what happened; you may have important information that the victim cannot remember.

You can report crimes by calling 101, visiting a police station or completing the reporting form online.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I AM A VICTIM OF HATE CRIME?

You have the right to express yourself and live free from abuse – hate crime is never the fault of the victim.



SEEK HELP.

If you need immediate police or medical help, call 999.

To talk to the police directly you can use their non-emergency number 101.

If you would prefer not to speak to the police initially but you would like to chat to someone for advice and support, you can contact the LGBT+ anti-violence charity Galop whose website you can access here.

RECORD WHAT HAPPENED.

Memories fade quickly and the details of the event can be important. Try to write down what happened including who the person was or what they looked like.

If this hate crime is ongoing, with the same person harassing you, it is useful to keep a record of what happens including the dates and times.

If you have been injured, as well as seeking medical help, photograph your injuries as they may later be used as evidence.

LOOK AFTER YOURSELF.

We hope you are never the victim of a hate crime but if it does happen it can be very stressful and upsetting. We encourage you to talk to someone and share how you are feeling. Try using an instant messaging service or a call-in system like an LGBTQ+ Switchboard: 0300 330 0630. Sometimes a charity allows text messages.

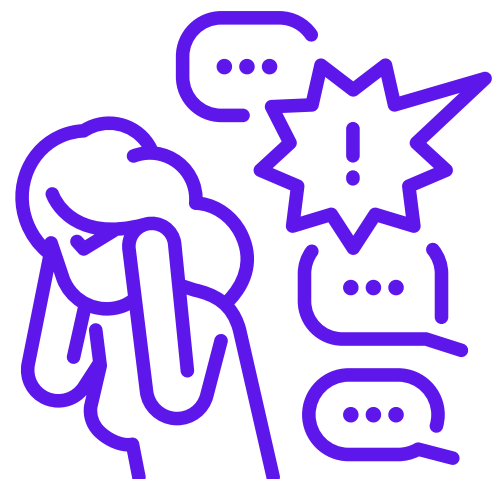
As well as caring for your mental wellbeing, look after your physical health. Care for your body with good food, lots of water, some exercise and enough sleep.

WHERE CAN I FIND OUT MORE INFORMATION?

True Vision has lots of information about the different types of hate crime and what they may look like – you can check out their website

[Report-it.org.uk](https://www.report-it.org.uk)

Galop is an LGBT+ anti-violence charity that can offer guidance and support – you can access their website [Galop.org.uk](https://www.galop.org.uk)





PROTECTING YOUR SEXUAL ORIENTATION



Decide who knows about your sexual orientation, and when and how you tell them.



You have the right to be respected and treated no differently to anyone else.



You have the right to feel safe and welcome.
(Check out page 63/64)

SPREAD
LOVE
NOT
HATE



Ask for support.
Maybe a trusted adult, teacher, friend or join a local support group.

EXIT GUIDE

SETTING BOUNDARIES



Boundaries help keep us safe, comfortable, and respected.

You can keep things private.

It's okay to say: "I don't want to talk about that."

Speak up if something feels wrong.

You can say: "Please stop." or "That makes me uncomfortable."

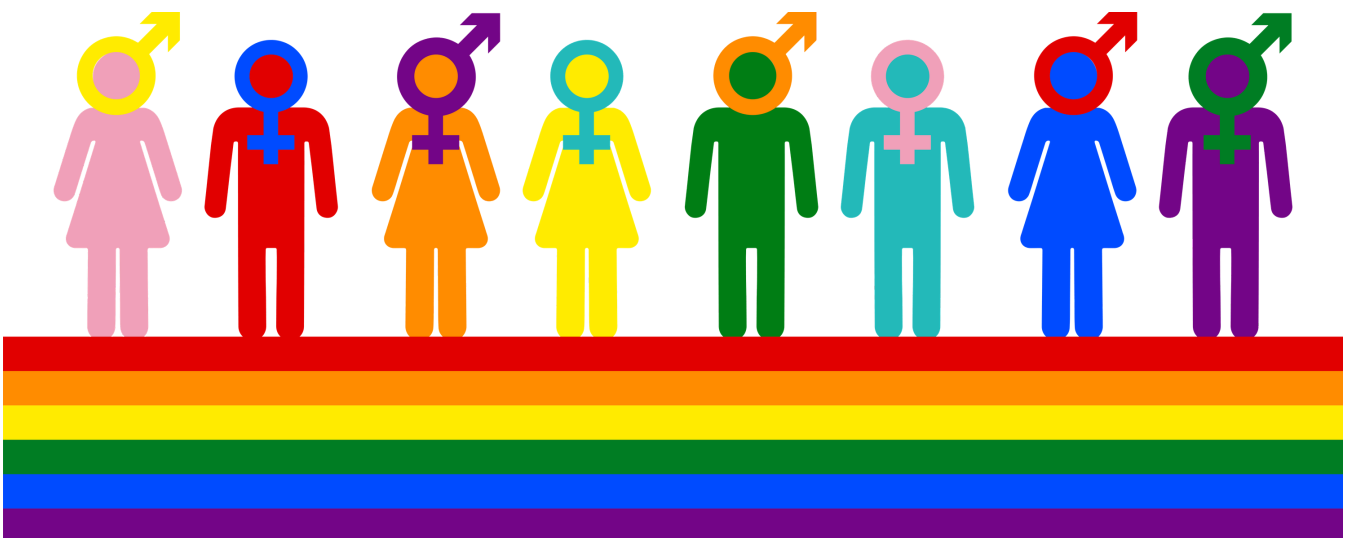
Be around kind people.

Good friends respect your feelings and who you are.

Ask a trusted adult for help.

If someone keeps bothering you, tell a teacher, parent, or another trusted adult.

♥ **Remember:** Everyone deserves to feel safe, respected, and accepted.



PROTECTING YOUR GENDER IDENTITY

If you're a trans young person you have the right to:



Use whatever name and pronoun you want.



Decide who knows you're trans, and when and how to tell them.



Use whatever toilet you feel most comfortable in, or have access to gender-neutral toilets if you prefer.



Ask for support.

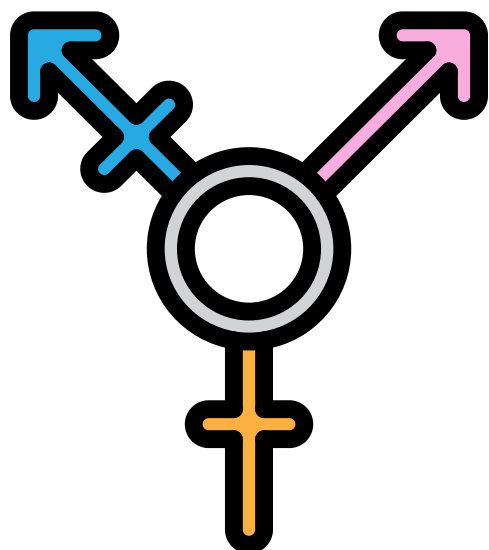
Take a look at pages 63/64.



Be taken seriously

Respect yourself, keep yourself safe!

GENDER
Equality



ASK FOR SUPPORT.

Your school, college, or workplace is not allowed to treat you unfairly because of your sexuality or gender identity. A law called the Equality Act (2010) protects people from being treated badly for who they are. One of the things this law protects is sexual orientation, which means it's against the law to discriminate against someone for being LGBTQ+.

Under the Equality Act, you don't need any documentation (such as a letter from your parents or doctor) to 'prove' that you're trans, and you don't need to undergo any medical or social changes to have these rights.

TRANS RIGHTS IN SCHOOL



YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

- Use whatever name, pronoun and title you want and to have that respected.
- Be listened to and taken seriously.
- Decide who knows that you are trans, when you tell people and how you tell them.
- Use the toilet where you feel safe and comfortable, and have equal access to a gender-neutral option such as the accessible toilet.
- Ask for support.

YOU DO NOT:

- Need any documentation to 'prove' you're trans.
- Have to undergo any changes, medical or social, to be protected under the Equality Act (2010).
- Not have to deal with transphobic bullying. This is a hate crime and you can report it to your school, college or the police.

CHANGING YOUR NAME

You can change your name for any reason, as long as you're not doing it to trick or mislead someone. You don't have to follow a formal process to start using a new name, but some places might ask for proof. You can get this proof through a deed poll or a statutory declaration. A parents letter can support a name change in school for register purposes but a deed poll is needed for exams.



Trans
Joy



THE DEED POLL CONSISTS OF THREE SECTIONS CALLED DECLARATIONS:

A deed poll is a legal way to show that you have changed your name. It states that you will no longer use your old name, will use your new name for everything, and want others to use your new name. An unenrolled deed poll needs two adult witnesses. Once complete, it can often be used to update key documents such as passports, driving licences, banking details, and education or work records. People in the UK aged 16 or above can usually create their own.



UNDER 16'S:

Children under 16 cannot make their own deed poll.

A parent or someone with parental responsibility must apply on their behalf.

Usually:

- Everyone with parental responsibility must agree to the name change
- If people disagree, a court order may be needed, the court will consider what is best for the child.
- A child's name can sometimes be changed without a deed poll by updating records directly, but many organisations ask for official documents.



KEY POINTS:

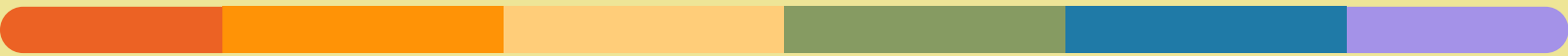
- Make your own unenrolled deed poll for free
- Most UK organisations accept unenrolled deed polls
- An enrolled deed poll costs £53.05 (January 2026)
- Enrolled deed polls are added to the public record
- Unenrolled deed polls stay private unless you share them
- You need two witnesses aged 18 or over
- Children under 16 need consent from everyone with parental responsibility

SUMMARY:

- A deed poll is a widely recognised way to change your name in the UK
- You can create an unenrolled deed poll yourself using the wording on the GOV.UK website
- Most people use unenrolled deed polls because they are free and commonly accepted
- Children under 16 need an adult with parental responsibility to apply for them
- For more information: [GOV.UK – Change your name by deed poll](https://www.gov.uk/change-name-by-deed-poll)



TOP TIPS FOR ALLIES



WEBSITES/ OTHER RESOURCES



TOP TIPS

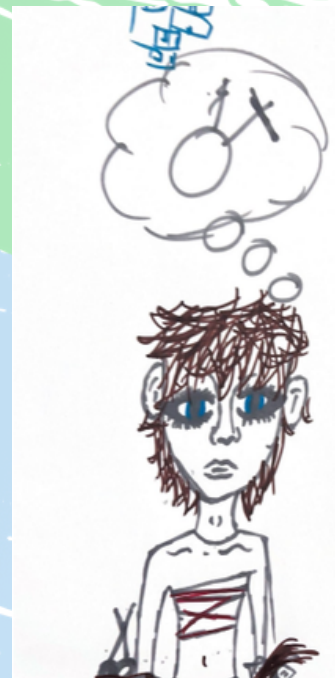
FOR ALLIES



(An ally is someone who listens, supports, and stands up for others, even if they are not part of the same community)

- **NEVER PRESUME – ALWAYS ASK. START BY ASKING THE YOUNG PERSON THEIR NAME AND THE PRONOUNS THEY USE.**
- **USE OUR CHOSEN NAME AND THE PRONOUNS I TELL YOU.**
- **IF YOU SLIP UP, SAY SORRY AND TRY TO LEARN FROM IT. A MISTAKE ONCE OR TWICE IS HUMAN, BUT REPEATED SLIPS CAN BE UPSETTING.**
- **KEEP CALM IF SOMEONE IS MISGENDERED.**
- **TAKE TIME TO LEARN SO YOU UNDERSTAND BETTER.**
- **NEVER SHARE SOMEONE'S IDENTITY WITHOUT THEIR CLEAR CONSENT, EVEN WITH ANOTHER PROFESSIONAL.**
- **BE KIND AND RESPECTFUL.**
- **REMEMBER THAT THINGS CAN CHANGE. A YOUNG PERSON MIGHT SHARE ONE IDENTITY FIRST AND UNDERSTAND THEMSELVES DIFFERENTLY LATER. COMING OUT CAN HAPPEN MANY TIMES.**
- **SUPPORT THE YOUNG PERSON'S CHOICES AND JOURNEY.**
- **PLEASE DON'T ASK PRIVATE QUESTIONS IF YOU DON'T KNOW ME WELL, INCLUDING THINGS LIKE SURGERY.**
- **DON'T MINIMISE BEING BISEXUAL OR ASSUME ANOTHER LABEL FITS.**

- **WHEN TALKING ABOUT TRANS PEOPLE, DON'T LOOK TOWARDS SOMEONE WHO ISN'T OUT.**
- **USE OUR CHOSEN NAMES.**
- **NEVER LAUGH WHEN SOMEONE IS ASKED ABOUT THEIR GENDER.**
- **AVOID SPEAKING FOR LGBTQIA+ PEOPLE.**
- **CALL OUT STIGMA AND HURTFUL IDEAS.**
- **STOP QUESTIONS THAT CROSS THE LINE.**
- **BE THERE FOR US WHEN WE FEEL WORRIED OR STRESSED.**
- **IF SOMETHING ISN'T CLEAR, ASK THE YOUNG PERSON DIRECTLY.**
- **TREAT US AS THE PEOPLE WE ARE, WITHOUT LABELS.**



EXIT GUIDE

(Advice from children and young people involved in the project)

Xilohen
Xilohen
x
Catalia



one day
she told
Catalia
how
she
feels
and
turns
out
Catalia
also
loved
her and it
wasnt just
Xilohen.

But she
is afraid it
will ruin their
friendship if she
tells her how
she feels.

Xilohen
is lesbian
she loves
Catalia ♡

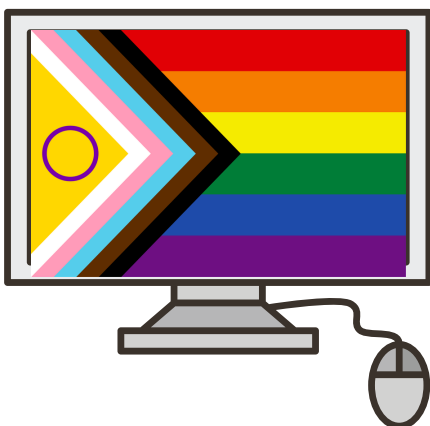


WEBSITES/ OTHER RESOURCES

A collection of LGBT resources, including helpful websites for information and community support both locally and nationally.

WEBSITES:

- [TransActual](#)
- [Mental Health Support Network provided by Chasing the Stigma | Hub of hope](#)
- [Welcome - FFLAG - for parents](#)
- [General Resources - LGBT+ History Month \(lgbtplushistorymonth.co.uk\)](#)
- [The Mix - advice and articles on all sorts of topics- 13- 25 years old](#)
- [Trans+Connect - Not A Phase](#)

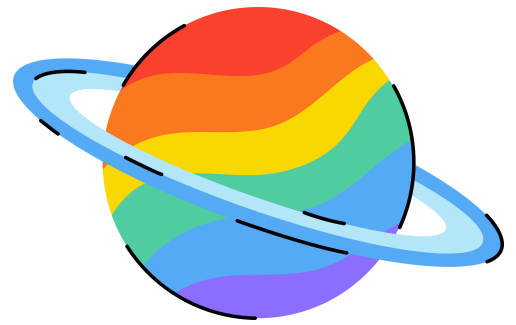


LOCAL INFORMATION (COUNTY DURHAM/ NORTH EAST) :

- [@FreedomZone.stanley](#)
- [Sunderland LGBT network](#)
- [LGBT+NorthEast - Waythrough](#)
- [HartgablesAbout Hart Gables - Hart Gables](#)
- [Durham Pride UK](#)
- [County Durham and Darlington - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Trans+ \(LGBTQ+\) \(cddft.nhs.uk\)](#)
- [Rainbow Home - Where our stories live.](#)
- [\(LGBTQIA+\) support and groups in Newcastle - Information Now](#)
- [Health \(northern-pride.com\)](#)
- [Be: Trans Support & Community](#)
- [Support Line | Gendered Intelligence 18+](#)
- <https://www.facebook.com/derwentsidedetachedyouthproject>

NATIONAL CHARITIES:

- [Homepage - Mermaids \(mermaidsuk.org.uk\)](http://mermaidsuk.org.uk)
- [Homepage | Stonewall](#)
- [Home - LGBT Foundation](#)



COMMUNITIES AND GROUPS:

- [Trans Unite | Find a Transgender Support Group in Your Area](#)
- [Tranzwiki -- Gender Identity Research & Education Society - Tranzwiki directory. \(gires.org.uk\)](#)
- [Community: LGBTQIA+ Events & Tickets in Durham, UK | Eventbrite](#) - may include 18+ events



#LOVEWINS!

MENTAL HEALTH, HEALTH AND SUPPORT:

- [Useful contacts - LGBTQIA+ mental health - Mind](#)
- [MindOut | Mental Health Charity for LGBTQ community 18+](#)
- [Samaritans | Every life lost to suicide is a tragedy. | Here to listen](#)

Childline

- [Find an NHS talking therapies services - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)
- [The Mix - Essential support for under 25s](#)
- [Homepage | Switchboard](#)
- [Terrence Higgins Trust \(tht.org.uk\)](http://tht.org.uk)
- [Icon UK \(interconnecteduk.org\)](http://interconnecteduk.org)
- [Quinns Retreat - Helping those bereaved by suicide, in memory of Dyllon & Quinn](#)



EXIT GUIDE

If you are struggling with mental health, reach out! There are people that want to listen and who understand you.



TV SHOWS- WITH LGBTQIA+ REPRESENTATION OR FOCUS

Suitable for Younger Teens

(11-13+)

- Heartstopper — 12
- The Owl House — PG / family friendly
- Nimona — PG
- Jamie Dodger — family friendly educational content
- Queer Eye — suitable for many teens with parental guidance
- Ackley Bridge — teen drama themes



PRIDE IS EVERYDAY



Suitable for Older Teens (14-15+)

Love, Victor — teen relationships and mild sexual references

Glee — language and mature themes

Atypical — mature topics and relationships

Shadowhunters — fantasy violence

Pretty Little Liars — suspense and darker themes

Degrassi — realistic teen issues

I Am Not Okay With This — strong language and violence

The Umbrella Academy — violence and strong language

The Chilling Adventures of Sabrina — horror themes

Stranger Things — horror and violence

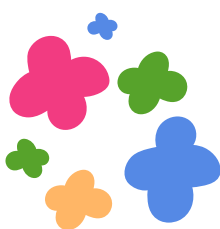
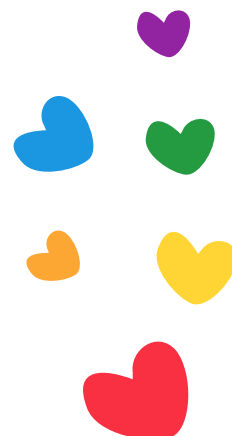
Anyone But Me — older teen relationship themes



TV SHOWS- WITH LGBTQIA+ REPRESENTATION OR FOCUS

Best for Mature Teens / Adults (15-18+)

- Arcane — intense violence and mature themes
- Buffy the Vampire Slayer — horror and violence
- RuPaul's Drag Race — strong language and adult humour
- The Danish Girl — mature emotional themes
- AJ and the Queen — adult humour and language
- Red, White & Royal Blue — sexual content and strong language



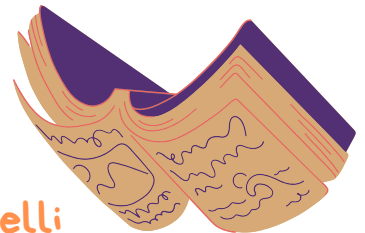
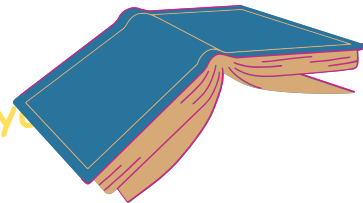
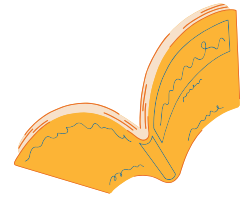
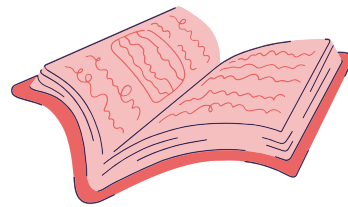
Important Note

Age ratings may vary between streaming platforms and countries.

Please check official ratings and content warnings before viewing.

BOOKS

- Pageboy- Elliot Page
- Trans teen survival guide- owl and fox fisher
- Ace notes- Michele Kirichanskaya
- Love from the pink palace- Jill Nalder
- Queer Heroes of Myth and Legend- Dan Jones
- Sounds fake but okay- Sarah Costello, Kayla Kaszycki
- David bowie made me gay- Darryl w. Bullock
- Accepting gender- Alex Stitt
- You'll be a wonderful parent- Jasper peach
- Amazing ace, awesome Aro- Victoria Barron
- The LGBT+ history book- DK
- Am I Trans enough- Alo Johnston
- 50 LGBTQI+ who changed the world- Florent Manelli
- A child's introduction to pride- Sarah Prager
- Perfectly queer: and illustrated guide- Victoria Barron
- Surviving transphobia- Laura A. Jacobs LCSW
- Bending the Binary- Deborah Lipp
- Its totally normal- Monica Gupta Mehta, Ash Mehta
- Out- John Sovec
- Welcome to st hell- Lewis Hancox





MYTHS VS FACTS



LGBTQIA+ HISTORY



LGBTQIA+ MYTHS VS FACTS

Across the world, the LGBTQIA+ community faces many challenges.

Among these are deeply rooted stereotypes and misconceptions about LGBTQIA+ identities. Many of these beliefs come from social, political, and religious influences rather than scientific evidence or logical reasoning.

As a result, misinformation and negative attitudes can contribute to increased stress, anxiety, and other mental health challenges for young queer people.



MYTH 1: HOMOSEXUALITY IS A DISEASE

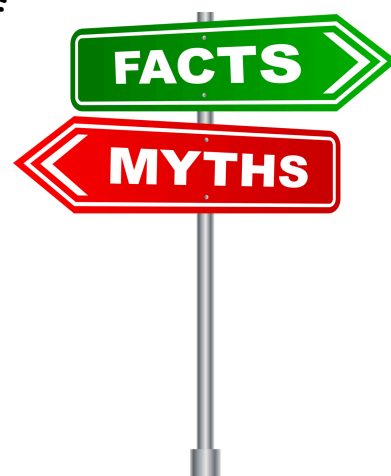
For many years, people wrongly labelled homosexuality as a mental illness. This idea has been proven false, and it is now fully understood that being gay is a natural and healthy part of human diversity.

MYTH 2: "WHO'S THE MAN IN THE RELATIONSHIP?"

You may have heard this very question being asked either directed at you or heard in conversation. Many people think that relationships must have a "norm" of man and woman gender roles. Each relationship is different and gender doesn't matter!

MYTH 3: LGBTQIA+ RELATIONSHIPS DON'T LAST LONG

This idea comes from broad, unfair assumptions. LGBTQIA+ people build strong, loving, long-term relationships just like anyone else, and research continues to show that this claim isn't true.



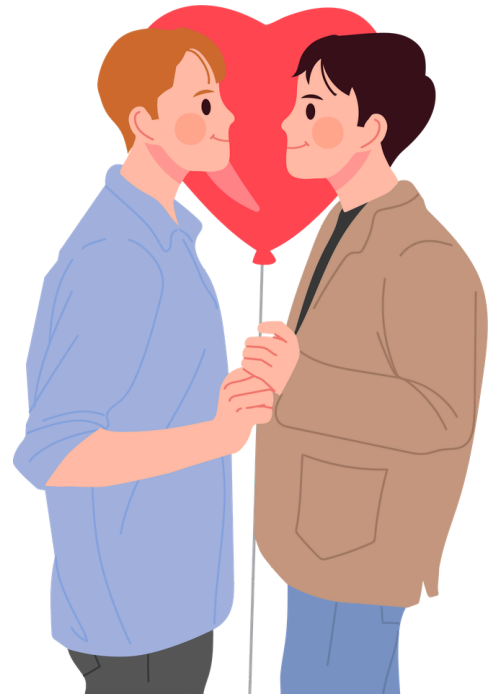
MYTH 4: GAY MARRIAGE HAS DESTROYED THE MEANING OF MARRIAGE



Love, trust, and the wish to build a life together are what make a marriage. Studies show that same-sex couples help communities grow by encouraging acceptance, fairness, and less discrimination. While some people hold to older ideas about marriage, the meaning has widened to include two people who choose each other. Gay marriage is still not legal everywhere, which can lead some to see it as a threat, but it does not take away from anyone else's marriage.

MYTH 5: HOMOSEXUALITY IS AGAINST THE LAWS OF NATURE / "GAY ISN'T NATURAL"

The idea that being gay isn't natural is an old misunderstanding. Many animals show same-sex behaviour, including penguins, dolphins, giraffes and swans. In some species like seahorses, males carry and birth the young, showing how wide and diverse gender and family roles can be in nature. Nature celebrates difference, and homosexuality has always been part of it.



MYTH 6: ALL GAY MEN ARE FEMME AND ALL LESBIANS ARE MASC

Everyone expresses themselves in their own way. How we dress, style our hair, or act is personal and not tied to who we love. A woman with short hair isn't automatically a lesbian, and a boy who enjoys wearing a skirt isn't automatically gay. These ideas come from assumptions about how people are 'supposed' to look. In reality, people who appear straight might be queer, and people who appear queer might be straight. You can't tell someone's identity just by looking at them.

MYTH 7: QUEER PEOPLE ARE HYPERSEXUAL

Queer people have often been stigmatized as hyper sexual and sexual deviants. The reality is that this is a negative and harmful stereotype that neglects the fact that anyone can be hypersexual. Also it is common in media to hyper sexualize queer people and this has added to the belief that queer people are promiscuous and or being used as fetishes.



MYTH 8: GAY MEN ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE PREDATORS

One of the methods people use and used to demonize homosexuality was often categorizing homosexuals as predators and or paedophiles. There is no proof to this claim and there are studies and statistics that will show that this is a myth and a terrible fear mongering tactic that can ruin people's lives.

MYTH 9: TRANS PEOPLE ASSAULT OTHERS IN BATHROOMS/ TRANS PEOPLE ARE PERVERTS TRYING TO GET INTO FEMALE TOILETS

Another fear mongering technique used by transphobic people that are uninformed about the trans community. There are little to no reports of trans people doing this in bathrooms while there are staggering reports of trans people being attacked and penalized for trying to access a basic human necessity.



MYTH 10: THERE ARE ONLY TWO GENDERS

As mentioned above the term gender is broad. Science shows that there is far more to the human body than just female and male hormones and in terms of intersex people this is very true. As an identity, gender norm, gender roles and gender representation is fluid and an extension of expression. Therefore there are not just two genders, there is a range of expression and we shouldn't be confined by negative and harmful "traditions" that are far past us in the modern world.



MYTH 11: BEING TRANS MEANS YOU WILL HAVE SURGERY

A lot of people misunderstand that every trans person will want or have surgery. The reality is that surgery is a very long waiting game for many trans people and not everyone wants to have the surgery. Surgery is very invasive and a very big life changing decision, and although it may fit for one trans individual that option may not fit for another.

MYTH 12: HOMOSEXUALITY IS CURABLE

This harmful belief has contributed to the promotion of so-called “conversion therapies,” which claim to change a person’s sexual orientation or identity. In reality, these practices have been widely condemned and are often linked to abusive and traumatic experiences for LGBTQIA+ young people. Research by Richard Friedman has found no credible evidence that conversion therapy is effective. His work has also helped challenge the outdated idea that homosexuality is a disease, reinforcing that it does not require a cure. Forcing such practices on individuals can cause serious emotional harm and goes against ethical and evidence-based psychological care.



MYTH 13: GENDER IDENTITY AND BIOLOGICAL GENDER ARE THE SAME

They are different. Biological gender, or sex, is the label given at birth based on physical traits. Gender identity is how someone feels on the inside and how they choose to show themselves on the outside. Old ideas about roles for men and women no longer fit everyone. See our flags section to learn more.





MYTH 15: ASEXUAL PEOPLE HAVE NO LIBIDO

Asexuality is a spectrum and an umbrella term within the LGBTQIA+ community. While some asexual people do not experience sexual attraction, others may still experience a libido or sexual desire. Because asexuality includes a wide range of identities and experiences, feelings about sexual attraction and desire can vary from person to person.



MYTH 14: LESBIANS HATE MEN / THEY JUST HAVEN'T MET THE "RIGHT GUY"

This idea suggests lesbians dislike men or simply need a certain man to change their mind. There's no truth to either claim. Attraction isn't something that can be fixed or changed by someone else.



MYTH 16: INTERSEX IS ANOTHER WORD FOR TRANS

Intersex is a term for individuals born outside of the remit of the standard male and female biology. Intersex is far broader than just having male and female parts together, it could be a difference in chromosomes or perhaps a difference in their biology that does not stick to the standard parameters for boy or girl. Intersex is not a term for trans people at all.

MYTH 17: GAY PEOPLE AREN'T RELIGIOUS

While there are many religious groups and communities that have shunned and do not agree with the LGBTQIA+ community that does not mean the LGBTQIA+ community can't have a faith. Many people of the LGBTQIA+ community and their allies fight to ensure they have a right to their faith and have ensured that they are included in their religious communities.



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MYTH 20: LGBTQIA+ PARENTS ARE A THREAT TO CHILDREN

Same-sex parents often face harmful claims that their families are unsafe or that their children will grow up a certain way. In reality, LGBTQIA+ families are just as loving and capable as any other. Research shows that children raised by same-sex parents thrive emotionally, socially and academically thanks to strong bonds, support and warmth at home.

MYTH 18: YOU HAVE TO COME OUT TO YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY

NO YOU DON'T. You have the choice to come out when and to who you want. Some families may not be completely accepting, while some are extremely accepting, but it is up to you on who you tell. Coming out is a personal experience and not everyone has come out to every family member or any friend. Your choice! If you want to find out more read our personal stories section on page 25.

MYTH 19: PEOPLE WHO ARE BISEXUAL ARE CONFUSED/IT IS JUST PHASE!

While it is true that some people may come out as bisexual and then change their mind and identify as gay or straight or something else entirely. Sometimes bisexuality can be a safety net for young people exploring their identity. Sexuality is fluid and it could take years before you find the identity that matches who you are. But there are very much a lot of Bisexuals that are bisexual and have been and maintained that identity.



MYTH 21: SEXUAL ORIENTATION IS CONTAGIOUS

Sexual Orientation and identity has been thought of as being brain-washed or that somehow you can catch it. This is fictional. There has been no proof of homosexuality or gender identity being a result of peer pressure or just because they have listened to a few LGBTQIA+ ideals. Sexual orientation is a part of who you are as a person and is rooted into your biology. If you're gay you're gay.



MYTH 22: SEXUALITY IS A CHOICE

Sexuality (as mentioned above) is rooted in biology. Being gay has never been a choice for people it has only ever been a choice to live openly.

MYTH 23: NON-BINARY PEOPLE ARE ANDROGYNOUS

Androgynous is an identity in which someone presents as someone who looks both feminine and masculine.

As such this is often a fashion choice and presentation. Non-Binary is an identity someone may adopt if they don't feel like they fit into the parameters of female or male.

MYTH 24: PRONOUNS AREN'T REAL

Pronouns are very real and they are an extension to help individuals that don't fit within the traditional gender norms. See our page on pronouns to find out more.





LGBTQ+ HISTORY

This is a timeline that shows important moments in the history of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people. It highlights key changes in Laws, society, and how LGBTQ+ people have become more visible and represented over time.

LGBTQ+ history goes back hundreds of years. LGBTQ+ people have always existed, but their stories were often hidden, ignored, or treated unfairly. This timeline starts in 1533, when Henry VIII introduced Laws in England that made homosexuality illegal. Today, we understand that sexual orientation and gender identity are natural parts of being human, although some people around the world still face challenges with acceptance.

Laws have shifted to better support people in living openly and truthfully. Language has grown too, helping create clearer understanding and deeper respect. Even with this progress, the community continues to push for equal rights and true acceptance, despite having always been here.



This timeline mainly focuses on events that happened in Western countries. In some parts of the world, people can still get in trouble for being gay, and transgender people are not always accepted or supported.

Over the past 20 years, there have been many positive changes that have helped LGBTQIA+ people gain more rights and recognition. However, sometimes progress can slow down or change depending on Laws and Government decisions.

If you are part of the LGBTQIA+ community, it is important to learn about your history, understand your rights, and always make choices that help keep you safe. 🌈

TIMELINE 1533- CURRENT DAY



In 1533, Henry VIII made a law called the Buggery Act, which made being gay against the law.

More than 300 years later!

1885- Criminal Law act 1885 section II- Any sexual and intimate connection between men is a crime

1921 - "The 1921 Criminal Law Amendment Act tried to criminalise relationships between women, but it failed because many lawmakers refused to acknowledge lesbian relationships or believed discussing them would encourage them."

1940 - 1950's - Michael Dillon is often highlighted in LGBTQIA+ history as an early example of a transgender man seeking both medical and social recognition for his identity.

1951- Roberta Cowell is the 1st British woman to under-go gender reassignment surgery and her birth certificate officially changed.

1954- Wolfenden committee investigates the legitimacy of the law about homosexuality being a criminal offence

1957- "The 1957 Wolfenden Report argued that consensual homosexual acts should be legal, but reform was delayed for years."

1967- the sexual offence act decriminalizes sex between men over 21 'in private'. Same-sex still remained illegal in areas and people were arrested.





1969- In 1969, the Stonewall Riots began after police raided the Stonewall Inn, a gay bar in New York City. Members of the LGBTQ+ community fought back against police harassment, leading to protests and the modern gay rights movement.

1972- First Pride held in London 1st July 1972

1978- Artist Gilbert Baker designed the iconic Pride flag. First flown in San Francisco's pride 25th June

1979- the founding of Harry Benjamin's international gender dysphoria association- now a worldwide professional association for trans health

1980- gay sex between 2 men is decriminalized in Scotland

1981- the 1st recorded case of AID's in the US and the UK.

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1983- Law in place that Gay men are unable to donate to UK blood banks.

1988- section 28 of local Gov Act 1988 enacted on 24th May states "shall not intentionally promote homosexuality or publish material with the intention of promoting homosexuality."

1990- first pride held in Manchester 79

1992- In 1992, the World Health Organisation removed homosexuality from its list of mental illnesses. The same year, the Isle of Man decriminalised homosexual acts between men by repealing sodomy laws.

1994- Age of consent for same-sex between men lowered to 18.

Isle of man decriminalizes homosexuality.

1995- Mermaids was founded to support transgender children, young people, and their families in the UK.

1997 the UK recognizes same-sex partners for immigration

1999- Trans day of remembrance founded to bring attention to the injustice of murders and suicide of trans individuals. Bi visibility day founded 23rd September to celebrate and combat bi-erasure

2000- the UK lifts ban on LGB people serving in the military. Legislation to repeal section 28- the Scottish abolished this while it remained in England and Wales

2001- the age of consent for Gay men is lowered to 16

2002- same-sex couples can adopt

2003- Section 28 was repealed, ending the ban on local authorities and schools 'promoting' homosexuality. The same year, Employment Equality Regulations made discrimination based on sexual orientation illegal in the workplace.

2004- the civil partnership act is passed

Gender recognition act is passed giving trans people full legal recognition



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2005- section 146 of criminal justice act
2003- empowers the UK to impose tougher sentences for aggravated attacks due to someone's sexual orientation.

Stonewall launches campaign to tackle homophobic bullying in education



2005 - 2006- Civil Partnerships were introduced, giving same-sex couples many of the legal rights of marriage.

2007- stonewall launches "Some people are Gay. Get over it! Campaign

2008- the ability to get IVF treatment recognizes same-sex couples as legal parents of children conceived this way.

2009- Stonewall conducts the first study of lesbian and bisexual women's health.

2010- the first LGBT+ refugees accepted into the UK

Equality act 2010- gender reassignment made a protected characteristic

New offence made "incitement to homophobic hatred" comes into force in the UK



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2011- the lifetime ban of gay men being able to donate blood is lifted. There is still a 12-month celibacy clause still in place

2012- explicit homophobic bullying in schools introduced into ofsted's school inspection framework.

2013- marriage between same sex people is legalised in England and Wales.

2014- same-sex marriage in force- first marriages held on 29th March 2014

Scotland Legalises same-sex marriage

2015- Ireland holds a referendum to legalise gay marriage- it passes

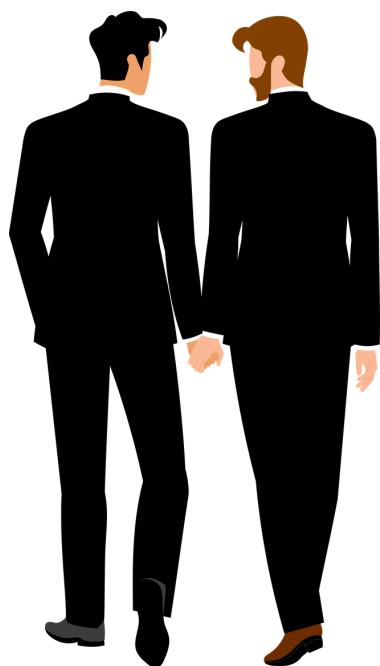
2016- the isle of man legalise gay marriage
The pulse disaster- 49 killed- 53 injured. Vigils were held across the world in memory of this hate crime attack

2017- amendments made to children and social work bill- makes relationships and sex education mandatory in schools from 2019

UK supreme court rules discrimination against same-sex couples on pensions rights needs to end immediately.

2018- UK bring forward proposals to end conversion therapy

Consultation on the reform of gender recognition, 100,000 Responses and vast majority supportive



2019- WHO declassifies Transgender as a mental health illness.

PSHE curriculum introduced that requires lesson include acknowledgement of LGBT rights and protect LGBT children.

Religious communities come together in unity to urge the ban of conversion therapy.

2021- Gov announces the plans to ban conversion practices as well as setting up a fund to support survivors.

UK Census includes questions on sexual orientation and gender identity for the first time

Blood donation rules changed for gay and bisexual men



2021 to present - Campaigns continue to ban conversion therapy across the UK.

2022 - Greater recognition of asexual and non-binary identities

2022 to present - Increased activism and debate around trans rights and gender recognition

2024 - Scotland publishes first census data on LGBTQ+ populations



GAY LOVE IS BEAUTIFUL





FAMOUS PEOPLE



Famous People to follow:

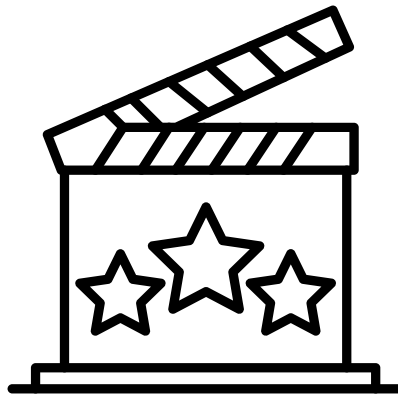


Sam Smith

RuPaul

Queen

Colin Jackson



Miley Cyrus

Elliot Page

Ellen Degeneres

Yung blud



Chappell Roan

Lesbian

Singer and songwriter

Roan is from a strict Christian background and started playing piano at aged 10. She suffers from Bi-Polar disorder. At 14 she auditioned at Americas Got Talent but wasn't successful. In 2015 Roan began uploading covers of songs on Youtube, this gained her traction from various areas thus her current success.

A recent song she released Pink Pony Club is about her experience of visiting a gay bar and feeling included and accepted. Pinky Pony Club is now a very popular song amongst the LGBTQIA+ community.



Bella Ramsey

Non-Binary - using they/them pronouns

Actor

Ramsey is a British actor that is most known for their roles in Game of Thrones and the lead character Ellie in The Last of Us tv series. At 18 Bella was Diagnosed with autism and they came out identifying as non-binary publicly in 2024. They have been nominated for multiple awards and in their second-season of nominations became the first non-binary performer nominated more than once.

Ramsey is Christian and has social media channels that explains their faith and journey that helped them with their struggle of anorexia.



Elliot Page

Transgender Actor, Producer and activist

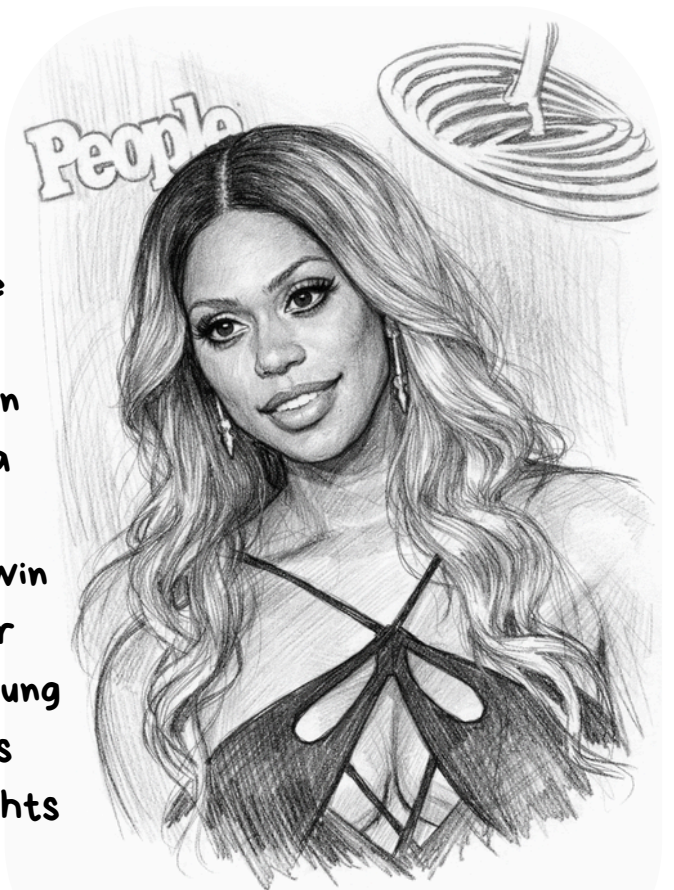
Elliot Page is a Canadian actor, producer, and LGBTQ+ activist acclaimed for roles in *Juno*, *Inception*, the *X-Men* films, and Netflix's *The Umbrella Academy*. He earned an Academy Award nomination for *Juno* and is known for indie hits like *Hard Candy* and *Whip It*. A visible advocate for transgender rights since coming out as trans in 2020, Page also authored the bestselling memoir *Pageboy* (2023).



Laverne Cox

Transgender Actress

Laverne Cox is an American actress, producer, and LGBTQ advocate who broke barriers as the first openly transgender person nominated for a Primetime Emmy in an acting category for her role as Sophia Burset on *Orange Is the New Black*. She later became the first trans woman to win a Daytime Emmy as an executive producer and has starred in films like *Promising Young Woman* and *Jolt*. A vocal activist, she uses her platform to advance transgender rights and representation.

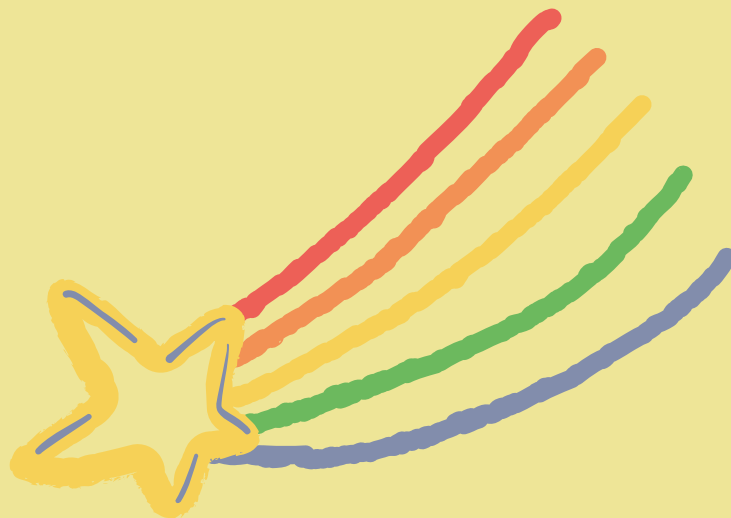


- Hetero
- Homo
- Human

BUZZWORDS:



- **Mental Health Disorder:** Conditions affecting thinking, mood, or behaviour, e.g., depression and anxiety.
- **Gender Roles:** Expected behaviours and presentations based on assigned sex.
- **Gender Norms:** Social beliefs on how individuals of a gender should behave and interact.
- **Assigned Sex:** The sex designated at birth based on genitalia.
- **Homophobia:** Prejudice against gay individuals.
- **Societal Pressures:** Influences shaping individual beliefs and choices.
- **Incitement:** Encouraging unlawful behaviour.
- **Gender Expression:** External presentation of gender identity through various forms.
- **Conversion Therapy:** Harmful practices aiming to change sexual orientation to heterosexuality.
- **Stigma:** Negative beliefs about certain groups, including homosexuality.
- **Discrimination:** Unjust treatment of individuals, especially minorities.





BUZZWORDS:



- **Fear-mongering:** Deliberately inciting public fear about a specific issue.
- **Penalized:** Subject to punishment or penalties.
- **Gender representation:** Portrayal of individuals based on gender in media and culture
- **Transmasculine** - is an umbrella term that refers to people who were assigned female at birth but identify with masculinity.
- **Transfeminine** - is an umbrella term that refers to a few different groups of people who were assigned male at birth but identify with femininity.
- **Aesthetic** - concerned with beauty or the appreciation of beauty.
- **Platonic** - a close, caring relationship without romantic or sexual feelings.
- **Plurisexuality** - is a term used to describe individuals who are attracted to multiple genders.
- **Hate Crime** - any incident which the victim, or anyone else, thinks is based on someone's prejudice towards them because of their race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or because they are transgender.
- **Ally** - a person who supports and stands up for a group they are not part of.
- **Queer** - a broad word some people use to describe identities or attractions that are not straight or not only linked to one gender.
- **Outing** - telling others about someone's identity without their say-so.

REFERENCE LIST:



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PG 9 - https://www.inclusiveemployers.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/LGBTQ-Guide-2023.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com

PG 9 TO 11 - <https://lgbtqia.fandom.com/wiki/Pronoun>

PG 13 to 18 - https://rainbowandco.uk/blogs/what-were-saying/sexualities-definitions?_pos=1&_psq=sexual&_ss=e&_v=1.0

PG 20 TO 25 - <https://www.theproudtrust.org/young-people/exploring-identity/the-genderperson-explaining-gender-identity/>

PG 46 - 50 - https://www.theproudtrust.org/young-people/staying-safe/keeping-safe-online/?gad_source=1



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PG 52 TO 58 - <https://www.theproudtrust.org/young-people/staying-safe/hate-crime/>

PG 54 TO 57 - <https://www.theproudtrust.org/young-people/staying-safe/your-rights-and-the-law/>

PG 76 TO 85 - <https://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/lgbtq-history/lgbtq-timeline>
<https://www.gohenry.com/uk/blog/family/a-timeline-of-lgbtq-history>
[Key dates for LGBTQ+ equality | Stonewall](#)

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PG 83 TO 86 - <https://www.theproudtrust.org/young-people/people-like-me/music/>

PG 01 TO 84 - <https://allsortsyouth.org.uk/resources#booklets>

We would like to acknowledge all of the resources that we have drawn from within this guide.



**A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL THE YOUNG PEOPLE
INVOLVED IN CREATING THIS GUIDE!**



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**LGBTQIA+ SURVIVAL GUIDE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE
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