Glossary of Basic LGBTQ+ Related Terms

**Agender:** Describes someone who does not have an internal sense of gender.

**Ally:** A person who does not identify as LGBTQIA+ and supports the rights of LGBTQIA+ individuals

**Asexual:** Describes someone who does not experience sexual attraction to others.

**Bisexual:** Describes someone who experiences sexual and/or romantic attraction to the same gender as him/herself and different gender(s) from him/herself. Known traditionally as attraction to men and women, but many bisexuals are distancing themselves from the gender binary.

**Cisgender:** Describes an individual who feels comfortable with the gender identity and gender expectations ascribed to them at birth.

**Gay:** Describes men who identify as experiencing romantic or sexual attraction to other men; may also be used as an umbrella term to describe all individuals who identify as experiencing same-gender attraction.

**Gender Binary:** The notion that there are only two genders and an individual must identify as either/or.

**Gender-expansive:** An umbrella term used for individuals that broaden their own culture’s commonly held definitions of gender, including expectations for its expression, identities, roles and/or other perceived gender norms. Gender-expansive individuals include those with transgender and non-binary identities as well as those whose gender in some way is seen to be stretching society’s notions of gender.

**Gender Expression:** The ways in which people externally communicate their gender identity to others through social cues.

**Heterosexism:** Prejudice against individuals and groups who display non-heterosexual behaviors or identities, combined with the majority power to impose such prejudice.

**Homophobia:** The irrational fear or hatred of persons perceived to be gay, homosexuality, or any behavior or belief that does not conform to rigid sex role stereotypes; reinforces both sexism and heterosexism.

**Intersex:** The condition of being born with biological aspects of both female and male sexes to varying degrees (May be determined through biological structure, hormones, DNA, or other physical factors).
**Lesbian:** Describes individuals who identify as women and experience romantic and/or sexual attraction to other women.

**Pansexual:** Describes individuals who identify as having a romantic and/or sexual attraction to all or many gender expressions; also considered romantic/sexual attraction to others regardless of gender.

**Queer:** A widely used umbrella term used to describe those individuals whose sexual or gender identities have been marginalized; also can describe a non-hetero/gender normative identity, and is often used by those with more fluid identities; may also be used to indicate a particular subversive gender/sexual politic; a reclaimed term that had been used as a slur and can still be considered offensive to some people; should be used carefully by allies, though it is considered acceptable for gender and sexual minority-identified individuals to use it, as well as in academic settings.

**Sexuality:** An individual’s exploration of sexual acts, sexual identity, sexual pleasure, and desire.

**Trans*: A new umbrella term for all transgender-identified people that was created out of internet culture to be more inclusive of non-binary individuals, as many felt that “trans” or “transgender” was being used only for binary-identifying transgender people; asterisk comes from a search engine command to search for all related information.

**Transgender:** A broad term used to describe all gender variant people, or any person who identifies as a gender not assigned at birth according to anatomical sex.

**Transphobia:** The irrational fear of those who are gender variant and/or the inability to deal with gender ambiguity.