



LGBTQIA+ Workshop #3

“Let’s Talk about Gender and Pronouns”

*Wednesday, March 8th, 2023 5:30-6:30 PM @
Flynn Elementary School Library*

In this workshop led by EMS YPAR (Youth-led Participatory Action Research), participants will understand, apply and gain comfort around gender, pronouns and sexuality. We will explore the use of pronouns, neopronouns, and mixed pronouns, discuss sexuality and how it is different from gender, and hear recommendations from students on how to respect gender and sexuality with friends, family, staff and peers.



Agreements:

1. This is safe place where we honor integrity and respect for all.
2. No hate speech, homophobia, or transphobia will be tolerated.
3. Videos and photographs are not permitted.



**To: Staff and Community, Board
Transgender Rights and Lives**

March 8, 2023

Dear BSD Community,

Please stay tuned for another message later today or tomorrow regarding our first day back, the successful budget vote, and Holi.

Before that message though, I feel compelled to share that last week [across nine states](#), there were fifteen anti-trans bills introduced, pre-filed, or filed, and three anti-trans bills signed into law that would directly impact the freedoms, lives, and, in some cases, the livelihoods of people who are transgender. In addition, at the Conservative Political Action Conference, [a speaker claimed that](#) “Transgenderism must be eradicated from public life entirely.” These words have stirred hatred and sowed fear, a tactic condemned by Governor Phil Scott who [issued a statement last year](#), noting that “Exploiting fear and targeting divisive rhetoric at people who are just trying to be who they are is hateful and can lead to violence.” This morning a BSD staff member who is a member of the transgender community shared this story with me, noting, “We are very scared.” *Transgender rights and the well-being of the LGBTQ community is not about politics, it is about lives.*

While these laws are thankfully not happening in the Vermont legislature now, there is a real possibility that these bills and laws can begin to influence national conversations about, and policies pertaining to, transgender people. In addition, we know that members of the trans and LGBTQIA+ community feel the weight of these events from afar, while also dealing with hatred and discrimination in our school district, city, and state every day, despite the welcoming and supportive environment that many of us strive to support. We heard this from our [LGBTQ Task Force](#) and we have seen the anti-trans stickers that have inundated our city this year. Our students and staff who are trans tell me these events create great stress for them.

So I am writing this message to express BSD’s condemnation of trans hate and our support for our trans community. And also to let you know, as members of our community have let me know, that we should check in with loved ones, validate their experiences, and let them know we appreciate them and will work to keep them safe here in BVT.

Another thing we can do is engage in learning. Allies, those who want to create change, can lead and give others a venue for education that can shape thoughts and ideas, and create more allies. I’m proud of how our Office of Equity is leading in this space. Tonight (Wednesday, March 8), they will hold their third and final in-person LGBTQIA+ Workshop: Let’s Talk about Gender and Pronouns. In this workshop, led by the EMS YPAR (Youth-led Participatory Action Research) team, participants will understand, apply and gain comfort around gender, pronouns, and sexuality. We will explore the use of pronouns, neopronouns, and mixed pronouns, discuss sexuality and how it is different from gender, and hear recommendations from students on how to respect gender and sexuality with friends, family, staff, and peers. I hope you will join us from 5:30-6:30 PM in the Flynn Elementary Library as we gather to learn, validate, and connect.

In partnership,
Tom

If you have been negatively affected by the events of last week, LGBTQIA+ affirming mental health support and resources are available from Trans Lifeline (877-565-8860) and the LGBT Hotline (888-843-4564), as well as The Trevor Project (866-488-7386 or text START to 678-678). BSD’s Office of Equity is also available at equity@bsdvt.org and has additional resources for advocacy [on our website](#).



Welcome!

**Today we will be learning about
gender, pronouns,
and sexuality**

THE WHY!!!

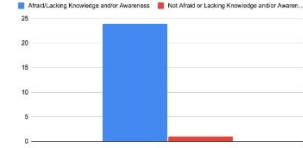
In a survey sent out last school year, 96% of the staff surveyed are either afraid and/or feel as if they are lacking knowledge and/or awareness to discuss 2SLGBTQIA+ topics with their students.

2 SLGBTQIA+ Staff Research Report: 5/6/2022

Question: Are you comfortable talking or having discussions about 2SLGBTQIA+ topics with your students.

Quantitative Data

Afraid/Lacking Knowledge and/or Awareness and Not Afraid or Lacking Knowledge and/or Awareness



Statement: After collecting data from over 60% of the school staff our data shows that 96% of the staff surveyed are either afraid and/or feel as if they are lacking knowledge and/or awareness to discuss 2SLGBTQIA+ topics with their students.

Quote Response: "People are so afraid of saying the wrong thing and then being ridiculed for it not being a safe environment to ask questions."

Quote Response: "It was something that was a taboo topic when I was growing up. I was taught to not talk about or to avoid the conversation if it came up."

Quote Response: "As I have searched for more knowledge to grow myself I have confronted this teaching [about 2SLGBTQIA+ topics in school] and realized that it was wrong, realized that I was wrong, but I don't know how many other people have done the work to confront biases that they were taught when they were young."

Quote Response: "Currently at our school, it is tough to have these conversations because people are quick to judge and attack others."

Quote Response: "Some people might feel fearful saying something that others might be offended by."

Quote Response: "Ignorance. Not knowing what it means. I think also people in our country are very uncomfortable with "difference" and talking about the body or how we identify with the body."

Quote Response: "Discomfort usually comes from a lack of understanding. When people don't understand something, it can scare them or make them uncomfortable. I also know that some adults are so worried about saying the "wrong" thing or making a mistake that they avoid talking about it."

Implications: This data is pointing to the fact that the majority of teachers at our school are fearful and not equipped and/or prepared to have conversations with their students about LGBTQIA+ topics. The fact that so many teachers aren't comfortable talking about 2SLGBTQIA+ issues can be scary for students that are a part of this community because they have very few adults to talk with about these issues. At present 35.8% (LGBTQIA+ YPAR Pre-Reflection Survey Data, 03/2022) of the EMS students identify as queer and questioning. Many of these students feel unsafe because the majority of adults in our building have identified themselves as people that are not comfortable talking with them about issues that are connected to their identities. We need students to feel safe at school and they can't if they don't have supportive teachers who will be there for them regardless of their personal identities. We need our queer-identified students to feel safe at school. In order for this to happen, they need affirming teachers who have the culturally competent skills and attitudes to support the LGBTQIA+ community.

Community members will be able to:

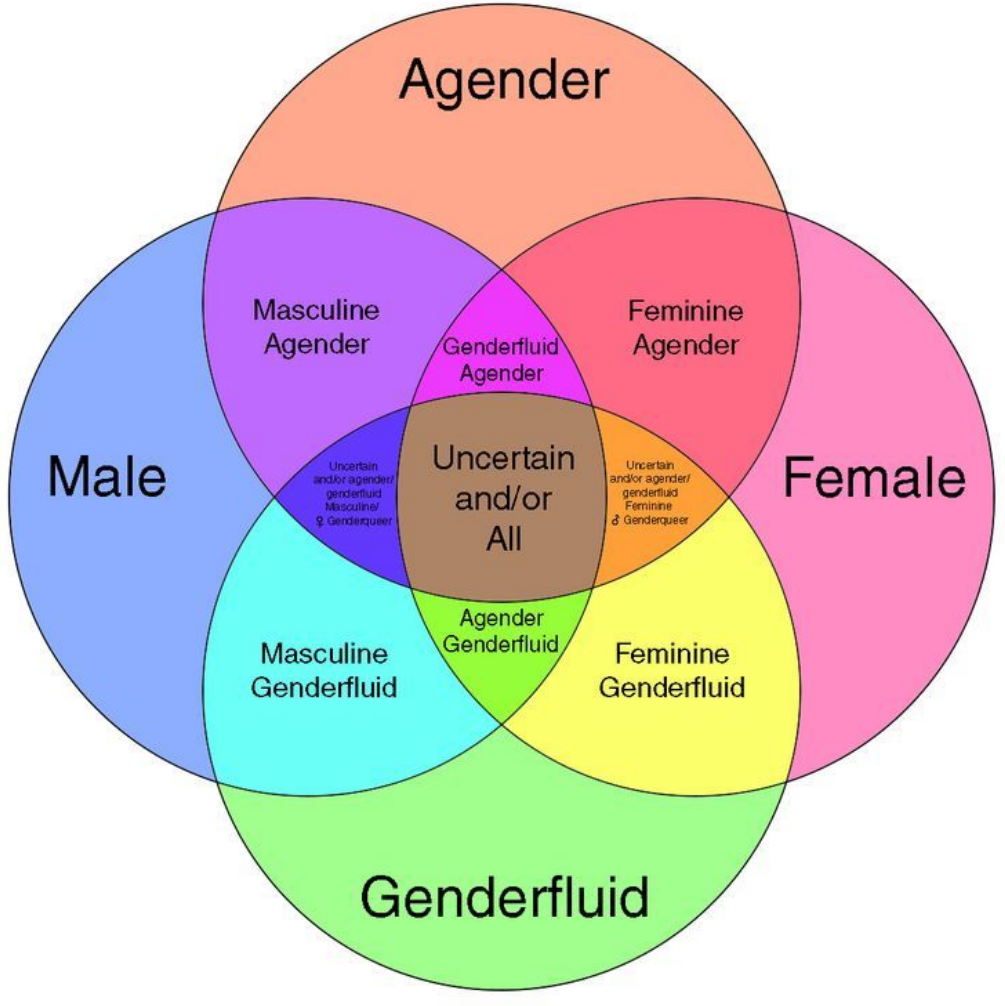
- **Understand, apply, and gain comfort**
 - around gender identity
 - with the use of pronouns
 - with neopronouns and how and when to use them
 - with mixed pronouns and how and when to use them
 - with sexuality and how it is different than gender
 - with intersex and its importance
- **Understand what “outing” is and why it is harmful**
- **Understand how discussing peer’s crushes can be harmful**

Gender Question:

- **Describe gender identity in one sentence or fewer?**

Gender:

The fluid representation of how you identify with femininity, masculinity, androgyny and everything in between.



How to respect gender with friends, family, staff, and peers

- Always use the pronouns a person asks you to use.**
- Check in regularly to ensure you are respecting a person's gender and/or pronouns**
- Educate yourself and avoid using a queer friend to educate yourself**
- If you make a mistake and are called out, learn from it instead of getting angry.**

Pronoun Question:

- **What is the purpose of pronouns?**

Pronouns:

Words used to replace nouns. Often used to refer to someone instead of using their name.

Pronoun Examples:

Note: these are not all the pronouns that anyone
can use.

she/they

they/them

it/it's

he/she/they

Any/all Pronouns

he/him

she/her

they/she

they/it

he/they

Xe/Xem

they/he

she/it

he/it

No Pronouns

What are Mixed Pronouns?

- Mixed pronouns refer to using more than one set of pronouns.
 - They can be a mix of 2 or more pronoun identities
 - The order of the pronouns can make a difference (for example, she/they vs. they/she or he/they/she vs. they/she/he)

What Are Neopronouns?

Neo(new) + Pronouns = New Pronouns

Neopronouns are pronouns outside of the conventional she, he, and they pronouns.

Examples of Neopronouns:

- xe/xem/xyr
- ze/hir/hirs
- ey/em/eir.

They	<i>They</i> laughed	I called <i>them</i>	<i>Their</i> eyes gleam	That is <i>theirs</i>	They like <i>themselves</i>
Ne	<i>Ne</i> laughed	I called <i>nem</i>	<i>Nir</i> eyes gleam	That is <i>nirs</i>	<i>Ne</i> likes <i>nemself</i>
Ve	<i>Ve</i> laughed	I called <i>ver</i>	<i>Vis</i> eyes gleam	That is <i>vis</i>	<i>Ve</i> likes <i>verself</i>
Spivak	<i>Ey</i> laughed	I called <i>em</i>	<i>Eir</i> eyes gleam	That is <i>eirs</i>	<i>Ey</i> likes <i>emself</i>
Ze/Zie and Hir	<i>Ze</i> laughed	I called <i>hir</i>	<i>Hir</i> eyes gleam	That is <i>hirs</i>	<i>Ze</i> likes <i>hirsself</i>
Ze/Zie and Zir	<i>Ze</i> laughed	I called <i>zir</i>	<i>Zir</i> eyes gleam	That is <i>zirs</i>	<i>Ze</i> likes <i>zirsself</i>
Xe	<i>Xe</i> laughed	I called <i>xem</i>	<i>Xyr</i> eyes gleam	That is <i>xyrs</i>	<i>Xe</i> likes <i>xemself</i>

How should I ask for Someones Pronouns?

Try to:

- Ask with genuine curiosity and respect.
- Have an open mind.

Try this:

"My pronouns are ---, if you don't mind me asking, what are yours?"

Avoid:

- Using the word "Preferred" when referring to someone's pronouns
 - i.e "What are your preferred pronouns"
- Assuming gender, sexuality, or pronouns
- Do not pressure people into sharing their pronouns, gender identity, or sexuality.

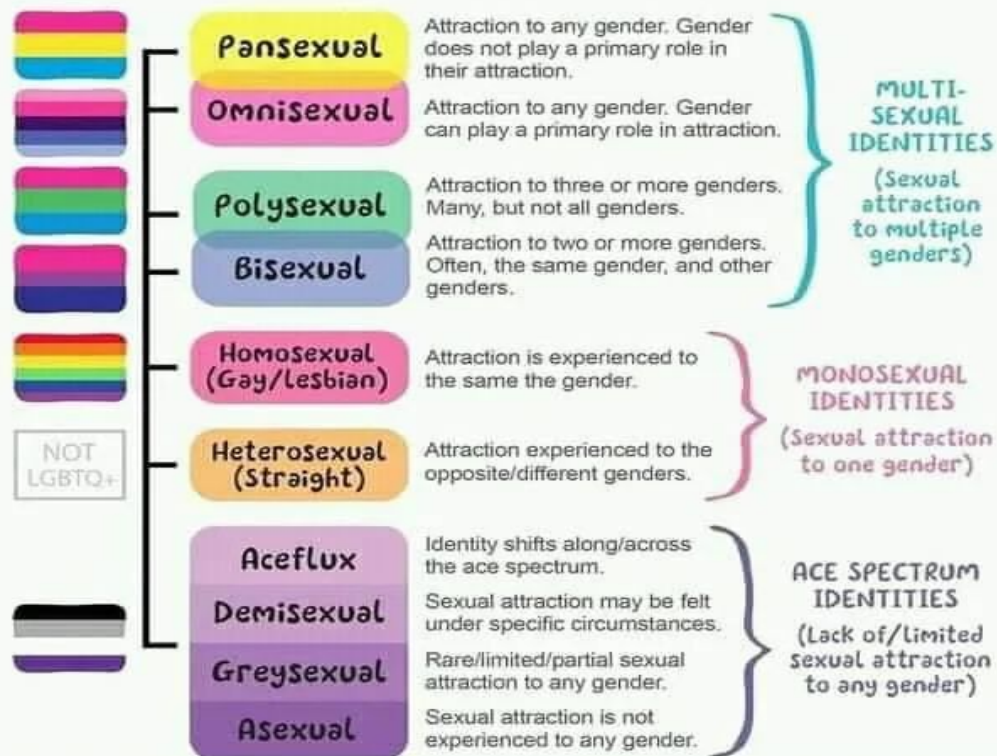
Sexuality Question:

- **What are some different sexualities that you've heard of?**

Sexuality

**The fluid representation of who you are or
are not attracted to.**

SEXUAL ORIENTATION SCALE



What is Intersex?

Intersex refers to being born with reproductive organs that do not fit a box of “female” or “male” assigned birth sex.

This could mean:

- Chromosomes not being XX or XY
- Reproductive organs outside of the binary (internally or externally)

Often doctors perform unnecessary surgeries to make reproductive organs match the binary.

Why knowing about Intersex is important

- Many people who may identify as intersex are unrepresented and may find it difficult to consistently explain intersexuality to those around them.
- It is not a very commonly talked about topic, so we need to do our best to respect and learn about intersex people.

What is Outing?

What is outing?

Outing refers to disclosing someone's identity (gender, sexuality etc.) Often without their permission.

How is outing harmful?

Outing can put people in danger because not all people are accepting of others identities.

How does outing happen?

Outing can happen in many ways, here are a few.

- Pressuring people to share about their crushes
- Gossiping
- Sharing information without permission

Today we learned

- **How to understand, apply, and gain comfort**
 - **around gender identity**
 - **with the use of pronouns**
 - **with neopronouns and how and when to use them**
 - **with mixed pronouns and how and when to use them**
 - **with sexuality and how it is different than gender**
 - **with intersex and its importance**
- **How to understand what “outing” is and why it is harmful**
- **How to understand how discussing student’s crushes can be harmful**

Time for a game!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Everyone will get a card that says either a term or definition. Find another person the the definition to your term or term to your definition.

Once you meet your partner, get to know each other! Ask them, "What is one thing you learned in the lesson?" Or "What is one thing you already knew?"

THANK YOU!!!

**For your time and
willingness to learn.**

Exit Ticket

Please take a moment to give us feedback on this event!

<https://tinyurl.com/y5jjwn56>

