Introduction

Gender and Gender Identity are subjects that have drastically changed and developed in recent years. In order to best understand the terminology used within this guide please see the Gender Glossary located on page 3 of this guide. The terminology surrounding gender and the gender identity of a person is not limited to the vocabulary used within this guide, and if unsure, it is always best to ask the person you are speaking to with the words and pronouns they are most comfortable using.

What is Gender Identity? The Gender Identity is said to be an innate sense of the person's own gender; this may align or differ from their sex assigned at birth. For instance, in the case of a transgender man who was assigned female at birth, their innate sense of their own gender was male, which differed from their assigned sex at birth.

Gender Identity and Orientation

The gender identity that a person uses is just one of the ways in which they live their lives and present themselves within society. A person's sexual orientation indicates the attraction that the individual feels for other people, often with regard to the other person's gender. For instance, for if someone has more of an attraction towards men than women, or equally feels no romantic attraction towards anyone. Both gender identity and orientation are ways that a person can define themselves.

The way a person chooses to dress can help to express a person's gender identity to the society they live in, as well as provide comfort to the individual. This is known as gender expression.

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One Minute Guide
Gender Identity
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Pronouns

Pronouns are words used conversationally to refer to a person or their property. Examples of this are: he/she his/hers. Some people choose to use gender neutral pronouns such as they/them/their instead of the gendered pronouns. If a person asks you to use particular pronouns, you should try and respect this boundary that they have set in expressing their gender identity.

National Statistics

Gender Identity was introduced for the first time within the 2021 Census. Within the Gender Identity question, people were asked to state if their gender identity differed from their assigned sex, with the option to specify how the identify if they wished. The Census data is from England and Wales population ages 16 and over.

A total of 4.5 million (93.5% of the population) stated their gender identity was the same as their sex assigned at birth

262,000 people answered that their gender identity differed from their sex registered at birth

0.1% of the population identified as a trans man

0.1% of the population identified as a trans woman

30,000 people identified as non-binary

Gender Identity in Coventry

In 2018 the Safeguarding Children Partnership completed a Looked After Children thematic audit which focused on the experiences of Coventry children and young people.

The Audit included both those in care and care leavers. One of the main areas of discussion was that some people feel lost in a world of rapidly changing diversity.

There were worries on how this may impact on children and young people who may wish to have conversations about their individual situations.

However we choose to express ourselves is okay.

The hopes from this guide are that people will have a better understanding of what gender identity is as well as how it impacts everyone uniquely.

We hope the meanings on the following pages will help some people to increase their understanding around the subject of gender identity. Please remember, our understanding of gender identity is dynamic and prone to developing, and you should always check with the person you are speaking to as to the terms they prefer to use, and which best fit their definition of who they are. Everyone is as unique as their fingerprint, and should be treated with kindness, understanding and respect.

Key Contacts and Further Information

Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership   UK Census England and Wales 2021

Stonewall.org   Prism LGBTQ+ Youth Group   Coventry Pride Services

Gender Glossary

Gender → a term often expressed in terms of masculinity or femininity, gender is largely culturally determined, and is assumed from the sex assigned at birth.

Sex → Assigned to the person based on primary characteristics (genitalia) and reproductive functions. Sometimes the words "sex" and "gender" are used interchanged to mean "male" or "female".

Pronouns → Words used to refer to people's gender in conversation, such as he/him or she/her. Some people prefer to have gender neutral language used such as they/their or ze/zir.

Gender Identity → A person's innate sense of their own gender, whether male/female or something else that may or may not correspond with the sex they were assigned at birth.

Gender Expression → How a person chooses to outwardly express their gender within societal expectations of gender.

Orientation → An umbrella term to describe a person's attraction to other people (romantically and/or sexually). This refers to a person's sense of identity based on their attractions or lack thereof.

Cisgender (Cis) → Someone whose gender identity is the same as their sex assigned at birth

Transgender Man → A term used to describe someone who is assigned female at birth but identifies and lives as a man. This may be shortened to trans man, or FTM, an abbreviation for female-to-male.

Transgender Woman → A term used to describe someone who is assigned male at birth but identifies and lives as a woman. This may be shortened to trans woman, or MTF, an abbreviation for male-to-female.

Trans → An umbrella term to describe people whose gender is not the same as or are uncomfortable with the sex they were assigned at birth. They may use a variety of terms in which they identify with including but not limited to: transgender, transsexual, gender-queer, non-binary, gender fluid, trans man or trans woman.

Transexual ➔ A previous medical terminology for someone who has had medical intervention in their transition. The term is still used by some; however, many people use and prefer the terms trans or transgender

Intersex ➔ Someone who may have biological attributes of both sexes, or whose biological attributes do not fit with societal assumptions of 'male' and 'female'.

Non-Binary ➔ An umbrella term for people whose gender doesn't sit comfortably with 'man' or 'woman'. This is associated with gender neutrality.

Genderfluid ➔ A non-fixed gender identity that shifts over time or depending on the situation. This can be a change to a gender identity, gender expression or both.

Queer ➔ A term used by those wanting to reject specific labels of romantic orientation, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

LGBTQIA+ ➔ Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, and Asexual or Ace

Transitioning ➔ The steps taken by a trans person to live in the gender with which they identify. This transition is unique to each person: for some this may involve medical intervention, changing legal documents, or telling their family/friends.

Questioning ➔ The process of exploring your own gender identity and/or sexual orientation.

Gender Dysphoria ➔ Both a term and clinical diagnosis used to describe when a person experiences discomfort or distress due to the mismatch between their assigned sex and their gender identity.

Gender Reassignment ➔ A way to describe a person's transition. This usually involves medical Intervention but can also include a change in name, pronouns, dressing differently or a change in their self-identified gender.

Gender Recognition Certificate (CGR) ➔ Paperwork that allows trans people to be legally recognised in their affirmed gender and to be issued with a new birth certificate. Only those over the age of 18 will be able to apply for this. A CGR is not needed to change gender markers at work or to change other documents such as passports.

Deadnaming ➔ The act of calling someone by their birth name after a transition/change of name.