

Glossary

Cisgender: Used to describe an individual whose gender identity and gender expression align with the sex assigned at birth.

Gender binary: The classification of gender into two discrete categories of male and female.

Gender dysphoria: Discomfort or distress related to an incongruence between an individual's gender identity and the gender assigned at birth.

Gender expression: Clothing, physical appearance and other external presentations and behaviors that express aspects of gender identity or role.

Gender identity: An internal sense of being male, female or something else, which may or may not correspond to an individual's sex assigned at birth or sex characteristics.

Gender nonconforming: Describes an individual whose gender identity or gender expression differs from the gender norms associated with the sex they were assigned at birth.

Genderqueer: Describes an individual whose gender identity doesn't align with a binary understanding of gender, including those who think of themselves as both male and female, neither, moving between genders, a third gender or outside of gender altogether.

Trans-affirmative: Being aware of, respectful and supportive of the needs of transgender and gender-nonconforming individuals.

Transgender: An umbrella term encompassing those whose gender identities or gender roles differ from those typically associated with the sex they were assigned at birth.

Transition: The process of shifting toward a gender role different from that assigned at birth, which can include social transition, such as new names, pronouns and clothing, and medical transition, such as hormone therapy or surgery.

Terms to Avoid

"born a man," "born a woman," "biologically male," "biologically female," "biological boy," "biological girl," "genetically male," "genetically female" - Phrases like these oversimplify a complex subject and are often used by anti-transgender activists to inaccurately imply that a trans person is not who they say they are. "Biological boy" is a term anti-trans activists often use to disregard and discredit transgender girls and deny them access to society as their authentic gender identity. BEST PRACTICE: Assigned female at birth or assigned male at birth.

"transgenders," "a transgender" - Transgender should be used as an adjective, not as a noun. Do not say, "Tony is a transgender," or "The parade included many transgenders." Do not write "transwoman" or "transman." Do not capitalize transgender, unless it begins a sentence or is part of a name. BEST PRACTICE: transgender people, a transgender person

"transgendered" - The adjective transgender should never have an extraneous "-ed" tacked onto the end. An "-ed" suffix adds unnecessary length to the word and can cause tense confusion and grammatical errors. Not using the "-ed" suffix also brings transgender into alignment with lesbian, gay, bisexual, and queer. You would not say that Elton John is "gayed" or Ellen DeGeneres is "lesbianed," therefore you would not say Laverne Cox is "transgendered." (Similarly, cisgender never needs an "-ed" at the end.) BEST PRACTICE: "John is a transgender person."

"Identifies as" - Avoid saying that transgender people "identify as" their gender. That implies that gender identity is a choice. Avoid "Marisol identifies as a woman." BEST PRACTICE: Transgender people are their gender the same way cisgender people are their gender. For example, "Marisol is a transgender woman."

Please visit the GLAAD Media Reference Guide for more information:

<https://www.glaad.org/reference/transgender>