



LGBTQ+ Back-To-Basics

*Beyond the Binary: Supporting
Transgender and Non-Binary
Students of Color*

Proudly presented by OSSE and facilitated by Diana Bruce, Advocate
for Thriving Students.



Hello, I'm Diana.

Diana Bruce (she/her) is a nationally recognized leader who works at the intersection of health and education equity. She advises schools and youth-serving organizations on COVID-19, transgender accommodations, bias reduction, sex education and school-based health care, and brings her clients 25+ years experience and expertise in the field. Proud parent of two young adults who graduated from DCPS and a DC public charter school.

Group Agreements

Be present

Provide grace and space to yourself and others

Practice active listening

Ensure full confidentiality

5. Ask, that is how we all learn

6. The Data - What it's telling us and what we can

Learning Objectives

After the training, participants will be able to:

- Explain and differentiate what is meant by transgender and non-binary gender identity.
- Draw connections between inclusive and supportive environments and decreased risk of severe mental health outcomes using local and national data.
- Articulate age- and grade-appropriate strategies for talking about gender with young children.

Agenda

- Beyond the binary – terms and definitions
- What transgender and non-binary students need to be successful
- Talking about gender with students – age- and grade-appropriate strategies
- Identity is layered – see all your students
- Session evaluation

Think About ...

- Think about a time in your life when you felt at odds with the expectations of your family, peers or community regarding your gender.
- Think about a time when you were the “only” in a room. How did you feel, and how/if at all did it impact your experience?



Beyond the Binary Basics

Let's get on the same page

Let's Get on the Same Page

- “Every student deserves to learn in a safe and supportive setting, free from discrimination.” US Department of Education, *Supporting Transgender Youth in School*
- **“Focus on students.** We believe in the potential of all DC students, from our infants and toddlers all the way to our adult learners, to learn and achieve at high levels. We believe that a critical part of our role as the state education agency is in ensuring greater equity in outcomes for our students, by accelerating progress for those who are furthest behind.” OSSE Core Values

www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/ed-factsheet-transgender-202106.pdf

wwwosse.dc.gov/page/our-core-values



Think About...

What are your values? Why are you an educator?

How does supporting transgender student align with your values?
With the values of your school?

Terms and Definitions

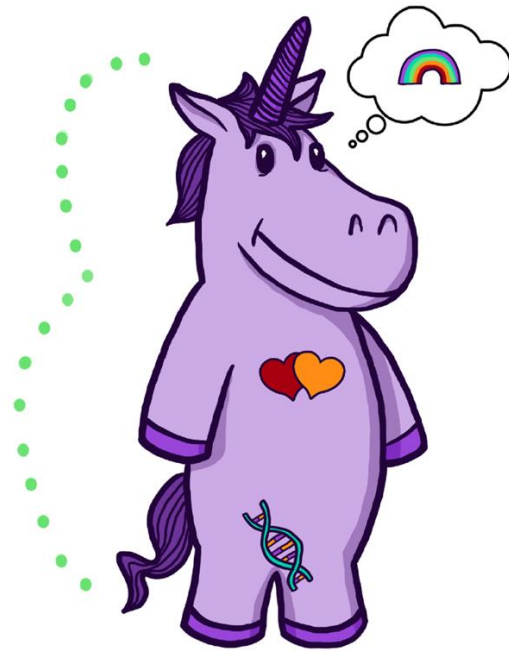
- **Transgender:** Often shortened to trans, from the Latin prefix for “on a different side as.” A term describing a person’s gender identity that does not necessarily match their assigned sex at birth.
- **Non-Binary:** Refers to people who do not subscribe to the gender binary. They might exist between or beyond the man-woman binary. Some use the term exclusively, while others may use it interchangeably with terms like genderqueer, genderfluid, gender non-conforming, gender diverse, or gender expansive.
- **Cisgender:** (pronounced sis-gender): A term used to refer to an individual whose gender identity aligns with the sex assigned to them at birth. The prefix cis- comes from the Latin word for “on the same side as.”

www.pflag.org/glossary/

How it All Fits Together

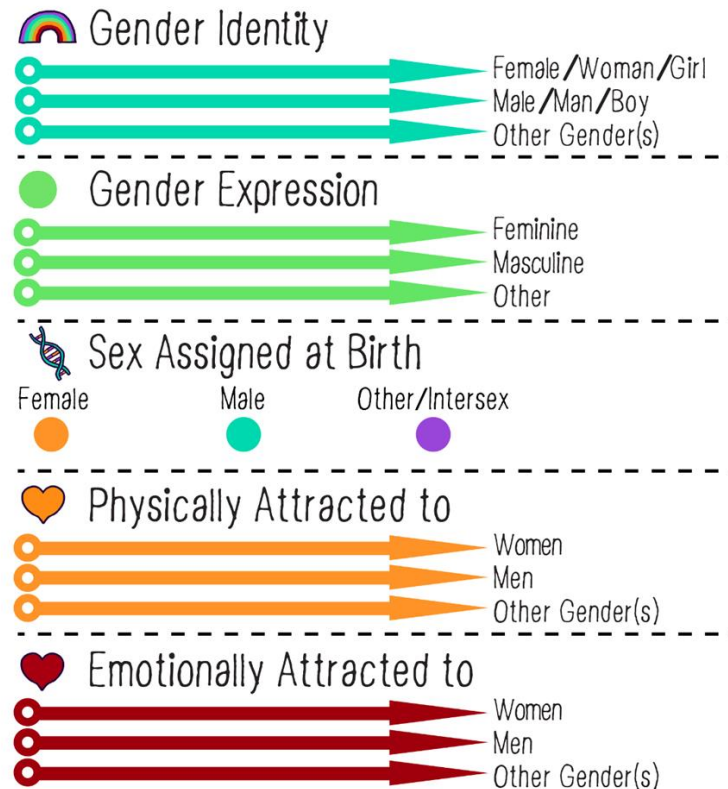
The Gender Unicorn

Graphic by:
TSER
Trans Student Educational Resources



To learn more, go to:
www.transstudent.org/gender

Design by Landyn Pøn and Anna Moore



www.Transstudent.org

Think About...

What's something new you heard about gender identity or gender expression?



The Need

Why focus on these students?

Why Focus on Transgender Students?

- These students are a vulnerable group at a much higher risk for severe mental health outcomes as compared to their cisgender peers.
- Educators have the power to change this narrative!
 - Affirming, welcoming, accepting and supportive environments *significantly* reduce the rates of severe mental health outcomes for these students.

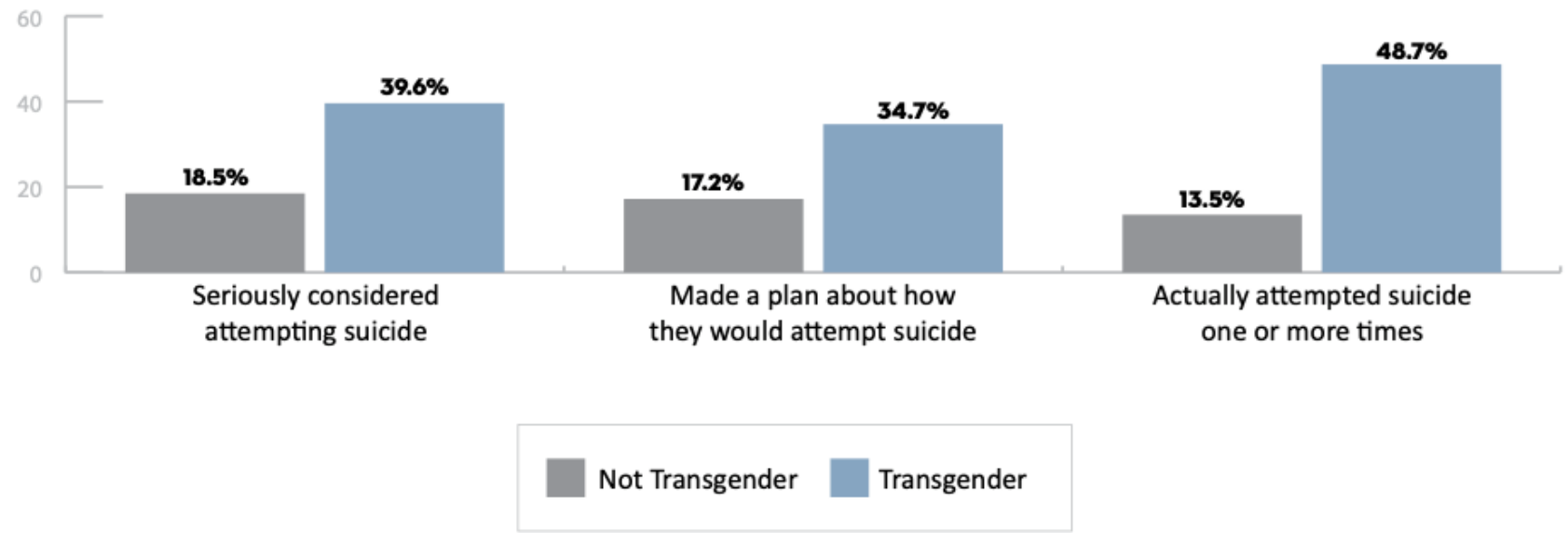
Transgender Students are in School

In DC, middle and high school students are asked questions about themselves and their behaviors every two years through the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS),

- 2 percent of DC middle and high school students are transgender.
 - **The percentage of middle school students identifying as transgender doubled from 2019 to 2021.**
 - **Elementary schools are increasingly asking for gender identity support**
 - There is not currently a question specifically asking about non-binary.
- These students are more likely to experience sexual violence, physical violence, engage in binge drinking, use illegal substance and miss school due to feeling unsafe.

What the DC Data Tell Us

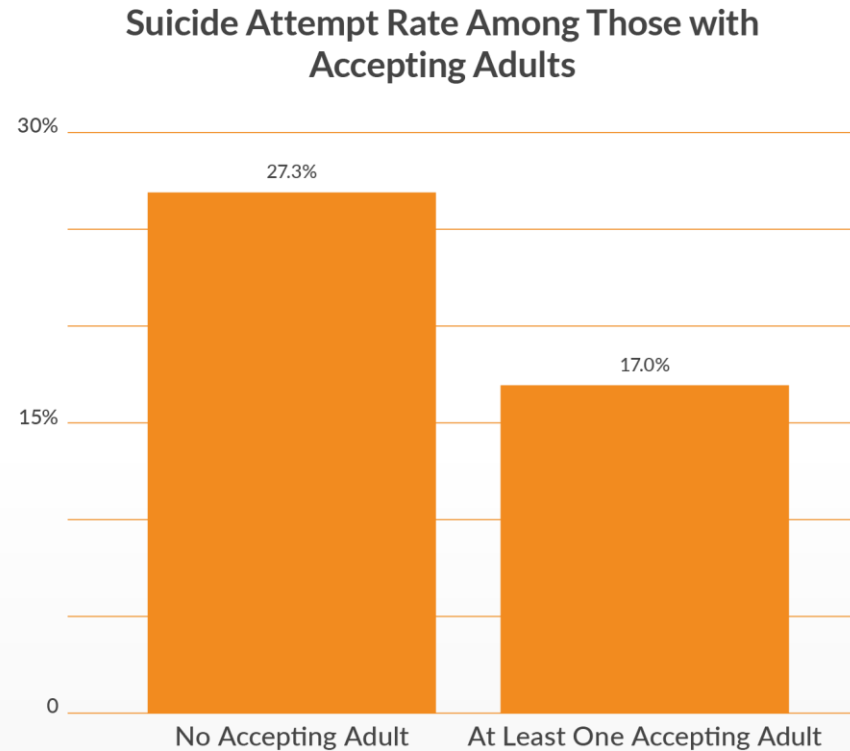
High school suicidality, by gender identity



<https://osse.dc.gov/publication/2019-yrbs-report>

What Can Make a Difference

- Accepting adults can significantly reduce the risk of suicide for LGBTQ+ youth.
- These adults can be parents, teachers, coaches, administrators, counselors, etc.



<https://www.thetrevorproject.org/research-briefs/accepting-adults-reduce-suicide-attempts-among-lgbtq-youth/>

What Supports our Students to be Successful

- Transgender teens able to use their chosen names at school, work, home and with friends:
 - 71 percent decrease in severe depression symptoms
 - 34 percent decrease in reported suicide ideation
 - 65 percent decrease in suicidal attempt

<https://news.utexas.edu/2018/03/30/name-use-matters-for-transgender-youths-mental-health/>

Think About...

What could you do to support a transgender student?

Laws that Support Transgender Students at School

- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
- Title IX
- DC Human Rights Act
- DC Teen Bullying Prevention Act
- School-specific nondiscrimination, bullying and harassment policies

Implementing Values and the Law

- Inclusive policies should address:
 - Names and Pronouns
 - Bathrooms and Locker Rooms
 - Gender-Based Activities
 - Dress Codes
 - Clubs
 - Privacy and Confidentiality
 - Bullying and Harassment Prevention

Think About...

What policy could you improve at your school to improve the experience of transgender students?



Talking About Gender with Students

Age and grade appropriate strategies

When Does Gender Identity Typically Develop?

- By age **2**, children are conscious of physical difference between different sexes.
- By age **3**, children can label themselves by gender.
- By age **4**, children have a stable sense of their gender identity.

www.downloads.aap.org/AAP/PDF/BF_HealthySexualityGenderIdentity_Tipsheet.pdf

It's Okay to Talk about Gender

- Students do better when they feel seen and can see themselves in the curriculum.
- Let your classroom be a window, a mirror and a sliding glass door.
(Rudine Sims Bishop, retired professor from Ohio State University)

<https://scenicregional.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Mirrors-Windows-and-Sliding-Glass-Doors.pdf>

Use Inclusive Messages About Gender

- Everyone's gender is unique to them.
- Things do not have genders - people do.
- Someone's gender isn't always obvious by looking at them.
- Your body, clothing choice, haircut, etc., do **NOT** determine your gender.
- There is not one way to be.

www.genderspectrum.org/articles/talking-to-young-children

But Wait! Clarify the Question

- Adults sometimes interpret children's questions about gender through an adult lens.
- Children may be more concrete in their thinking and questions.
- Slow down.
- “Is there a reason you are asking, or are you just curious?”
- Think about the child's development...

Talking About Gender: Pre-K to Second Grade

- There are lots of ways to be boys or girls or something else! Isn't that great?
- Kids can do or be or like anything they want! We are all individuals and certain things, colors, haircuts, or activities are not just for boys or girls.

www.genderspectrum.org/articles/talking-to-young-children

Talking About Gender: Grades 2-4

- Gender is complex and not just about our bodies.
- We all have a right to be ourselves.
- You determine who you are.
- All people deserve to be treated with kindness and respect.

www.genderspectrum.org/articles/talking-to-young-children

Talking About Gender: Grades 4-6

- Certain types of bodies are thought of as boys or girls, but that's not true for everyone.
- Gender across culture and history.
- Gender Diversity vs. Binary.

www.genderspectrum.org/articles/talking-to-young-children

Talking About Gender: Grade 6 and up

- Every person deserves respect, kindness and empathy.
- Normalize asking about pronouns on the first day of class.
- Prepare students to be active participants in a world where they will encounter people from different backgrounds, races, genders, sexualities and cultures.

www.genderspectrum.org/articles/talking-to-young-children

Think About ...

Where do you think there is an opportunity in your school for you to use an inclusive message about gender?

www.genderspectrum.org/articles/talking-to-young-children



Intersectionality

What it is and how to celebrate it in the classroom.

Students Need to be Seen to Learn

- We all carry multiple identities - gender, race, ethnicity, disability, etc.
- Students who do not feel seen may have a more difficult time learning in school.
- By understanding who is in our classroom and making sure they feel seen and respected, the work of teaching can get easier.
- **It often takes very little to engage a student or shut them down.**
- Recognizing what makes students feel seen will only help build connection and support better classroom behavior and learning.

Intersectionality

"Intersectionality is a metaphor for understanding the ways that multiple forms of inequality or disadvantage sometimes compound themselves and create obstacles that often are not understood among conventional ways of thinking."

– Kimberlé Crenshaw, Civil Rights Lawyer and Professor at Columbia University

In DC, Most of Our Students are Students of Color

- Four ways to support trans students of color
 - Listen (to your students)
 - Learn (educate yourself!)
 - Acknowledge your privilege
 - Highlight (their voice and stories)

www.glsen.org/blog/4-ways-support-trans-students-color

Think About...

What is one thing you can do to listen, learn and examine your own privilege when you work to include your transgender students of color more effectively?

www.glsen.org/blog/4-ways-support-trans-students-color

In Closing

- At least 2 percent of your students may be transgender, even if they have not come out to you yet.
- Educators matter, and inclusive school environments can dramatically improve outcomes for their transgender students.
- It is OK to talk about gender.
- Make your classroom a window, mirror and sliding door.
- Transgender students bring a diversity of identities, including identities that also experienced discrimination, such as race.
- Listen, learn, acknowledge privilege and highlight stories!

www.glsen.org/blog/4-ways-support-trans-students-color



Questions?

Join us for the upcoming trainings in this series:



**Sept. 19, 20 and 21
at 3:30 p.m.**

Session Evaluation

Please complete the Session Evaluation available via QR code or at the link in the chat.

When complete, please feel free to leave any questions in the chat.

See you next session!





Thank you!

FIND US

ADDRESS:

1050 First St. NE,
Washington, DC 20002

PHONE:

EMAIL:

GET SOCIAL



facebook.com/ossedc



twitter.com/ossedc



youtube.com/DCEducation



www.osse.dc.gov



Instagram.com/ossedc