MBPP Teen Council | Updated 2022-23
Gender Identity & Sexual Orientation

Enduring Understanding:

- People of all genders and sexual identities deserve respect and consideration.

Essential Questions:

1. What are the differences between sex assigned at birth, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation?
2. What is the proper vocabulary to describe common genders and sexual identities?
3. How can I be respectful of people of all genders and sexual identities?

Assessments:

1. Definition match activity
2. Inclusive language worksheet discussion
3. Scenario responses
4. Myth vs. Fact responses

Agenda:

1. Introduction (5 mins)
2. Warm-up survey (5 mins)
3. Trivia (5 mins)
4. Identity mini-lecture (10 mins)
5. Terminology sort (10 mins)
6. Break (5 mins)
7. Scenarios (10 mins)
8. Inclusive Language (15 mins)
9. Myth vs Fact (5 mins)
10. Conclusion/Anonymous Qs (10 mins)

Materials:

- Scripts, PPT, nametags, glows & grows
- Warm-up surveys + Agree, Disagree signs
- Genderbread Person handouts
- Terminology card sort
- Rephrase that phrase worksheets

1. INTRODUCTION

★Today we'll be discussing Gender Identity & Sexual Orientation.
★★Introduction of individual presenters (name/pronouns/grade/school)

★**Group Agreements.** We've reviewed these before, let's go over them again!

- Create a supportive space
- Participate please!
- Respect different perspectives and experiences
- Listen to understand (vs. judge)
- Ask questions
- Remember that we're all learning
- Take care of yourself and others.

- ★Today we are going to talk about Gender and Sexual Identity. This is a complex topic, and for some of you this might be brand new information. It is okay to feel uncomfortable or make mistakes, but it's really important to remain open minded and respectful. Others of us may know a lot about this already!
- ★We are going to use the acronym LGBTQ a lot in this lesson. This is an abbreviation that refers to people who identify themselves as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning or Queer. Please let us know if you have questions.
- ★We do want to give a content warning for today's lesson. We will be discussing statistics regarding suicide, homelessness, and bullying. We know that these topics can be very difficult to discuss and so we will emphasize again our group agreement of self-care.

2. WARM-UP ACTIVITY (5 mins)

★ We're going to start with a survey that has some questions about your safety in school. We've taped agree and disagree signs on the walls. We'd like you to fill out the survey and when you're done, hold it up so we can come and collect it. We'll redistribute the surveys so that they're anonymous and we'll invite folks to move to the sign that reflects the answers on their page.

Pass out surveys. After all are collected and redistributed:

★We're going to read the statements from the survey and, if you're able, we want to you move to the sign that reflects the answer on the paper you're holding.

1. ★I feel like my school is a supportive place for all people.
    - Take a minute to notice how the class is distributed.
    - Remember that where people are standing doesn't reflect their personal views just the views of the class

2. ★I feel like I actively try to make this school welcoming for all people.
    - Just notice where folks are standing.
3. ★I feel comfortable being myself around my peers.
4. ★If I have a concern, I trust and feel comfortable talking to at least one adult at this school.
    - **Who might be some of the trusted adults at this school? *Who would you talk to if you had a concern?***

Invite the class to sit down.

★**With a neighbor, discuss what stood out to you about how the class was distributed? Were you surprised by where most people were standing?** Have the class discuss with a neighbor, then invite folks to share out to the larger group.

★**What would make someone feel unsafe or unsupported at school?** *Possible answers include bullying, racism, homophobia, gossip, rumors etc.*

3. ADOLESCENT SEXUALITY TRIVIA (5 mins)

★ Now we have a few trivia questions for you! Read all possible answers, then read each again while asking students to raise their hands to vote for an answer.

1. ★True or False: The U.S. teen pregnancy rate is at an all-time low? **True**
2. ★What is the primary reason for the current decline in teen pregnancy?
    - Is it the answer: a) Reality TV shows like Teen Mom and 16 & Pregnant, b) Increased use of effective contraception, c) Abstinence-until-marriage education, or d) Decreased sexual activity among teens?
    - **The answer is b) increased use of effective contraception**
    - **Decreased sexual activity among teens also contributed to some of this decline.**
3. ★True or False: The U.S. has one of the highest teen pregnancy rates among industrialized nations? **True**
    - So, while the U.S. has the lowest teen pregnancy rate in our history, it is still higher than most other industrialized nations
4. ★Of the 26 million new STI infections each year, how many affect young people between ages 15 and 24?
    - Is the answer a) 25%, b) 33%, or c) 50%? **The answer is c) 50%**
    - STIs are really common and remember that most STIs are curable and all STIs are treatable!

5. ★True or False: 92% of LGBTQ youth say they hear negative messages about being LGBTQ. The top sources are school, the internet, and their peers. **True**
    - We want to point out that the identity of an individual does NOT cause these negative outcomes. The negative outcomes are caused by the negative reactions from peers, family, and their community
    - The bullying and lack of acceptance that so many LGBTQ youth experience leads to many serious issues, which is why today we'll be talking about the importance of being accepting and inclusive
6. ★True or False: 1 out of 5 transgender individuals will experience homelessness at some point in their life. **True**
    - **Why do you think trans folks might experience homelessness at such high rates?** *More likely to be kicked out of home if not supported by family, job discrimination*
7. ★True or False: 41% of people who identify as transgender have attempted suicide. **This one is unfortunately true**
8. ★True or False: Transgender folks with strong support from peers are 82% less likely to attempt suicide than those without support. **True**
    - A 2018 study showed that trans youth who are able to use their chosen name at school, home, work, and with friends experience 71% fewer symptoms of severe depression, a 34% decrease in suicidal thoughts, and a *65% decrease* in suicide attempts
    - We want to be clear that the purpose of this lesson is NOT to change anyone's values or beliefs. We just want to give you the tools to be respectful to everyone, because we know the risk of suicide, homelessness, and bullying is reduced when people feel safe and supported. So, even if you don't agree with or don't understand something being said, just keep in mind that our goal is to make school a safer and more accepting place for all students.

4. IDENTITY MINI-LECTURE (10 mins)

- ★Now, we would like to share some more information about the topic of identity, even though it is a very complex topic to discuss in such a short time. We're going to start by watching a short video from Bill Nye The Science Guy. This video will introduce us to the multiple aspects of sexual identity.

Play Bill Nye video

- ★Now, we're going to delve a little deeper into the information from the video.

Identity Model

★We'd like to use this illustration to discuss some aspects of identity.

★Pass out Genderbread person handouts

- ★The brain represents **Gender identity -** the way a person thinks of themselves as a woman, man, non-binary, or another identity. Sometimes a person might identify really strongly with a particular gender and sometimes a person might not identify with any gender at all.
- ★**Gender expression** has to do with the way people present themselves such as what clothes they wear like whether they dress masculine, feminine, or androgynous. It can also include things like vocal inflection, hair style, makeup, profession, and mannerisms.
- ★**Sex assigned at birth** is represented by this symbol between the legs**.** At birth, a person is assigned male, female, or intersex depending on the physical features of their body. Sex assigned at birth is determined by a doctor and is based almost entirely on external genitals. Biological sex also includes chromosomes, internal reproductive organs, and hormones. Many people assume biological sex is binary, but it is actually much more complicated than that.
- ★**Sexual and romantic orientation** is represented by the heart, and indicates who a person desires or is attracted to, physically and/or emotionally.

★These components of identity are often fluid and can shift throughout a person's life. A lot of them are also on a spectrum, meaning that they can vary in intensity. Figuring out your identity can take some time, and it's up to you to decide what identity feels right for you.

★Let's look at two examples of a person's whole identity, based on this model

Identity IRL 1 & 2- describe the identity of the figure.

1. ★This person's sex assigned at birth is male, they identify as a man, present themselves as mostly masculine, and are attracted to women and femininity.
    a. This *might* be an example of a cisgender heterosexual man- meaning they identify with their sex assigned at birth and are attracted to the opposite gender. We know a bit about this person's identity, but it's important to remember that their identity doesn't tell us anything about their actual sexual behavior.
2. ★This person's sex assigned at birth is also male, but they identify as a woman, present themselves as mostly feminine, and are attracted to men, women, and other genders.
    a. This person *might* identify as a transgender woman who is pansexual, but they could choose different labels for themself.

5. IDENTITY DEFINITION MATCH ACTIVITY (10 mins)

★We're taping some common identity terms up on the board. This isn't a comprehensive list of identities, but we want to go over a few! We're going to pass out the definitions and we want you to work with the people around you to decide which term it matches with. As soon as you're ready, come up and tape it on the board!

Read all of the terms before inviting students up to the bard

Tape identity labels on the board **IN THIS ORDER.**

GENDER IDENTITY	EXPRESSION	SEX ASSIGNED AT BIRTH	SEXUAL ORIENTATION	UMBRELLA TERM

Cisgender, Transgender, Non-binary, Androgynous, Intersex, Pansexual, Asexual, Queer

1. **Read the list of identity terms**, pass out definitions**,** and invite the class to come to the front to tape theirs up.
2. ★★Go through the cards, read the definitions, and adjust as needed. Use the word bank if a card needs to move into an occupied space.
3. **Explain the difference between Non-Binary and Androgynous**.

Once all the definitions are correctly placed:

- ★Okay, so now that everything is matched up correctly, we want to point out that these terms are grouped into categories by their color and they match up with the different parts on the genderbread person.
- Blue- **which aspect of the genderbread person does that match with?** *Gender Identity*. **What are some other gender identities you've heard of?** *Man, woman, genderqueer, genderfluid.* Man and woman are also identities that cis or trans people may use to identify themselves.
    - ★★Continue this pattern with the rest of the cards. Be sure to identify some romantic orientations as well. *Queer is an umbrella term.*
- **Are there any other terms we've forgotten to mention that might be important to know?**

5 minute break – Collect Genderbread person handouts, clear board

6. SCENARIOS (10 mins)

★We think it's important to treat all people with respect, so we want to talk about how to be an ally- meaning a person who is supportive of the LGBTQ community. We're going to read through some scenarios, and we want you to think about how you could be a good ally in these situations.

★**Scenario 1**- There is a new student in class, and you aren't sure what pronouns they use. **What should you do?**

- Pronouns are words that we use to refer to another person in third person in place of their name. Some examples are he, she, they, zie, or another pronoun.

Encourage class to discuss with neighbors. After a few minutes, solicit responses.

- In this scenario, you could ask the person what their pronouns are, you could offer your own pronouns when you introduce yourself, call the person by their name or gender-neutral pronouns, or you could listen to cues from others.
- You could also simply correct yourself if you make a mistake. Asking someone their pronouns in an appropriate 1:1 situation may make them more comfortable to share.
- Don't make assumptions about pronouns or identity. Pronouns are something a person chooses, and you can't tell what pronouns someone uses by looking at them.

★**Scenario 2**- Your best friend says they have something important to tell you. They seem really nervous. When you ask them what's up, they tell you that they are gay. **What should you say to your friend in order to reassure them?**

Encourage class to discuss with neighbors. After a few minutes, solicit responses.

- ★*Do* thank them for trusting you, ask them how you can best support them, and ask them how confidential that information is. Most importantly, treat them with the same love and respect you always have!
- ★*Don't* say "I always knew." This could make your friend feel unsafe, as it may suggest that other people have guessed their sexual orientation as well. Don't tell anyone else, ask your friend probing questions, or cross personal boundaries.

★**Scenario 3**- You're on the soccer team with a friend who uses they/them pronouns, but recently you've noticed that they've been getting upset because the coach continually misgenders them, and they have started skipping practice to avoid it. **What do you do?**

- ★The word misgender here means to call someone by the incorrect pronouns.

Encourage class to discuss with neighbors. After a few minutes, solicit responses.

- ★In this situation, if you were comfortable with it, you could ask your friend if you could correct the coach privately before or after practice.
- ★You wouldn't want to be aggressive or rude when correcting the coach because they just might not know they're misgendering your friend, and you wouldn't want to assume that it's okay to step in without asking your friend's permission first.

★**If the coach continued to misgender your friend after you corrected them, then what would you?** *Try again, reach out to another coach or staff member, check in with your friend to see how they want to handle the situation*

★In this scenario, we are assuming the coach was unintentionally misgendering a student. If the coach were deliberately misgendering the student, you could directly

address the situation if you are comfortable, inform a parent or another staff member at school to get involved.

★**Scenario 4**- You're at lunch and you hear a group of people from your class saying derogatory things about the queer community and using the word "gay" to describe a class project that they don't want to do. **What do you do?**

Encourage class to discuss with neighbors. After a few minutes, solicit responses.

- ★If you can, you could respectfully let them know why they shouldn't use that word, or you could ask an adult to step in if needed.
- ★Don't assume that they have bad intentions- they just might not know the impact of their words.

7. INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE (15 mins)

★So what does it look like to be inclusive?

- ★**Avoid making assumptions** – especially based on appearance. Remember that people are individuals, and stereotypes can be harmful.
- ★**Treat ALL individuals** with compassion and respect
- ★**Be aware of different gender identities** - some people identify as a man, a woman, neither, or both, and a person's gender identity may evolve over time.
- ★**Say what you mean**; if you think something is bad or uncool don't use someone's gender or sexual identity to describe it. For example: don't say "that's so gay"
- ★**Advocate for inclusive policies at your school –** such as gender neutral bathrooms and locker rooms.
- ★**Admit when you don't understand, and be open to explanation**
- ★**Use inclusive language**; For example, ask: **"**How would you like me to address you?" or "What pronouns do you use?"

★Now, we're going to get some practice using inclusive language. We're going to pass out some worksheets with some phrases on them, and we want you to work with a partner to rephrase the sentences in a more inclusive way.

Pass out worksheets, TC members should be wandering around to help, allow class few minutes to complete.

Ask for a volunteer or two for each sentence to read their rewritten statement. TC members can also offer alternatives.

1. ★**Do you have any brothers or sisters?** *Do you have any siblings?*
    a. This is a more open-ended question and some siblings are non-binary!
2. ★**Men have penises and women have vaginas.** *Some people have penises and some people have vaginas. Some people are also intersex.*

a. Remember that a person's genitals don't always correlate with their gender.

3. ★**That's so gay**. We want to clarify that the term "gay" should not be associated with things being "uncool" or "bad", unfortunately the term "gay" is often used this way. *When being negatively, someone could say that's not cool/ that's unfair, etc. as that is what they really mean,*
    a. This phrase has been reclaimed by many people in the LGBTQ+ community in a positive and joyful way.
4. ★**Do you have a boyfriend?** *Are you dating someone? Do you have a partner?*
    a. Assuming someone's sexual orientation can be harmful and may put them on the spot.
5. ★**About 15 weeks into the pregnancy, the woman will find out if the baby is a boy or a girl.** *About 15 weeks into the pregnancy, the pregnant person will find out the sex of the baby.*
    a. Not all pregnant people are women, and saying "the sex of the baby" is more accurate.
6. ★**If a man is transgendered, it means he was born into the wrong body and used to be a woman.** *If a man is transgender, it means his gender identity is different than his sex assigned at birth.*
    a. If a person is transgender, their body is not "wrong." Some trans people seek medical intervention and others do not! Also adding *-ed* to the end of the word transgender makes is sound like something happened to them, when really it is just an identity that they hold.

★**Why do you think being an ally and using inclusive language is important?**

We want school to be a place where people come to learn and make friends, not be bullied or discriminated against

<u>OOPS!</u>

★We also want to acknowledge that no one is perfect at using inclusive language. Changing your language is a process- it doesn't happen overnight.

- **What should you do if you mess up a person's gender pronouns?**
    - Do: Apologize quickly if necessary and do your best to use the correct pronouns in the future.
    - Don't dwell on your mistake, make it about you, or say "This is so hard for me." - **Why wouldn't we want to say this?** *Makes a person feel like a burden.*

★It's okay to make mistakes, just try to be mindful of when you mess up, quickly apologize if necessary, and make sure to change up your language in the future. It's okay to admit when you don't understand. Be open to an explanation and don't assume you are an expert on someone else's identity.

8. MYTH VS FACT (5 mins)

★Now we are going to test your knowledge with a myth vs. fact quiz. We're going to read a statement, and then we want you to shout out whether you think it's a myth or a fact.

★**LGBTQ people can't have kids—MYTH! ➔**

- While a pregnancy can only be started with a sperm and an egg, we know that there are many options when it comes to having a family, such as adoption, surrogacy, sperm & egg donation, and invitro fertilization.

★**Men who act feminine are gay—MYTH!**

- We cannot assume a person's sexual orientation by how the act and express themselves.

★**People can choose their sexual orientation and gender identity- MYTH!**

- This is a myth because while people can choose the *label* that feels best for them, most people do not choose how they feel about themselves or who they are attracted to.

★**If someone identifies as straight, they may also have sex with someone of the same gender—FACT!**

- Remember, identity and behavior are different! It's not up to us to tell other people what identity label to use for themselves.

★**Someone's sexual identity may be fluid and could change over time—FACT!**

- It's important that we do what feels right for ourselves, and sometimes that can change as life goes on! Aspects of identity are no different, and maybe our feelings will change as we grow.

★**You can't tell what pronouns someone uses by looking at them—FACT!**

- Remember to not assume how someone identifies by how the look. If you're not sure how to address someone, think of what we talked about earlier and maybe share your pronouns first and then ask how they would like to be addressed.

★**A person can look like a girl and have a vagina and identify as a boy—FACT!**

- Sex assigned at birth does not dictate gender identity—that comes from the brain and how that person feels.

★**Pride celebrations originated from a protest led in part by Black trans women and trans women of color. -FACT!**

- Pride celebrations as we know them today originated from a 1969 protest against a police raid at the Stonewall Inn, a gay bar in New York City. This uprising was led in

part by trans women of color, including Marsha P. Johnson, and is considered one of the most important events in the LGBTQ liberation movement.

9. CONCLUSION (15 mins)

★This slide shows resources that are available for LGBTQ+ folks and to learn more about gender and sexuality. If available, also review resources at this school.

- ★Mt. Baker Planned Parenthood offers transgender hormone therapy and reproductive health services for transgender folks. Our health centers are not currently accepting new patients for hormone therapy but hope to soon!
- ★ The Trevor Project is a national non-profit focused on suicide prevention efforts for LGBTQ+ youth.
- ★imi is a new online resource with guides for LGBTQ+ teens that help people explore their identity and support their mental health.
- ★Accord Alliance is devoted to improving healthcare access to people who are born intersex.
- PFLAG stands for Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays. They support bringing together families and allies with the LGBTQ+ community PFLAG has a lot of information online as well as local chapters in Bellingham and Skagit.
- ★GLSEN stands for Gay, Lesbian, & Straight Education Network. Their work seeks to end bullying and discrimination against the LGBTQ+ community in schools. Their nearest chapter is in Seattle, but they also have great resources on their website
- ★The Queer Youth Project at Northwest Youth Services is dedicated to supporting and advocating for at-risk and homeless LGBTQ youth

★Follow Teen Council on Instagram and tiktok to keep up with what we're doing! Applications for the 2023-2024 school year are open now and interviews will take place in the Spring. Scan the QR code, or find the link in our Instagram bio to apply.

ANONYMOUS QUESTIONS (if time)

Now, we're going to do anonymous questions. On the back of your survey from early, I'd like everyone to write down a question. If you don't have a question, you can write down something you learned or a piece of feedback for us! It's important that everyone write something down to help keep the questions anonymous.
Ask the class to write down a question or a comment on the back of their survey from the warm-up activity. After a few minutes, everyone will turn in their surveys. TC members

sort through and find the questions and answer them. Don’t forget to ANSWER using VQP!