

More than Pronouns: Why it Matters



Pronouns

- Identifiers that people may use in the place of their names
- Common ones are he/him/his, she/her/hers, they/them/theirs
- Some people also use neopronouns – alternative gender-neutral pronouns like ze/zir/zirs, fae/faer/faers, xe/xem/xyr



Gender Identity vs Expression

- Someone may identify as one gender and present as another. Identity is how someone feels inside, expression is how they publicly present or expresses their gender



Cisgender vs Transgender

- Cis- and trans- are prefixes meaning "on this side of" and "across from"
- A person whose gender identity aligns with their sex assigned at birth would be cisgender
- A person whose gender identity differs from their sex assigned at birth is transgender



NonBinary

- Nonbinary is an umbrella term for anyone whose gender identity falls outside the typical binary of male or female.



Misgendering

- Misgendering is the act of referring to someone using the incorrect identifiers for their gender identity. This can be done intentionally or unintentionally.
- If you accidentally misgender someone, the best practice is to quickly correct yourself, apologize, and move on. Don't make it about yourself and how bad you feel, that places the burden on the person that you have hurt. Hold yourself accountable to do better.



Pronouns & Mental Health: Why you should Care

Queer people who experience rejection are six times more likely to be experiencing high levels of depression.
51% of trans people have been diagnosed with depression or anxiety
As many as 40% of trans adults have attempted to die by suicide in their lifetime.

Trans youth who have support in their lives are four times less likely to die by suicide.
71% of trans people have a college or university degree, yet 50% have a personal annual income of less than \$15,000.

Gender identity and expression are protected grounds in the OHRC



<https://www.suicideinfo.ca/resource/transgender-people-suicide/>



How to be an ally for trans people

Unlearn

- Check assumptions, ask people about their pronouns compared to assuming one's pronouns
- **Someone's pronouns are not preferred, they are required.** Use the term "correct pronouns" or just "pronouns" when discussing

Take Action

- Display your pronouns in online spaces ie: LinkedIn, email signatures
- Include pronouns in your introductions



Be accountable

- Say something: if you witness transphobia or misgendering people don't ignore it. Say or do something about it.



Connect

- Keep 2SLGBTQ supports available for people who need them
- Sheridan Counselling Services @ <https://central.sheridancollege.ca/counselling-services>
- LGBTQ Youthline @ youthline.ca
- Trans Lifeline (866) 330-6366 <https://translifeline.org/>
- Trevor Project <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/>
- Good2Talk 1 (866) 925-5454 or text 686868