



SAGA/LGBTQ Education and Support Services of Canada Inc.

(SAGA: Sexuality and Gender Acceptance)

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Terminology

- **Bottom surgery:** Any of a variety of gender-related surgeries dealing with genitalia. They can include: vaginoplasty, phalloplasty, vaginectomy, metoidioplasty, orchidectomy, scrotoplasty and others.
 - **Cisgender:** Someone whose gender identity matches the gender they were assigned at birth, someone who is not trans*. Cisgender is often shortened to cis.
 - **Cross dresser:** Someone who dresses as and presents themselves as a gender other than the one they typically identify with. Cross dressing can be purely aesthetic, sexual, a facet of someone's gender identity, or have other meanings.
 - **Dysphoria:** Unhappiness or sadness with all or some gendered aspects of one's body, or in response to social misgendering. Some trans* people experience dysphoria, some don't.
- FTM: **female to male:** A term usually synonymous with trans man.
- **Full Time:** Living as and attempting to pass as your true gender identity one hundred percent of the time. This term is problematic to some because it can put a lot of the focus on the physical aspects of trans* identity and ignore the processes many people go through to accept themselves and to come out if they choose to. It is also a term that is getting to be a bit outdated but it's still used in some communities.
 - **Gender:** A complex combination of roles, expressions, identities, performances, and more which is assigned gendered meaning. Gender is self-defined as well as defined by our larger society and how gender is embodied and defined varies from culture to culture and from person to person.
 - **Gender assignment:** The gender we are assigned at birth, usually based on genitals alone. It is assumed that our identities should and will match this assignment but this isn't the case for most trans* people.
 - **Gender identity:** An individual's internal sense of what gender they are. One's gender identity may or may not align with their assigned gender, and one's gender identity is not visible to others.
 - **Gender role:** Cultural expectations for what people should do with their lives, what activities they should enjoy or excel at, and how they should behave, based on what their gender is.
 - **Genderfluid:** This term can be used as a specific identity or as a way of articulating the changing nature of one's gender identity or expression. People who are genderfluid may feel that their gender identity or expression is constantly changing, or that it switches back and forth.
 - **Hermaphrodite:** a person born with complete reproduction organs of both the female and the male.

- **Intersex:** A person born with any manner of supposed “ambiguity” in terms of gendered physical characteristics. This can include reproductive organs, genitals, hormones, chromosomes, or any combination there of.
- **LGBT:** A common acronym which stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender/trans*. There are other variations similar to this acronym, such as LGBTQQIAA which stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender/trans*, queer, questioning, intersex, asexual, and ally.
- **Misgender:** The act of attributing a person to a gender they do not identify as. So if you were to call someone a man but they were in fact non-binary, you would have misgendered them. You can cut down on misgendering people by trying to not practice gender attribution, and by asking people their preferred pronouns and terms when appropriate.

MTF: **male to female:** A term usually synonymous with trans woman.

- **Non-binary:** Non-binary people are those who identify as a gender that is neither man nor woman or who are not men or women exclusively. Non-binary can refer to a specific gender identity or it can function as an umbrella term which can include (though not always) people who are genderqueer, agender, bigender, neutrois, and others.
- **Passing:** When used by trans* people it can either mean that one is being read as the gender they identify as or that one is being read as cisgender. For example, a trans man who people read as a man, most likely a cis man.
- **Preferred pronouns:** The pronouns one prefers to be called, whether they be he, she, they, it, ze, ey, or any other. It is preferable to always ask someone their preferred pronouns if possible, and to not make assumptions about a person's pronouns. Always be sure to respect a person's preferred pronouns, use them, and apologize if you slip up.
- **Pre-op/post-op/non-op:** These terms refer to what gender-related surgeries a person has had, plans to have, or does not want to have. Pre-op (pre-operative) means the person plans to or wants to have some form of gender-related surgery but has not yet, post-op means they already have had some form of gender-related surgery, and non-op refers to trans* people who do not desire any gender-related surgeries. These terms should not be used to define a trans* person nor should they be applied to trans* people without their consent.
- **Sexual orientation:** Refers to who one is sexually attracted to. Gender identity and sexual orientation may affect one another but they are not the same. The term transgender does not refer to sexual orientation, it refers to gender identity and/or expression.
- **“Tranny”:** A derogatory term used against trans women and some other trans* people. Some trans* people are interested in reclaiming this word .
- **Trans*:** This term has a similar meaning to transgender but the asterisk is meant to show a more inclusive attitude towards the multitude of people under the transgender umbrella.
- **Trans man/Transmasculine:** A man who was assigned female at birth.
- **Trans woman/Transfeminine:** A woman who was assigned male at birth.

- **Transexual:** This term often refers to binary trans* people (trans men and trans women), or to trans* people who physically transition in any way. While still a preferred term for many, some people dislike the term because of its connection to the medicalization of trans* people and the focus it can put on physical transition.
- **Transgender:** An umbrella term for people whose gender identity or expression don't match the gender they were assigned at birth.
- **Transition:** To transition can mean a lot of things but a broad definition is the process trans* people may go through to become comfortable in terms of their gender. Transitioning may include social, physical, mental, and emotional components and may not fit into the narrative we are used to seeing. Transition may or may not include things like changing one's name, taking hormones, having surgery, changing legal documents to reflect one's gender identity, coming out to loved ones, dressing as one chooses, and accepting oneself among many other things. Transition is an individual process.
- **Transphobia:** The fear or hatred of trans* people or those perceived as such.
- **Transvestite:** Often used synonymously with cross dresser this term is usually derogatory and isn't preferred by most people today.
- **Two spirit:** A term specific to Native/First Nations cultures and people which some lesbian, gay, queer, pansexual, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and gender non-conforming people identify as. This term should not be used by non-Native/First Nations people.