

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ON GENDER AND SEXUALITY

Purpose: Identify techniques and resources for improving practice in creating affirming and inclusive environments.

Q: What do I do if I misgender someone?

- Stay calm; it's not about you. It is important to call yourself out for your mistake and apologize to the student in question, but don't lament for minutes on end. The important thing is that you know not to make the same mistake again, and that the person who was misgendered knows that their identity is respected.
- **A good example:**
 - "She had – I mean they, sorry, they had a great point earlier" in the moment
 - Privately messaging on zoom to apologize again (e.g. "I wanted to reach out and sincerely apologize again for the pronoun mistake earlier") if you want to is totally okay! Just don't necessarily expect a reply (e.g. saying something like "don't feel obligated to respond!" can work).

Q: Are all nonbinary people transgender?

- Some non-binary people also identify as trans, and some do not. Nonbinary non-trans people's names and pronouns are deserving of the same respect as those of trans folks.

Q: What is the best way to avoid using a student's deadname if I know it/it's their zoom name?

- Make a note somewhere that you'll see it so you don't accidentally use the wrong name. Sticky notes can be really helpful.
- Check with the host teacher to see if their zoom name can be changed if the student introduces themselves with a different name.

Q: Isn't singular "they" bad grammar?

- No. At this point, dictionary.com, the Oxford dictionary, and Merriam-Webster have all recognized the validity of "they" as a singular pronoun. It has also been historically in use since at least 1375 (Shakespeare's time!).
- If one is speaking about a person of unspecified gender, it is much more fluid and easy to say "if a person xyz, they ___" instead of "he or she," which is both clunky and disrespectful to those outside of the binary.

Q: I really do care about respecting students, but I'm cisgender and heterosexual and this stuff is still really new to me. Where can I get more information?

- **The resources below are ones that Peer Health Exchange Health Educators have found most helpful, and provide strategies for continued learning:**
 - [SafeZone Trainings](#)
 - The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development's [Gender Inclusive Classroom Newsletter](#)
 - [Gender Spectrum's Education Guide](#)
 - Alyssa Broomfield's [Introduction to Gender Inclusive Classrooms](#)
 - GLSEN's [Safe Space Kit](#) for Inclusive Classrooms
 - GLSEN's [Considerations for Working with LGBT Students of Color](#)
 - [Questionable Questions about Transgender Identity](#): A "Should I Ask This Question" Guide to Support Transgender People in Your Life