What does non-binary mean?

Non-binary (sometimes shortened to enby and/or nb) means you are outside of the gender binary, meaning not a "boy" or "girl." Some non-binary people are a combination of the two, some have no gender at all, and some are a completely different gender.

What kind of pronouns do non-binary people use?

A lot of non-binary people use pronouns out of the stereotypical "she/her/hers" or "he/him/his." Others include, but are not limited to:

- they/them/theirs
- she/they
- he/they
- it/it/its
- Neo-pronouns (they go beyond "she," "he," and "they"):
    - oxe/xir/xirs
    - ofae/faer/faers
    - oze/hir/hirs or ze/zir/zirs

What is the difference between sex and gender?

SEX: Sex is often labeled as two main categories on the basis of one's reproductive functions: female or male. This is assigned to you at birth.

- **Intersex:** Individuals who are born intersex are born with reproductive or sexual anatomy (body parts) that don't fit into the male/female binary. They are often born with genitals that do not match with their inside reproductive organs. People may also have both male and female parts on the inside and outside. In some cases, individuals do not know they are intersex until puberty.

GENDER: Gender is a social/cultural construct, often confused with "sex." This is how a person identifies. "Men" and "women" are typically viewed as the gender norm. However, gender is a broad spectrum and is not binary, meaning there are more than two ways/genders to identify as.
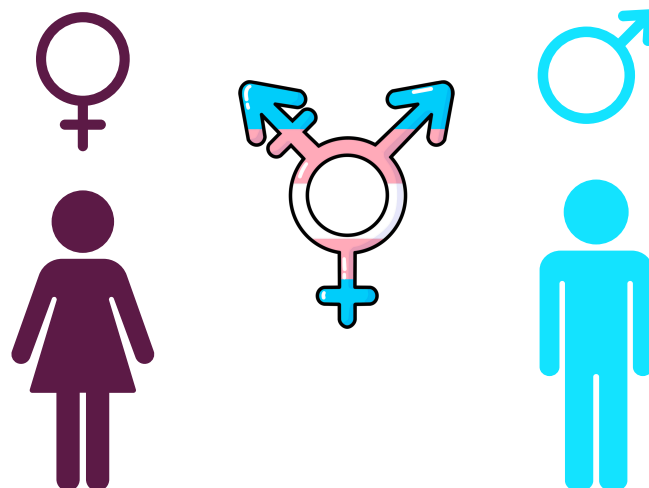
What is the difference between transgender and non-binary people?

Transgender is a word meaning your gender is different than the gender/sex assigned at birth. Example: You are a boy who was born as a girl/female, a girl who was born a boy/male, or a non-binary person who is neither. This term often applies to trans men and trans women.

Non-binary is an umbrella term for those who do not identify with either male or female sex labels or society's labels of man and woman. Some non-binary people identify as both a man and a woman, in between, or totally outside those categories. There are also many different labels that non-binary people might use to identify as:

- Genderqueer, genderfluid, bigender, pangender, agender, neutrosis, demiboy, demigirl, genderflux, trigender, two-spirit (Native American/Indigenous specific term), etc.

Cisgender (or cis) means that your gender aligns with sex you were assigned with at birth.

What is gender dysphoria?

Gender dysphoria is a feeling that some transgender and non-binary people have. This means that they feel uncomfortable with their body because it doesn't match how they want to look and be identified as. For some people it is a mild discomfort they can ignore, and for some people it can be debilitating. Some transgender people don't experience it at all. Whether you experience gender dysphoria or not does not define if you are transgender.

How can I be supportive?

- Don't assume people's pronouns when you meet them. Introduce yourself with your own pronouns to make others feel comfortable enough to share or respectfully ask.
- When someone tells you their pronouns (whether it is a change or you are just meeting them), use them.
- If you mess up someone's pronouns, quickly correct yourself and continue on. You can apologize to the person in private so you don't draw attention to it.
- Practice using pronouns that are new to you.
- Advocate for more transgender and non-binary inclusive spaces.
- Ask if your school/work has gender-neutral bathrooms.
- Advocate for LGBTQIA+ and gender-neutral healthcare access, share resources from organizations that already provide this care.
- Participate in pride events.
- Don't 'out' someone. For some, coming out can be a big deal but not everyone is ready to share their gender/sexual identity with others. If someone comes out to you, ask who knows about it and who it is okay to talk about it in front of.
- Use they/them in writing in places where you would use his/her. They/them pronouns can be used as both singular and plural pronouns. The more you use them for either, the more people might accept it as the "norm."
- Donate to helpful and inclusive organizations.
- Speak out against prejudice.
- Be an ally!