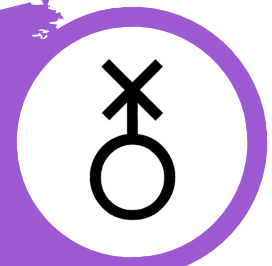


NON-BINARY

RAINBOW DEFINITIONS



To celebrate International Non-Binary People's Day, it's time to scrub up on our Rainbow Definitions and learn more about our Non-Binary Communities to support, inclusive and celebrate them.

Non-Binary Defined

Whilst most people including some transgender people identify as either male or female, some people don't neatly fit into the categories of "man" or "woman," or "male" or "female." For example, some people have a gender identity or expression that blends elements of being a man or a woman, or a gender that is different than man or women. Some people don't identify with any gender and some people's gender changes over time.

People whose gender is not a man or women use many different terms to describe themselves, with **non-binary** being one of the most common. Other terms include **genderqueer**, **agender**, **bigender**, and more. None of these terms mean exactly the same thing – but all speak to an experience of gender that is not simple and defined by narrow binary norms.

What is gender identity?

When you are born, you are assigned a sex – male, female, or indeterminate (intersex) – depending on the appearance of your external genitalia. You may feel that the sex you were assigned is correct. This is called being 'cisgender'. You may feel that the sex you were assigned is incorrect. This is called being 'transgender'.

Gender diversity refers to a diversity of genders in addition to cisgender people, and YES this includes non-binary people. Non-binary people fit under the umbrella term of Transgender - this is the first T in the LGBTTIAP+ rainbow acronym.

Non-Binary Pronouns

Different non-binary people may use different pronouns. Many non-binary people use "they" while others use "he" or "she," or a combination for example she/they and still others use other pronouns including 'ia' the Māori gender neutral pronoun in New Zealand. Asking whether someone should be referred to as "he," "she," "they," or another pronoun variation may feel awkward at first, but is one of the simplest and most important ways to show respect for someone's identity.



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Basic Facts about Non-Binary People

Non-binary people are nothing new and this is NOT a fad! Non-binary people aren't confused about their gender identity or following a new fad – non-binary identities have been recognised for millennia by cultures and societies around the world. Like all gender identities, research has shown that children can understand their own gender identity by as early as age 3 and are confident about how they identify by age 5 or 6.

Some, but not all, non-binary people undergo medical procedures to make their bodies more congruent with their gender identity. While not all non-binary people need medical care to live a fulfilling life, it's critical and even life-saving for some.

Being non-binary is not the same thing as being intersex. Intersex people have anatomy or genetic makeup that doesn't neatly fit typical 'boxes' of male and female. It's useful to remember that Non-binary people are usually not intersex: they're usually born with bodies that may fit typical definitions of male and female, but their innate gender identity is something other than male or female.

How to Be Respectful and Supportive of Non-Binary People

Use the name a person asks you to use. This is one of the most critical aspects of being respectful of a non-binary person, as the name you may have been using may not reflect their gender identity. Don't ask someone what their old name was.

Check your assumptions about people's gender. You can't tell if someone is non-binary simply by looking at them, just like how you can't tell if someone is transgender just by how they look.

If you're not sure what pronouns someone uses, ask and introduce yourself by using your pronouns first. Also, where you ask for people's titles i.e Mr, Mrs etc, include MX as a gender neutral option.

Understand that, for many non-binary people, figuring out which bathroom to use can be challenging. For many non-binary people, using either the women's or the men's room might feel unsafe, because others may verbally harass them or even physically attack them. Non-binary people should be supported by being able to use the restroom that they believe they will be safest in.

If you have a uniform in your organisation, ensure that your uniform policy allows people to pick and mix items that best align with their gender identity or expression and that this is not restricted to binary gendered uniforms only - a gender inclusive uniform!