



Supporting LGBTQIA+ Transitional Age Homeless Youth

Dana "TherActivist" Johnson, MSW

**Director of Youth Housing & Trainer for
Rainbow Community Center of Contra Costa
County**

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Thursday April 27, 2023

10:45 am - 12pm

Pacific D Room- Block A3



Agenda

Welcome & Introduction
HETAC Overview
Intersectionality
What is SOGIE?
Prevention & Allyship
Collaboration & Closing



Agreements

- This is a brave space.
- This is a confidential space.
- Please use "I" statements.
- Make, Take & Share Space.
- Respect feelings as all feelings are valid.



Speaker Introduction

- Dana “TherActivist” Johnson (They/ Them/ Theirs)
- Identify as Transgender Nonbinary
- Director of Youth Housing & Trainer, Rainbow Community Center of Contra Costa County
- LGBTQ+ Activist; Author & Documentary Filmmaker of TherActivist: They/ Them/ Theirs
- I have 18 years experience working with system involved youth in Juvenile Justice System



TherActivist: They/ Them/ Theirs- Book & Film

- Identity, Intersectionality, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. The TherActivist embodies a therapeutic activism approach, while servicing and empowering people of color, LGBTQ+ communities, and marginalized populations. For further details on empowering your "therapeutic activism," check out: TherActivist: They/Them/Theirs documentary. www.theractivist.com



How Are You Feeling Today?



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About Rainbow

~ MISSION ~

Rainbow Community Center builds community, equity, & well-being among Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning & Intersex (LGBTQIA+) people & our allies.

~ VISION ~

Rainbow envisions a society that advocates for and celebrates gender and sexual diversity, racial justice, safety, and liberation for all through healing centered engagement.

~ VALUES ~

Authenticity. Bravery. Education. Healing. Liberation.



Transcending Inclusive to Expansive

Rainbow transcends its vision from inclusive to expansive*, as we will be able to represent by centering and reaching a wider scope of Marginalized LGBTQI+ and Intersectional Identities more effectively.

Historically Marginalized & Intersectional LGBTQI+ Identities encompass:

- Transgender and Gender Non-conforming
- Black, Indigenous and People of Color
- Women
- Neurodiversity & Mental Health Abilities
- Physical Abilities
- Body Diversity
- HIV Status
- Elders
- Youth
- Immigrants
- Interfaith
- Familial Composition
- Class/Socioeconomic Status

**'inclusive' with its implied power differential, whereas 'expansive' refers to centering power with marginalized people*

Houseless Transitional Youth Program (HTYP)

Rainbow's Houseless Transitional Youth Program (HTYP) centers and serves intersectional, marginalized, LGBTQIA+ , Transitional Age Youth (TAY) Victims of Crime (VOC), ages 12-24, and individuals within the Foster Care System. Client services include providing culturally expansive case management, temporary housing, hotel vouchers (18+), transportation/rideshare program, food assistance, clothing assistance, relocation financial aid, medication assistance, legal assistance, counseling services, youth support groups, housing for those at risk of homelessness, and permanent supportive housing assistance.



Houseless Transitional Youth Program (HTYP)

Help We Offer

- Hotel Vouchers
- Transportation- Ride Share Program
- Food and Clothing
- Medication OTC - Prescription
- Relocation Funds
- Legal Assistance
- Housing Assistance
- Counseling Services
- Youth Support Groups



- HTYP benefits LGBTQIA+ youth and transitional age youth from age 12 to 24 who are experiencing houselessness, have been victims of violence, and are in crisis

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About HETAC

- The Homeless Education Technical Assistance Center (HETAC)
 - Is funded by the California Department of Education (CDE) to serve as the state's homeless education technical assistance center
 - Is operated jointly by the Contra Costa, Los Angeles, and San Diego County Offices of Education

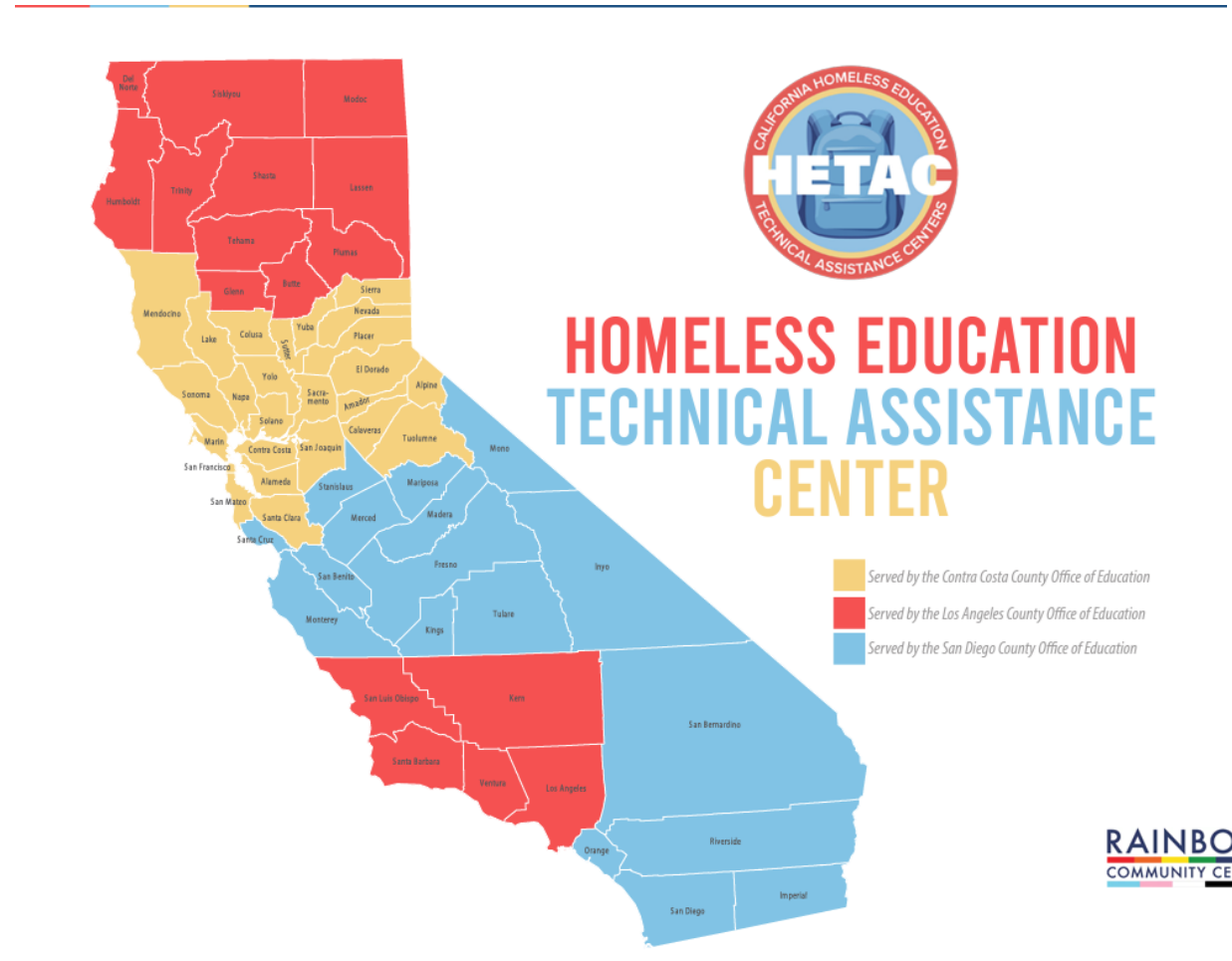
HETAC Lead Contacts

- Contra Costa County Office of Education
 - **Alejandra Chamberlain**
 - achamberlain@cccoe.k12.ca.us
- Los Angeles County Office of Education
 - **Jennifer Kottke**
 - kottke_jennifer@lacoed.edu
- San Diego County Office of Education
 - **Susanne Terry**
 - susanne.terry@sdcoe.net

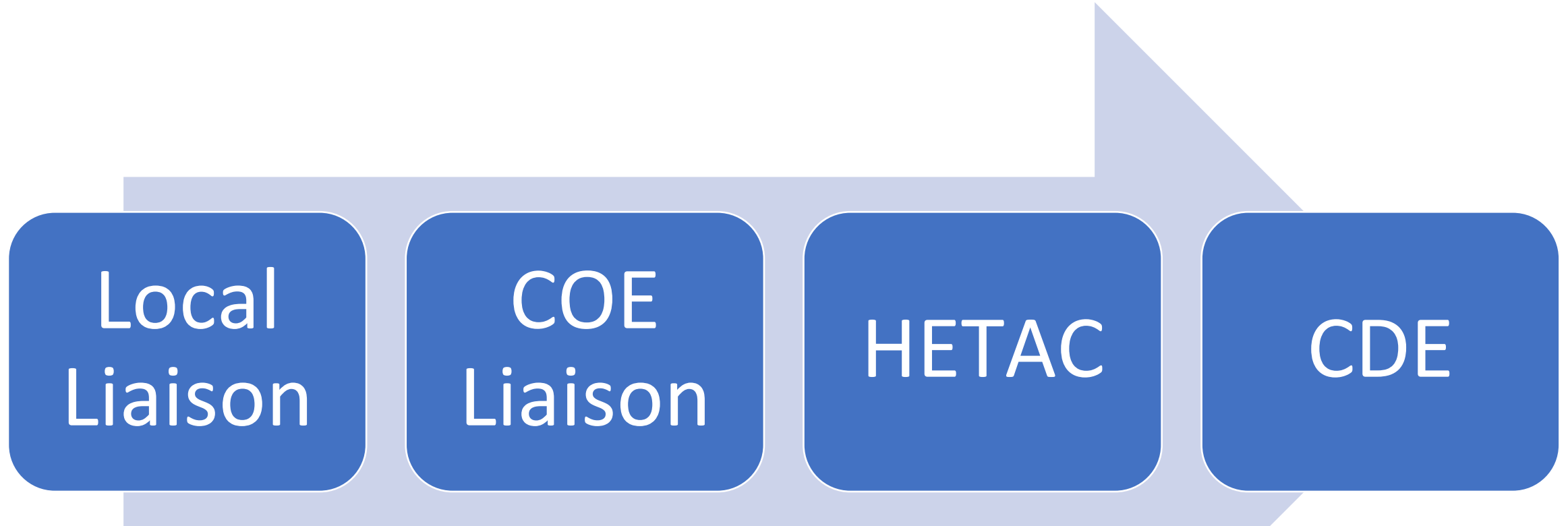


Regionalized

- **Contra Costa – Yellow**
- **Los Angeles – Red**
- **San Diego – Blue**



Relationship between CDE, HETAC, COE and LEAs



HETAC's Purpose

Homeless Education Technical Assistance Centers HETAC provides support and technical assistance to 24 Northern CA and 58 overall COEs throughout California in a regional approach to ensure they have the capacity, resources, and tools required to support their local educational agencies (LEAs) with implementation of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

(Title 42 of the United States Code, Section 11431 et seq.)

The provisions of this Act are designed to improve the educational stability, access, support, and academic achievement of children and youth experiencing homelessness.



Rainbow HETAC Goals

Create technical assistance (TA) and consultative profiles based on county identities, culture, and landscape.

Create District metrics to progress improvement towards Sexual Orientation Gender Identity and Expression (SOGIE) education, affirmation, and fluency, participation, and educational outcomes for youth.

Provide TA in collaboration with CCCOE to the COEs throughout the state, by helping identify local CBOs that are best poised to support LGBTQI+ homeless youth and other marginalized homeless children and youth.

Work collaboratively to model best practices, such as with the County Public Health and Behavioral Health Department including the Continuum of Care Planning and Policy Manager of the Homeless Program of CCC Health Services.

Uplift, Affirm, and Celebrate LGBTQI+ Youth, Allies, and Community!



Intersectionality

Multiple identities are interwoven into an individual's experience and cannot be examined independently of each other (Crenshaw, 1989)

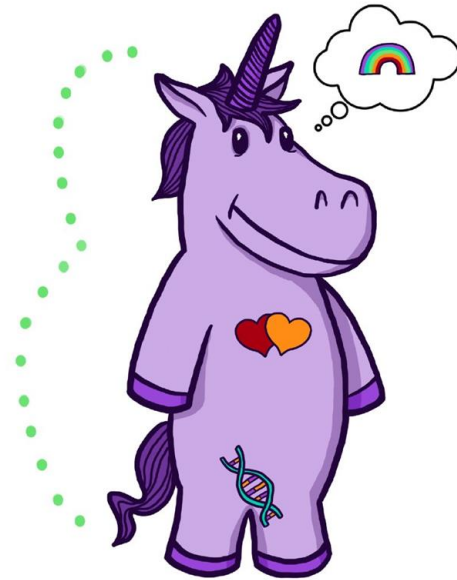
Justice and inclusion work must acknowledge the complex relationships between levels of oppression experienced simultaneously



Gender and Sexuality Spectrum

The Gender Unicorn

Graphic by:
TSER
Trans Student Educational Resources



To learn more, go to:
www.transstudent.org/gender

Design by Landyn Pan and Anna Moore



What is SOGIE?

SEXUAL ORIENTATION is a person's physical, romantic, emotional, aesthetic, and/or other form of attraction to others. Gender identity and sexual orientation are not the same.

Who you love or are attracted to.

GENDER IDENTITY refers to the individual identification of a person's gender, as defined by that person, and can differ from their sex assigned at birth. It is one's internal sense of being a "man or woman", neither of these, both, or other genders.

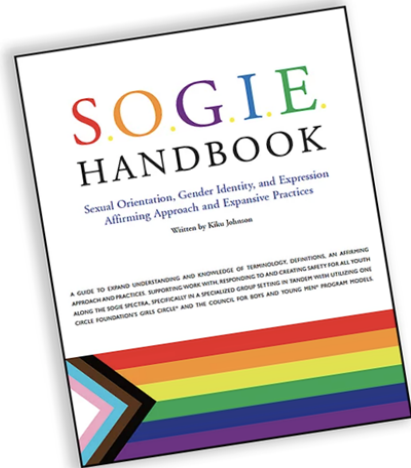
Deeply held sense of who you are.

GENDER EXPRESSION refers to the way one expresses their gender identity. It is the physical manifestation of one's gender identity through clothing, hairstyle, voice, body shape, etc.

How you communicate your gender to the world.



SOGIE Handbook



S.O.G.I.E Handbook FREE Download Now Available!

Open source, free, and downloadable, **SOGIE Handbook** written by Rainbow's Executive Director! **Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, and Expression Affirming Approach and Expansive Practices** for anyone who connects with anyone and wants a helpful tool. Funded by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and supported by the New York State Department of Health and Cornell University.

DOWNLOAD



Spanish https://www.rainbowcc.org/_files/ugd/9d1850_a564143cc04a472581dffa5f6a56aad9.pdf

English

https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/sexual_violence/docs/sogie_handbook.pdf

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Riding the Waves Together

Are there more than two genders?

Gender Binary

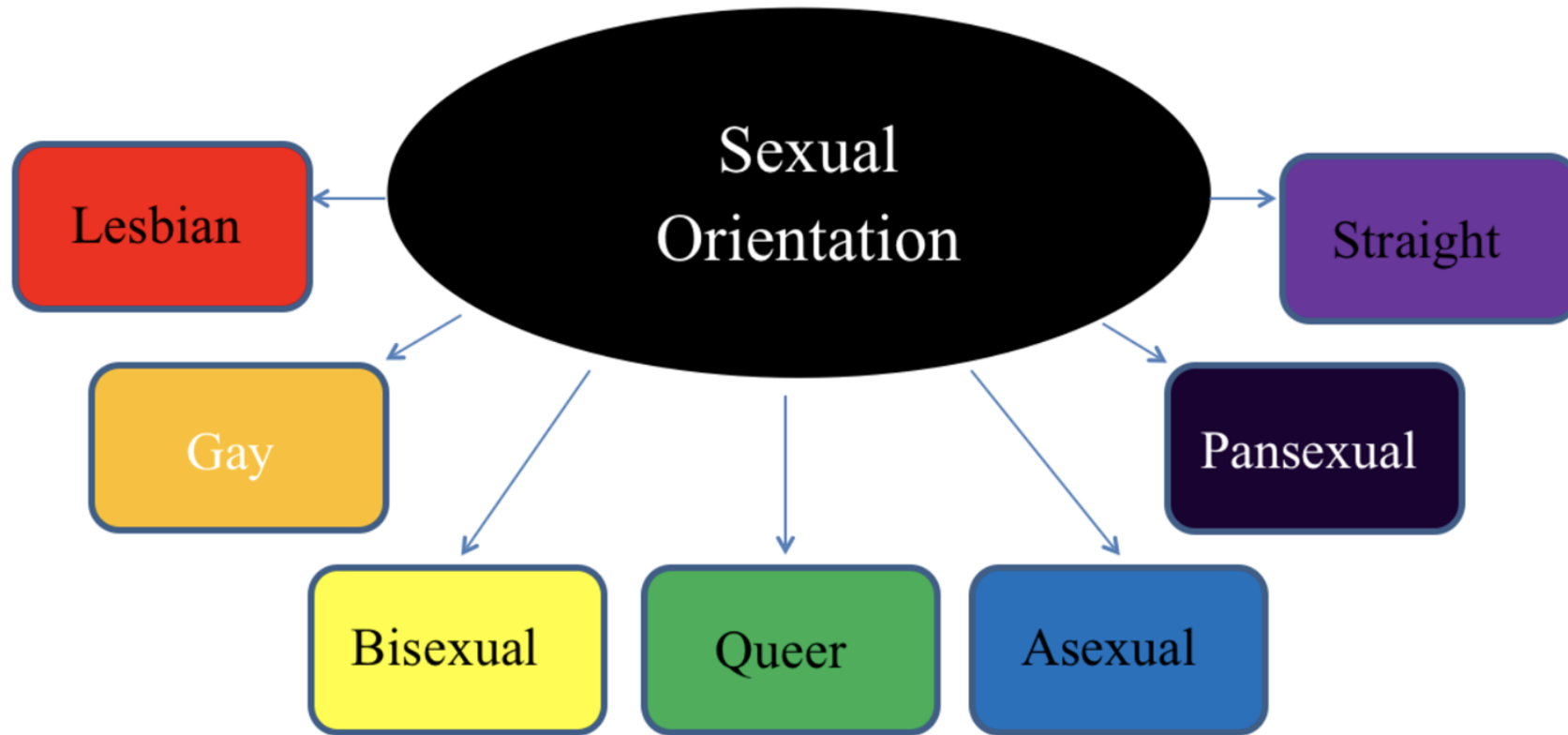
- a classification system consisting of two genders, male and female.
- a concept or belief that there are only two genders and that one's sex or gender assigned at birth will align with traditional social constructs of masculine and feminine identity, expression, and sexuality.

Nonbinary

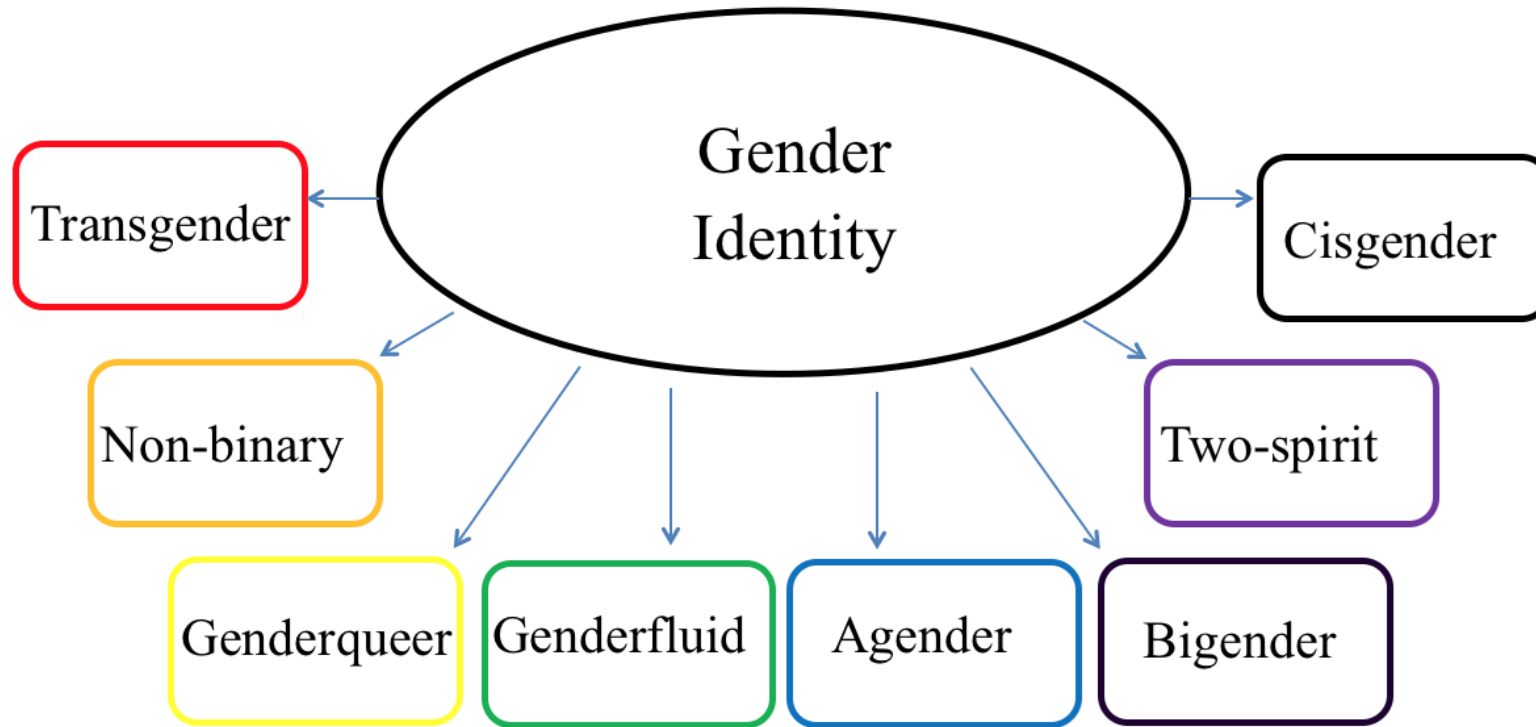
- *Nonbinary* is an umbrella term to describe any gender identity that does not fit into the gender binary of male and female.
- Nonbinary gender (also sometimes referred to as genderqueer) people may, for example, identify as having no gender, fall on a gender spectrum somewhere between male and female, or identify as totally outside binary gender identities.



Sexual Orientations



Gender Identities



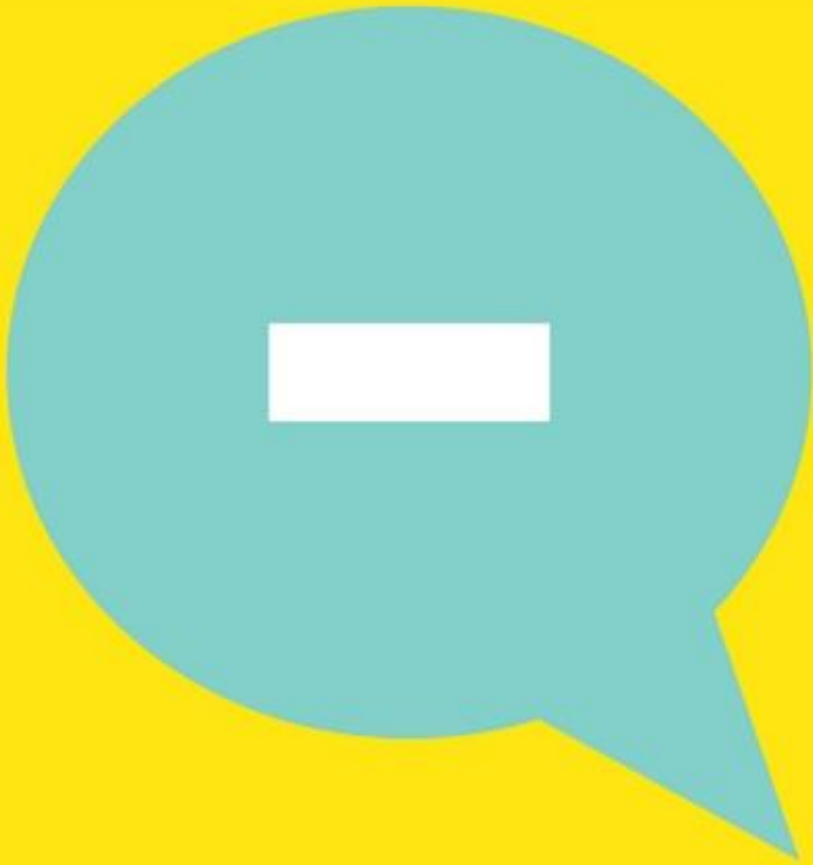
Pronouns Checklist

- ✓ Check with the students individually to see how they would like to be referred to
- ✓ Follow-up with the class to create an understanding on how names and pronouns will be used
- ✓ Allow students to share or not share based off of their own assessment of safety
- ✓ Set an example with an introduction and explanation for your own name and pronouns
- ✓ Check in periodically with the class to see if what you have agreed upon still works for them


Reflect & Share

- Raise your hand if you if you heard positive messages about LGBTQI+ growing up?
- Raise your hand if you learned that there are more than two genders when you were in school?
- Raise your hand if there was an LGBTQI+ person in your community that was highly respected that you looked up to?
- Raise your hand if you talked about gender and sexuality in your home growing up?

Negative Messages



92% of LGBT youth say they hear negative messages about being LGBT. The top sources are school, the Internet and their peers.



HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN®

www.hrc.org/youth

#LGBTYOUTH

<https://hrc-prod-requests.s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/files/assets/resources/2018-YouthReport-NoVid.pdf>

LGBTQIA+ in Foster Care

THE TREVOR PROJECT National Survey on LGBTQ Youth Mental Health 2022

LGBTQ youth who reported having been in foster care had **3X** greater odds of reporting a past-year suicide attempt compared to those who had not

LGBTQ youth who had been in foster care had nearly **4X** greater odds of being kicked out, abandoned, or running away due to treatment based on their LGBTQ identity compared to those who were never in foster care



Mental Health Impact

THE TREVOR PROJECT National Survey on LGBTQ Youth Mental Health 2022

45% of LGBTQ respondents seriously considered attempting suicide in the past twelve months and more than half of transgender and nonbinary youth have seriously considered suicide.

60% of LGBTQ youth who wanted mental health care in the past year were not able to get it.

71% of transgender and nonbinary youth reported that they have experienced discrimination based on their gender identity.

<https://www.thetrevorproject.org/survey-2022/>



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Education Impact

- Increased absenteeism
- Lower academic achievement
- Fewer plans for post-secondary education
- Poorer psychological well-being
(i.e. higher levels of depression and lower self-esteem)



System Involved LGBTQIA+ Youth

Approximately 300,000 gay and transgender youth are arrested and/or detained each year, of which **more than 60%** are Black or Latinx identifying.

Though gay and transgender youth represent just 5% to 7% of the nation's overall youth population, they compose 13% to 15% of those currently in the juvenile justice system.

https://www.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/issues/2012/06/pdf/juvenile_justice.pdf

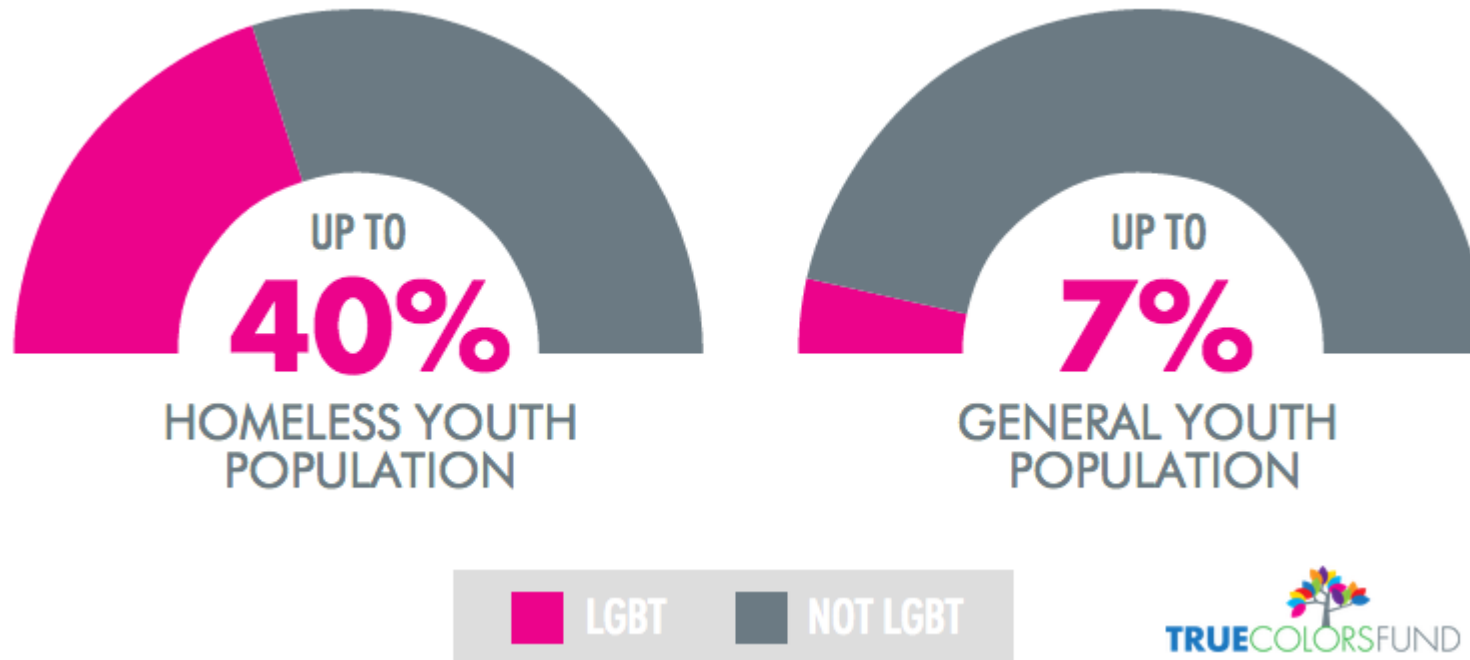


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LGBTQIA+ Youth are 120% More Likely to Experience Homelessness



Source: <https://truecolorsunited.org/portfolio/serving-our-youth/>



Disparities in Homelessness

LGBTQIA+ Youth are **120%** More Likely to Experience Homelessness than non-LGBTQIA+ youth.

It is estimated that **7%** of youth in the United States are LGBTQIA+, while **40%** of youth experiencing homelessness are LGBTQIA+.

<https://truecolorsunited.org/portfolio/serving-our-youth/>



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Protective Factors for Youth

TREXOR National Survey on LGBTQ Youth Mental Health 2022

1. Transgender and nonbinary youth who report having their chosen name and pronouns respected by all or most of the people in their lives attempted suicide at **half the rate** of those who did not
2. LGBTQ youth who had access to spaces that **affirmed their sexual orientation and gender identity** reported lower rates of attempting suicide.
3. Among LGBTQ youth with a history of foster care, those who reported **attending an LGBTQ-affirming school had more than 50% lower odds of reporting a past-year suicide attempt** compared to those who attended a school that was not LGBTQ-affirming
4. LGBTQ youth who have at least **one supportive adult** reported lower rates of attempted suicide



What Are The Causes?

Family conflict and rejection are the most common causes of homelessness for LGBTQIA+ youth



- Forced out ran away
 - Family Issues
- Aged out of foster care
 - Abuse
 - Family Poverty



<https://truecolorsunited.org/portfolio/serving-our-youth/>

Notice The Signs



- Sleeping in class
- Wearing the same clothes
- Hygiene and general cleanliness
- Absenteeism
- Taking extra food from cafeteria
- Hunger
- Substance abuse
- Lingered around campus
- Stealing and petty theft
- Issues with family connection
- Change in mood or personality

Be an Ally on Your Campus!

- **Ensure the Physical Space is Welcoming**
 - Inclusive signs/posters
 - Private/Gender Neutral Restrooms/Changing Rooms
 - Resources/books
- **Use Bias-free Language And Refrain From Assumptions**
 - Ask for Gender Pronouns & Names (for substitutes also)
 - Gender neutral language
- **Include & represent LGBTQIA+ people in school events – career days, health fairs, multicultural celebrations**



Ally Spectrum

Behold, the Straight for Equality Ally Spectrum®:



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<https://www.straightforequality.org/allyspectrum>



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Prevention and Allyship

- Read the SOGIE Handbook and continue personal learning**
- Identify dedicated staff to support LGBTQIA+ youth
- Make spaces affirming! Post flags and LGBTQIA+ images in spaces where youth and families/caregivers will see it**
- Interrupt witnessed anti-LGBTQIA+ bias
- Include LGBTQIA+ people in curricula**
- Create systems that ask for pronouns and names
- Provide ongoing training and learning opportunities for all staff to grow in their understanding of the diversity and unique needs of LGBTQIA+ youth**
- Forward communicate and educate on policies that exist to protect LGBTQIA+ youth
- Provide LGBTQIA+ Parent Education and resources to families and those who care for youth**
- Add pronouns to email signatures, bios, name badges, etc
- Connect with the leaders of the Gender and Sexualities Alliance (GSA) or Rainbow Club at every school in your district. If you don't have one, help it get started!**

Points of Collaboration

- Counselor and Social Worker SOGIE Training
- Educator SOGIE Training
- Administrators SOGIE Training
- LGBTQI+ Laws & Legal Training
- LGBTQI+ Curriculum support and guidance
- SEL-based LGBTQI+ Affirming Curriculum
- Ongoing LGBTQI+ Professional Learning Communities
- Parent Education
- Resources including *Gender Affirming Kits, Queer Affirming & Educational Libraries, Classroom Activity Sets, and more*
- Train the Trainer for GSA and Affinity Groups
- LGBTQI+ Consultation
- Policy Review



HETAC Professional Development Contra Costa County Office of Ed. Regional Training Schedule

- ***Servicing 23 County offices of Education in California***
 - Providing Professional Development and Technical Assistance
- **April 2023 Training**
 - Topic: Allyship to LGBTQIA+ Homeless Youth
 - April 14, 2023, from 10-11:30am
- **June 2023 Training**
 - Topic: Supporting LGBTQIA+ Homeless Youth
 - June 16, 2023, from 10-11:30am



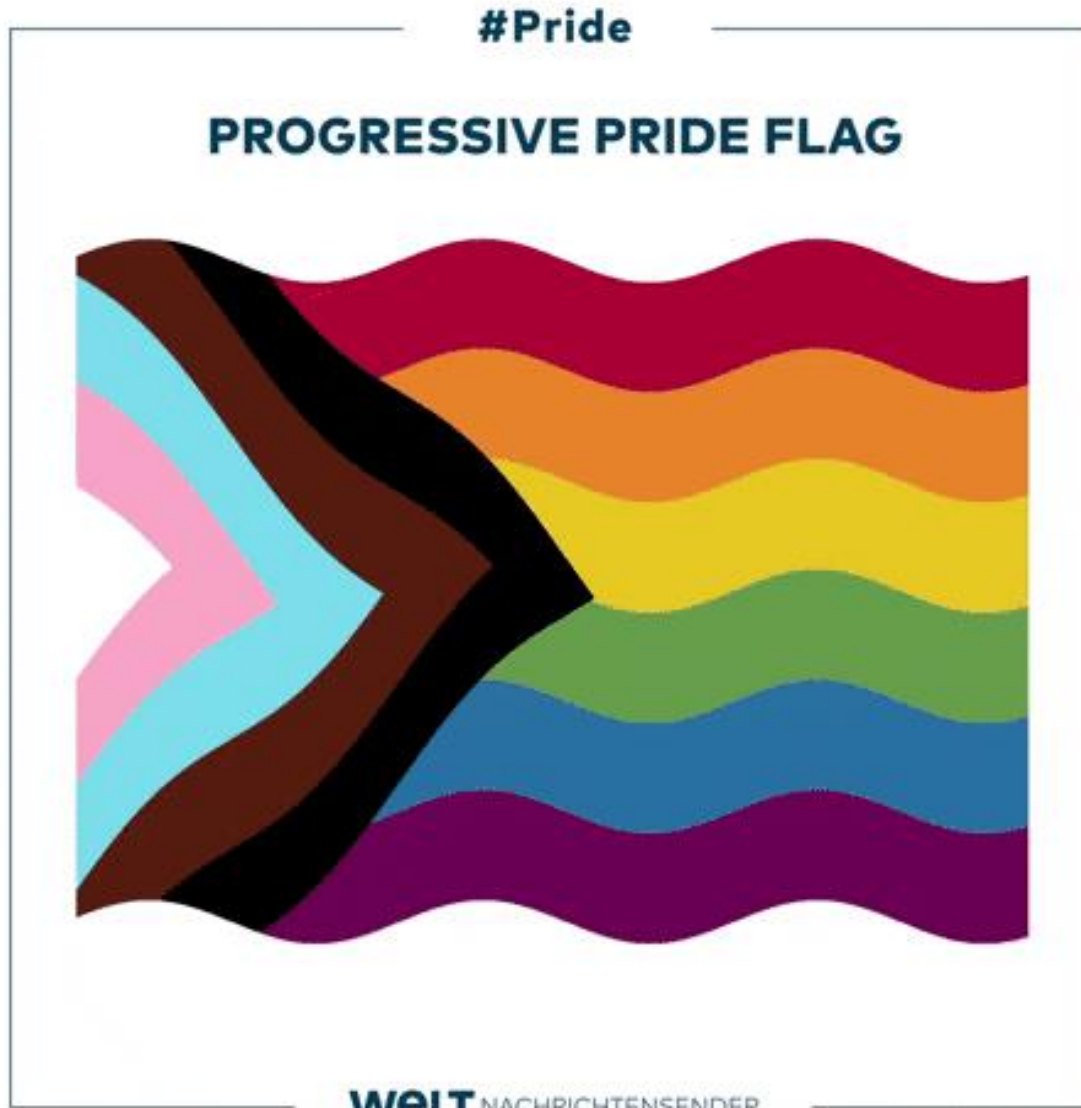
HETAC LGBTQIA+ Resource List

HETAC Website

<https://www.hetac.org/about>



Progress Pride



May 2021

[The Intersex-Inclusive Pride Progress Flag](#)

created by
Valentino Vecchietti
(She/They)

introduced by advocacy group
Intersex Equality Rights UK.