

# Safeguarding 7 minute briefing: LGBTQ+ and Gender Identity

## What to do?

Discuss concerns with your DSL/DDSL and follow our safeguarding procedures.  
Concerns about LGBTQ+ C&YP should be dealt with sensitively, taking into consideration any complicated feelings they might have about their sexuality or gender identity.  
You should be mindful that LGBTQ+ C&YP might not want to come out to everyone in their life. Sharing a child or young person's gender identity or sexuality might put them at extra risk if the person you tell is not supportive.

## Risks of harm

Evidence suggests that LGBTQ+ children and young people might be at increased risk of some forms of harm such as:

**CSE**  
**Online abuse**  
**Bullying**

## Areas of Impact

Negative experiences and interactions can impact all areas of a young person's life.

**Family relationships**  
**Homelessness**  
**Mental Health**  
**Isolation or barriers to speaking out**



[Click here for quiz](#)

## What it means

**LGBTQ+** is an acronym that is used to represent a diverse range of sexualities and gender-identities.

(See slide 2 for the meaning of each letter and related terms)

**Gender identity** describes how someone feels about their gender. Some people identify as a boy or a girl, others may find neither of these terms feel right for them, and identify as neither, or are fluid between both. It is different from someone's biological sex or assigned gender at birth and from sexuality or who someone's attracted to.

## Why it matters

People have been discriminated against because of their sexual orientation or gender. In the UK, gender and sexual orientation are 'protected characteristics' in the 'Equality Act 2010'. To harm someone because of their identity as part of the LGBTQ+ community is considered a 'Hate Crime'.

## Why it matters

Adults, children and young people across the UK are suffering mentally, emotionally, socially, and physically from the effects of LGBTQ+ prejudice and lack of support. Young people have rights but are less likely to report such hate crimes/incidences for fear of repercussions or lack of faith in adults around them providing the right kind of support.

## Adversities faced by young people

Negative experiences might include:

- experiencing homophobia, biphobia and transphobia
- feeling the pressure of sexual and gender norms
- having to manage their sexual and gender identity across different life areas (for example, coming out at school but not at home)
- feeling isolated or 'different' from their family and friends

- feeling like they can't express their identity because they're worried about people's responses
- having complicated or negative feelings about their gender identity or sexuality
- experiencing gender dysphoria (See slide 2 for definition)

# Meanings and Related Terms

## LGBTQ+ What does each letter mean?-

- **L (Lesbian):** A woman/woman-aligned person who is attracted to only people of the same/similar gender.
- **G (Gay):** Usually a term used to refer to men/men-aligned individuals who are only attracted to people of the same/similar gender. However, lesbians can also be referred to as gay.
- **B (Bisexual):** Indicates an attraction to all genders. The recognition of bisexual individuals is important, since there have been periods when people who identify as bi have been misunderstood as being gay. Bisexuality includes transgender, binary and nonbinary individuals.
- **T (Transgender):** A term that indicates that a person's gender identity is different from the gender associated with the sex they were assigned at birth.
- **Q (Queer or Questioning):** Though queer may be used by people as a specific identity, it is often considered an umbrella term for anyone who is non-cisgender or heterosexual. But it is also a slur. It should not be placed on all members of the community, and should only be used by cisgender and heterosexual individuals when referring to a person who explicitly identifies with it. Questioning refers to people who may be unsure of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity.
- **+ (Plus):** The 'plus' is used to signify all of the gender identities and sexual orientations that are not specifically covered by the other five initials. An example is Two-Spirit, a pan-Indigenous American identity.

## Related Terms to Know-

Some other terms that you may see or hear related to the LGBTQ+ community include:

- **Asexual:** Sometimes shorted to "ace," this term refers to someone who has little or no sexual attraction; they may, however, experience romantic attraction.
- **Cisgender:** This term refers to individuals whose gender identity corresponds to the gender associated with the sex they were assigned at birth.
- **Intersex:** A term to describe individuals who are born with variations of sex characteristics that do not fit with binary definitions of male or female bodies.
- **Nonbinary:** A person whose gender identity is neither exclusively woman or man.
- **Gender nonconforming:** An individual whose gender identity or expression is outside or beyond the traditional masculine/feminine and woman/man norms.

**Gender dysphoria-** is a term that describes a sense of unease that a person may have because of a mismatch between their biological sex and their gender identity.

## Pronouns

When someone is referred to with a pronoun (he/she/they) that doesn't align with their gender identity, it can make them feel alienated. Getting pronouns right is a basic way to respect a person's gender identity. It's also important to listen to how a young person wants their name and pronoun shared, and with whom.

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