

TG & Genderqueer Youth Speak Out: Learning from their Narratives

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Genderqueer

- Gender identities that are not exclusively masculine or feminine; outside of the gender binary and cisnormativity (non-binary)
- May identify as one or more of the following:
- having an overlap of, or indefinite lines between, gender identity;
- having two or more gender (bigender, trigender, pangender);
- having no gender (agender, nongender, genderless, genderfree);
- moving between genders or having a fluctuating gender identity (genderfluid);

Microaggressions

“Brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative slights and insults toward members of oppressed groups” (Nadal, et. al., 2008, p. 23).

Nadal, K., Skolnik, A., & Wong, Y., (2012). Interpersonal and systemic microaggressions toward transgender people: Implications for counseling. *LGBT Issues in Counseling*, 6:1, 55-82

Microaggressions

- Assumption of a universal transgender experience
- Exoticization
- Discomfort
- Adulthood
- Simplistic understanding/interpretation of what “gender normative” and “transgender” mean (MTF for example)
- Conflating gender expression with sexual orientation

Microaggressions

- Assumption that medical transition is imperative
- Assumption that transition is linear
- Endorsement of gender normative or binary culture and behaviors
- Physical harassment
- Denial of personal body privacy
- Marginalization within larger trans community
- Lifestyle choice discourse

Examples



MEANWHILE IN SCOTLAND...





Microaggressions

- Break into groups to discuss:
 - What microaggressions have you witnessed genderqueer youth experiencing?
 - What are the possible effects of microaggressions:
 - On genderqueer youth, parents, families?

Definition of Resistance

- “Any mental or behavioral act through which a person attempts to expose, withstand, repel, stop, prevent, abstain from, strive against, impede, refuse to comply with, or oppose any form of violence or oppression (including any type of disrespect), or the conditions that make such acts possible, may be understood as a form of resistance.” (Wade, 1997, p. 25)
- Why focus on resistance (instead of feelings, effects, behaviours)
- Wade, A. (1997). Small acts of living: Everyday resistance to violence and other forms of oppression. *Contemporary Family Therapy, 19(1), 23-39.*



WPATH Standards of Care (SOC) 7th edition

“Mental health professionals should not impose a binary view of gender. They should give ample room for clients to explore different options for gender expression. Hormonal or surgical interventions are appropriate for some adolescents but not for others.” p. 175

- Slide on effects of trauma
- Slide on role of medical and social affirmation
- Confirm how much time we have



Confused about my gender?
Let me help you.

I'M BOTH.

So, call me a girl... Or a boy.

*Just don't call me confused.
I'm GENDERFLUID.*

YOU'RE confused.

are you a boy
or a girl.

no



[Handwritten signature]

Sorry, Teacher, but where do the kids whose most salient identity isn't gender and instead self-identify as "awesome" line up?



- Student rights and protections (schools in transition, seth's law)

Response Based Therapy

- Example:
- Would not ask a person who was victimized: "How did that make you feel?"
- Instead— "When [microaggression] was done to you, how did you respond? What did you do?"

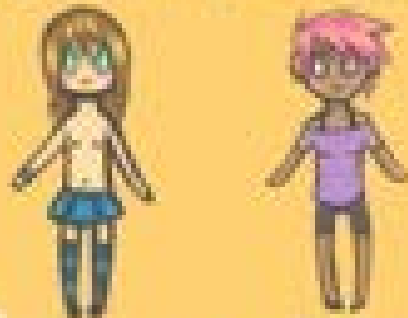
ALLIES/COMMUNITIES FOR SUPPORT

- Friends
- Family
 - Do not have to be directly known by person to be significant
- Counselors
 - They can be authors
- Social Worker
 - Characters in books, movies, comics
- Teacher
 - Musicians
- CPS worker
 - Allies do not even have to be people
- Spirituality
 - Imaginary friends
- Queer youth groups
 - Animal companions

Exercise

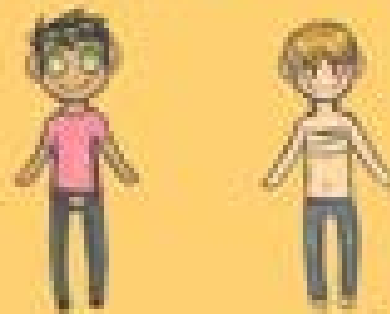
- How did gender norms effect you as a young person?
- How did you defy or resist gender norms?
- Who supported you?
- What did you need?
- What are ways that we as parents and adults can support TGNC youth?

Women are women



Regardless of sex

And Men are Men



In the same respects

you can
be both



or a mix
of the two

Or you can be neither



If that's what suits you

But people are people



Whoever their parts

Because what really matters



is inside of our hearts