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).

Microaggressions

• Assumption of a universal transgender experience
• Exoticization
• Discomfort
• Adultism
• 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)

RECOGNIZE
NON-BINARY
GENDERS

Hey,
I just met you
and this is crazy
but I’m genderqueer!
don’t call me lady.
“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
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
• Counselors
• Social Worker
• Teacher
• CPS worker
• Spirituality
• Queer youth groups

• Do not have to be directly known by person to be significant
• They can be authors
• Characters in books, movies, comics
• Musicians
• Allies do not even have to be people
• Imaginary friends
• 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
You can be both
Or a mix of the two
But people are people
Whatever their parts

And men are men
In the same respects
Or you can be neither
If that's what suits you
Because what really matters
Is inside of our hearts