

QIC LGBTQ2S Glossary

The National Quality Improvement Center (QIC) on Tailored Services, Placement Stability and Permanency for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning and Two-Spirit (LGBTQ2S) Children and Youth in Foster Care has created this glossary as a resource for the QIC-LGBTQ2S Local Implementation Sites (LIS), partners, and consultants. Even though we are providing these definitions, the best practice remains to ask youth how they self-identify and ask about language that makes them feel safe. If they choose to avoid self-identifying terms, honor their decision—doing so will clearly indicate to children and youth their right to be who they are and to be safe. Please visit our reference page for original sources.

Affirm: To acknowledge or assert as fact; here, to assert one's own sexual orientation or gender identity strongly and publicly or to openly acknowledge and publicly assert the rights and dignity of people with diverse SOGIE.

Agender: A person who does not identify with any particular gender or who identifies without gender.

Ally: A person or organization that actively aligns and uses their resources to support individuals and communities with a specific issue; here, an individual who openly supports and affirms the rights and dignity of people with diverse SOGIE may be considered an ally.

Androgynous: A gender expression that has both masculine and feminine elements.

Anti-Gay Bias: Hatred, discrimination or aversion to lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) people, people perceived to be LGB, or those associated with person who are LGB. Often referred to as Homophobia.

Anti-Transgender Bias: Hatred, discrimination or aversion to transgender, gender variant, or gender diverse people, people perceived to be as such, or those associated with persons who are transgender, gender variant, or gender diverse. Often referred to as Transphobia.

Asexual: A person who does not have sexual desire or attraction. This does not mean the person is not having sex, nor does it mean they do not want to have relationships.

Bisexual: A person who is attracted to people of their own gender as well as other genders.

Cisgender: A description for a person whose gender identity and assigned sex at birth align (e.g., a person identifies as a man and was assigned male at birth by a doctor).

Cisgender Privilege: The implicit and explicit privileges that cisgender people exercise. These privileges include, but are not limited to, the ability to use public restrooms without fear of verbal abuse, physical intimidation or arrest. The privileges also encompass freedom from questions about one's anatomy (often by strangers) and the freedom from frequent misgendering. Cisgender people also enjoy a presumed "validity" as a man/woman/human and this validity is not based on surgical procedures or how well one "passes" as a man/woman/human, etc.

Coming out: The process of acknowledging one's sexual orientation or gender identity to oneself and/or individuals in one's life; often incorrectly thought of to be a one-time event, this is a lifelong and sometimes daily process.

Cross Dress: To cross-dress is to wear clothing most often associated (in one's culture and historical timeframe) with people of another gender.

Diverse SOGIE: A more inclusive term to describe all people who identify as having diverse sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or gender expression (SOGIE).

Drag queen/drag king: Someone who dresses and performs as the opposite gender for entertainment purposes. Often embodies a theatrical or exaggerated version of masculinity or femininity; does not necessarily self-identify as transgender.

Feminine: A term used to describe the socially constructed and culturally specific gender behaviors expected of women.

Gay: A term used to describe a man who is attracted to another man; this term may also be used by women attracted to another woman.

Gay-straight alliance/Gender Sexuality Alliance (GSA): Formal organization of LGBTQ and straight people in support of the dignity and rights of LGBTQ people, usually developed in the context of creating change in educational institutions and environments.

Gender: Social and cultural expression of sex. Gender is not assigned biological sex.

Gender conformity: Acting within socially and culturally expected gender roles.

Gender expression: The ways in which an individual communicates their gender to others through behavior, clothing, hairstyle, voice, etc.; not an indication of sexual orientation.

Gender fluid: An individual whose gender identity may continually change throughout their lifetime. These individuals may not feel confined within the socially and culturally expected gender roles and in fact may identify differently from situation to situation.

Gender identity: One's internal, personal sense of their gender. Gender identity is best represented as a spectrum and an individual may move around this spectrum. Some terms that are associated with this spectrum are man, woman, gender fluid, genderqueer, trans, transgender and two-spirit, although these are not the only terms. Some individuals may identify as both man and woman, neither man nor woman, or non-binary.

Gender neutral: Anything (such as clothing, styles, activities, or spaces) that a society or culture considers appropriate for anyone, irrespective of gender; anything that carries with it no particular gender associations.

Gender nonconformity: Expressing gender and/or having gender characteristics that do not conform to the expectations of society and culture. Also referred to as gender variant, gender diverse, or gender creative.

Gender role: Culturally or socially determined sets of attitudes and behaviors that are expected of an individual based on their assigned sex at birth or perceived sex.

Genderqueer (also gender queer): An umbrella term some people use to describe themselves when their experience of their gender identity falls out of the binary of male or female.

Heterosexism: A dominant notion that everyone is heterosexual (or should be) and that heterosexuality is superior, better, and preferred.

Heterosexual: Feeling romantic, emotional, and sexual attraction to a person(s) of the opposite gender with which one identifies; sometimes referred to as being straight.

Heterosexual Privilege: The privileges that heterosexual people have because of heterosexism. Being heterosexual carries with it privileges that may be explicit or implicit such as the right to marry, adopt children, be a foster parent, fair employment etc.

Homosexual: Feeling romantic, emotional, and/or sexual attraction to a person(s) of the same gender with which one identifies. Although some individuals may identify with this term, it is now a dated term that has negative connotations and can be considered derogatory.

Identity: What, how, and who one perceives oneself to be; a multi-faceted component of self-concept that can evolve throughout one's life span.

Intersectionality: The study of how various identities including gender, race, class, ability, and sexual orientation interact and contribute to multiple form of discrimination and systematic social inequality.

Intersex: A general term constructed to describe variations of sex characteristics. This could include mixed chromosomes, elements of both male and female reproductive systems, or genitalia that do not appear clearly male or clearly female at birth. For example, a baby born with a vagina and testes.

Lesbian: A term used to describe a woman who is attracted to other women.

Masculine: A term used to describe the socially constructed and culturally specific gender behaviors expected of men.

Minority Stress: The minority stress model argues that disparities in health outcomes between minority groups and the general population can be attributed to a stressful environment created by pervasive stigma, prejudice, and discrimination. This regular exposure to stressors can lead to worsened health outcomes. Multiple minority stress refers to the compounded stress experienced by people who are part of multiple minority groups (e.g., people who are LGBTQ2S and people of color).

Misgender: To refer to another person as a gender with which they do not identify. This could be done intentionally to cause emotional and psychological harm or unintentionally because of an assumption.

Non-binary: An umbrella term for gender identities that are not exclusively either boy/girl, or man/woman. People who identify their gender as non-binary may feel they have more than one gender, don't identify with a specific gender, or something else altogether.

Out: Openly acknowledging one's sexual orientation and/or gender identity; may be partial (that is, out to some people and not to others).

Outed: When someone else accidentally or deliberately reveals another's sexual orientation and/or gender identity, usually without permission.

Pansexual: A person who is attracted to people regardless of sex, gender identity, or gender expression.

Pride: National, citywide, and neighborhood local events and programs, usually during the month of June in celebration of the ongoing fight for equality for people with diverse SOGIE.

QIC-LGBTQ2S: The official acronym of The National Quality Improvement Center (QIC) on Tailored Services, Placement Stability and Permanency for *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning, and Two Spirit* Children and Youth in Foster Care (LGBTQ2S). All QIC-LGBTQ2S documentation needs to reflect this acronym unless a Local Implementation Site is describing a study, program, or practice that is not inclusive of one or more of the populations reflected in the acronym LGBTQ2S.

Queer: Historically, this was a derogatory slang term used to identify people with diverse SOGIE. It is now a term that some people with diverse SOGIE are reclaiming and embracing as a symbol of pride that represents all individuals who fall outside of the gender and sexual orientation "norms." It should be noted that it is not acceptable for someone who does not have diverse SOGIE to call someone queer unless the person indicates that is their preferred identity language.

Questioning: Being unsure of one's sexual orientation or gender identity.

Safe space: A place where anyone can relax and be fully self-expressed, without fear of being made to feel uncomfortable, unwelcome, or unsafe on account of biological sex, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, cultural background, religion, age, and/or physical or mental ability; a place where the rules guard each person's self-respect and dignity and strongly encourage everyone to respect others.

Same gender loving: A term created by the Black and African-American SOGIE diverse community and used by some people of color who see 'gay' and 'lesbian' as terms more connected to a white lesbian or gay identity.

Sex assigned at birth: The sex assigned at birth by a doctor; based on physical anatomy and hormones. Designations include male, female or intersex and is also referred to as assigned sex at birth.

Sexism: Discrimination and unfair treatment based on sex or gender in which advantage is usually afforded to men and not women.

Sexual Behavior: The physical, intimate acts one may do with another person(s) for physical pleasure. This is distinct from sexual orientation.

Sexual Orientation: Describes the emotional, romantic, and/or physical feelings of attraction-usually over a period of time; it is distinct from sexual behavior.

Trans: Often used as shorthand to mean transgender. Like transgender, it can be used as an umbrella term that refers to all non-cisgender identities within the gender identity spectrum.

Transgender: An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from what is typically associated with the sex they were assigned at birth. People under the transgender umbrella may describe their gender identity using one or more of a wide variety of terms – including but not limited to transgender.

Transition: A term used to describe the process of moving from one sex/gender to another. Transition can include personal, medical, and legal steps like telling one's family, friends, and co-workers; using a different name and new pronouns; dressing differently; changing one's name and/or sex on legal documents; hormone therapy; and possibly (though not always) one or more types of surgery. The exact steps involved in transition are up to the person transitioning.

Two-Spirit: A term used by some Native American people to recognize individuals who possess qualities or fulfill roles of both genders; often considered part man and part woman or wholly man and wholly woman; often revered as natural peace makers as well as healers and shamans. Depending on the tribe, there may be different definitions. Some tribes consider Two-Spirit a term similar to diverse SOGIE. Others may not recognize the term at all.

Updated Trans Terminology

Inappropriate/Outdated	Reason	Respectful Practice
“transgendered” (adjective)	You would not say someone is "gayed" or "lesbianed," therefore you would not say a person is "transgendered."	Transgender: “Jake is a transgender teen.” Or “Jake is a trans teen.”
“a transgender,” “transgenders” (noun)	Transgender is not a noun. “Jake is a transgender” is not only grammatically incorrect, but offensive.	A transgender person, transgender people (see above)
misgendering- labeling a person as a gender different from the one with which they identify OR assuming someone’s pronouns based on appearance/gender expression	Self-identification is key- the only way you know someone’s pronouns is by hearing it from them. Just because someone has long hair, a high-pitched voice, and wears feminine-looking clothing does not mean they go by “she/her.”	Use the pronouns a person uses to describe themselves. If you don’t know, ask! “What are your pronouns?” Or, use neutral “they” to refer to them until you learn their pronouns so as to not make assumptions based on whether you perceive someone as masculine or feminine.
deadnaming- asking what someone’s name “used to be” prior to transition, or referring to it as their “real name”	Sometimes cisgender people use a trans person’s deadname to call it their “real name;” this is offensive and can out a trans youth.	Use the name the youth has asked you to use.
“real man/real woman” “used to be” a girl/boy “turning into” a girl/boy	These phrases imply the trans person’s identity is invalid or that their gender identity wasn’t always who they are. A trans person may take steps to transition their body to align with their gender identity, but they are not “turning into” someone else. They have always been that gender.	You don’t need proof of someone’s identity to affirm it; just refer to them in the present how they identify now.
“male-to-female” or “female-to-male”	While technically not outdated, these terms focus on the transition and not the person.	If a young person was assigned male at birth but identifies as a girl you can just say “trans girl”
“transsexual”	An older term; still used by some people who have changed or seek to change their bodies through medical interventions. Many transgender people do not identify as transsexual and prefer the word transgender.	It is best to ask which term a person prefers and not assume someone identifies as “transsexual” because they are transgender.
“passing”	A derogatory way to describe that someone “looks like” the gender they identify with. There are a lot of bias/expectations mixed up in “passing” – some people in the community use this term as a goal but it’s not for those outside of the community to use.	Nothing- there’s no need to comment on how masculine or feminine a person is.
“sex change,” “sex reassignment surgery,” “gender reassignment surgery”	Here, the word “sex” is a stand-in for the word “gender,” but gender doesn’t really change when someone undergoes an operation- because they have already identified like said gender.	gender affirming surgery, genital reconstruction surgery, genital reassignment surgery
asking personal questions	It’s not anyone else’s business to know specific personal information regarding a person’s trans identity or how they navigate the world as a trans person. Most of the time, questions in this arena are not going to be relevant.	Think, “Is this relevant information that I need to know?” If not, don’t ask. If it is, think, “what is the most professional & appropriate way I can ask this?”

Child Welfare Implementation and Evaluation Terms

Confidentiality: The legally required process and ethical practice of not disclosing to the public or other unauthorized persons any private or identifying information regarding children, their parents, or other family members that may be collected while providing services in the home or community. Particularly important when managing information related to SOGIE.

Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI): The complete process of identifying, describing, and analyzing strengths and problems and then testing, implementing, learning from, and revising solutions. CQI is reliant on a proactive organizational culture and the active participation of staff at all levels of the agency, children, youth, families, and stakeholders throughout the process.

Data Use Agreement (DUA): A contractual document between the “Data Users” (i.e., the individuals or organization receiving that data) and the “Data Set Source” (i.e., the organization providing the data) describing the provisions associated with the transfer of confidential, protected, or restricted-use data.

De-identification: De-identification is the process of removing personally identifying information like name and address from a dataset to protect the privacy of research subjects.

Dose/Dosage: Measures the amount of an intervention delivered to participants. For example, a participant’s dose might be 8 hour-long sessions.

Evidence-Based Practice: Approaches to prevention or treatment that are validated by some form of documented scientific evidence.

Evidence-Informed: Use of the best available research and practice knowledge to guide program design and implementation within the context of the child, family and community characteristics, culture and preferences.

Exploration Stage: An Implementation Stage focused on identifying the needs of your target population, selecting an appropriate intervention, assessing and building readiness, and beginning to plan for implementation and evaluation.

Family Engagement: A family-centered and strengths-based approach to partnering with families in making decisions, setting goals, and achieving desired outcomes. This includes engaging families as key stakeholders in policy development, service design, and evaluation.

Fidelity: Examines the extent to which a service is delivered as intended in the intervention model. It is a component of practice evaluation.

Formative Evaluation: Formative evaluation is completed during the early stages of program implementation (Initial Implementation). Formative evaluation assesses whether the intervention is

associated with expected program outputs and short-term outcomes. Results of formative evaluations help determine whether a program should be stopped, revised, or continue into Full Implementation.

Full Implementation: During the Full Implementation stage, staff will have become skilled at delivering the intervention and changes will have been institutionalized. Activities may include assessing and revising teaming structure, monitoring and assessing intervention and implementation supports, and completion of a summative evaluation.

Implementation Drivers: As defined by the National Implementation Research Network, implementation drivers are core factors that contribute to the successful implementation of an intervention. Implementation drivers include: staff selection, training, coaching, system interventions, facilitative administration, decision support data systems, and leadership.

Implementation Science: Refers to the study of factors and methods that affect the use of interventions in practice. The intent of implementation science is to close the gap between research and practice by identifying factors that affect the successful implementation of an intervention.

Implementation Stages: Discernible phases of implementation that are characterized by unique activities and goals. These stages are not necessarily linear or separate. The four stages are: Exploration, Installation, Initial Implementation, and Full Implementation.

Initial Implementation: The Implementation Stage where practitioners and staff begin to implement the intervention. During this stage, the focus is on evaluating whether the implementation is being faithfully implemented, whether key components are functioning appropriately, and whether any adjustments are needed prior to full implementation.

Informed Consent: A voluntary agreement to participate in research. The informed consent process is intended to ensure that participants have an understanding of the research and any associated risks. This information must be presented to enable prospective participants to voluntarily decide whether or not to participate as a research subject.

Installation Stage: The second of four Implementation Stages, Installation focuses on acquiring resources and building capacity for implementation. Activities during this stage may include: refining the teaming structure, operationalization of the intervention (e.g. creation of practice profiles), development of fidelity measures and protocols, revision of agency policies and procedures, and creation of training, coaching, and supervision systems.

Institutional Review Board (IRB): An administrative body established to protect the rights and welfare of human research subjects recruited to participate in research activities conducted under the institution with which it is affiliated. Also known as a Research Review Board (RRB).

Logic Model: A logic model is a map or a simple illustration of what you do, why you do it, what you hope to achieve, and how you will measure achievement. It includes the anticipated outcomes of your services, indicators of those outcomes, and measurement tools to evaluate the outcomes.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU): An MOU is a document that outlines an ongoing and strategic relationship between two or more institutions or organizations.

Outcome Evaluation: An outcome evaluation measures a program's results and helps determine whether an intervention produced the short-term and long-term changes it intended to achieve.

Permanency, Current Placement Episode Characteristics: Placement episode characteristics include 1) Current placement stability (defined below), 2) Current removal reasons, 3) Current length of stay, 4) Current placement type(s), 5) Type of exit; and 6) Current sibling placements.

Permanency, Legal Definition: Permanency is defined in legal terms as establishing reunification, adoption, or guardianship within required federal guidelines.

Permanency, Placement Stability: Placement stability is the number of placement settings a child/youth experiences within the same out-of-home placement.

Personally Identifiable Information (PII): PII is any information that can be used to identify or contact an individual, either alone or combined with other easily accessible sources of data. This includes such information as name, physical address, email address, or social security number.

Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) Cycles: A "trial-and-learning" approach in which the PDSA steps are conducted over iterative cycles designed to discover and solve problems, and eventually leads to achieving high standards while eliminating error. The PDSA process entails: 1) creating a plan for handling a problem or issue, 2) enacting your plan, 3) examining how your plan worked in practice, and 4) Continuing to use your plan, improving your plan, or creating a new plan.

Practice Evaluation: Tracks important implementation outcomes and practice indicators related to the quality of services. This includes elements such as reach, satisfaction, fidelity, and dose.

Practice Profile: A tool for operationalizing a conceptually defined approach so that it is clear what practitioners will do as they carry out the intervention.

Process Evaluation: Examines implementation strategies for developing and sustaining an intervention.

Reach: Examines the degree to which the target population is identified and engaged in services. It is a component of practice evaluations.

Relational Permanency: Relational permanence is defined as youth having lifelong connections to caring adults, including at least one adult who will provide a permanent, parent-like connection for that youth. Though sometimes also referred to as "emotional permanency," relational permanency is the preferred term being used by the QIC.

Resilience: The ability to adapt well to adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or significant sources of stress.

Satisfaction: Examines whether participants perceived the services provided as worthwhile and valuable. It is a component of practice evaluations.

Summative Evaluation: A summative evaluation is completed once an intervention has been well-established and assesses the short- and long-term outcomes of the intervention. It is conducted during the Full Implementation stage of program implementation.

Trauma: An event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening and has lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being.

Well-being: Includes physical, behavioral, emotional, and social functioning—those capacities and characteristics that enable young people to understand and navigate their world in healthy, positive ways. A focus on the social and emotional aspects of well-being can significantly improve outcomes for children while they are receiving child welfare services and after their cases have closed.

Youth Involvement/Engagement: A component of family-centered practice that centers on recognizing youth as experts in determining what is best for themselves and engaging youth in the development of policy, program, and service design and in decision-making, implementation, and evaluation.

Youth Leadership: The ability of a youth or young adult to guide or direct others on a course of action, influence the opinion and behavior of other people, and show the way by going in advance. It also includes the ability to analyze one's own strengths and weaknesses, set personal and vocational goals, and have the self-esteem to carry them out and to establish support networks to participate in community life and to effect positive social change.

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