

# Respectful Practice and Care Building Research Pride

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**WELLBEING  
HEALTH &  
YOUTH** NHMRC Centre of  
Research Excellence  
in Adolescent Health

**YR** **YOUNG &  
RESILIENT  
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CENTRE**

## Why it matters

Gender, sexuality and sex characteristics are fundamental human characteristics, critical to a person's health and wellbeing.

## Definitions

### Sex

The term sex can have different meanings in different contexts. Sex can refer to a person's physical characteristics, including their genitals and reproductive organs, or to their assigned or legal status. Sex can also refer to engaging in sexual activities.

### Gender identity

A person's internal view of their gender—that is, one's innermost sense of themselves as a gendered person. A person's gender identity may or may not correspond with their sex presumed at birth. Gender identity often influences the name and pronouns people use.

### Gender expression

Outward gender presentation and behaviour that may communicate gender to others.

### Sexuality

Encompasses who a person may be attracted to romantically and sexually.

### LGBTIQIA+

An evolving acronym that stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer/questioning, asexual and other terms (such as non-binary and pansexual) that people use to describe experiences of their gender, sexuality and physiological sex characteristics.

*Note: gender and sexuality can change over time*

## Working with young LGBTQIA+ people, and researchers with lived experience

### Prepare

#### What to consider before you engage

- Have you reviewed existing guides and research on how to work with LGBTQIA+ young people?
- Have you reached out to seek advice from other organisations who specialise in engaging with LGBTQIA+ young people to find out how they create safe, supported and meaningful engagement processes?
- Is there an opportunity to collaborate/partner with an existing organisation who engages young people in this cohort on your research project?
- Have you considered how your language, documentation and research process is inclusive of and meets the standards for sex, gender, variations in sex characteristics and sexual orientation variables?

### Connect

#### What to consider when you engage

- Have you considered what culturally safe practices to embed into your regular engagement with young people that signal safety and inclusion for this cohort, such as pronouns on name tags/zoom calls?
- Are you continually seeking to understand the unique lived experiences of the young people with whom you are engaging – noting the diverse experiences and identities of people encompassed under the umbrella term of LGBTQIA+?



## Reflect

### What to consider after you have engaged

- What assumptions am I making about young people's gender, sexuality, or sex characteristics? Be sure to check-in with young people and colleagues about their name, pronouns etc. and do not make assumptions.
- How am I viewing myself and young people in this process?

## Key points of consideration

- All population health research must capture gender, sexuality and variations of sex characteristics data accurately. See the Australian Bureau of Statistics Standard for Sex, Gender, Variations of Sex Characteristics and Sexual Orientation Variables.
- Researchers must empower young people to partner with them so their lived experiences can inform, educate and improve research outcomes that matter to LGBTQIA+ young people
- Acknowledge and consider the role of intersectionality in young people's lives. All health services and researchers must be inclusive and provide safe spaces for young people of diverse genders, sexualities and variations in sex characteristics that are trauma informed

**[Read the full WH&Y resource here.](#)**

## Reference for definitions

Davies, C., Robinson, K.H., Metcalf, A., Ivory, K., Mooney-Somers, J., Race, K., Skinner, S.R. (2021). Australians of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities, in T. Dune, K. McLeod, R. Williams (Eds.), Culture, Diversity and Health in Australia: Towards Culturally Safe Health Care, Routledge/Taylor and Francis, London, UK, 213-231.

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## Further reading & Resources

### Resources & Further reading

- [Twenty10 Inc GLCS NSW](#)
- [Minus18](#)
- [ABS 2020 Standards for sex, gender, variations in sex characteristics and sexual orientation variables](#)
- [International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural](#)
- [ACON](#)
- [Intersex Human Rights Australia](#)
- [Transhub](#)
- Davies, C., Robinson, K.H., Metcalf, A., Ivory, K., Mooney-Somers, J., Race, K., Skinner, S.R. (2021).
- Australians of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities, in T. Dune, K. McLeod, R. Williams (Eds.), \
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