



LGBTQIA...What are we even talking about?

The letters LGBTQIA stand for:

Lesbian

Gay

Bisexual

Transgender

Queer and/or Questioning

Intersex

Asexual

These are the most common examples of genders and sexualities that are not heterosexual (straight) or cisgender. There are many other identities, but for the sake of simplicity, LGBTQ+ or LGBTQIA+ are the most common acronyms. The "+" covers the dozens of other words people use to describe their sexuality or gender.

Sexuality is determined by sexual and romantic attraction and starts developing around puberty. The LGBTQ+ banner includes anyone who is not strictly attracted to people of the opposite gender. The LGB are sexualities.

Gender is determined by an individual's relation to their own unique manhood, womanhood, neither, or both. Gender starts developing around age two. The T is an example of gender.

Cisgender means that someone's gender identity is the same as what they were assigned at birth.

Transgender means that someone's gender identity is not the same as what they were assigned at birth. This could mean the opposite binary gender (Male-to-Female), a non-binary gender, or something else.

Sex Assigned at Birth is what the medical provider said when we were born, and what is on our birth certificate. Male, Female, and Intersex are all sex assignments at birth. The LGBTQ+ banner includes anyone whose sex assigned at birth does not align clearly with M or F.

The word "**Queer**" can be used to describe a sexuality or gender. It means that there are aspects of that person's identity that cannot fit into any box. It is an expansive term that means different things to different people. The word "queer" is historically and currently used to perpetuate violence and discrimination against LGBTQ+ people, and people who are perceived to be LGBTQ+. Please make sure to only use this word with respect.

Everyone has a sexuality and a gender. The LGBTQ+ banner includes anyone whose gender or sexuality is not strictly straight and/or cisgender. For an expansive terminology list, please check out www.outmaine.org/resources/terminology