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home of LGBT+ youth

Guide to using this resource

Young people may have heard lots of conflicting information about pronouns in the news and on social media. This assembly aims to break down some of those myths and misconceptions by giving a nice simple overview of what pronouns are and why they matter.

This PowerPoint explores:

- Why people may use different pronouns
- Why it's important to use the right pronouns to refer to others
- Key words relating to gender and pronouns



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What are pronouns and why do they matter?



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What are pronouns?

Pronouns are the words we use to refer to someone when we're not using their name.

She went to the park to meet **her** friends.

What did **they** say on the phone?

He was looking for **his** shoes, which were right in front of **him**.

People might use different personal pronouns depending on what feels right to them. Some common ones you've probably heard before are:



We often associate pronouns with gender.

- Lots of boys and men use “he” and “him” pronouns.
- Lots of girls and women use “she” and “her” pronouns.

But some people use other pronouns, like “they” and “them” for example.

No matter which pronouns people use, it’s important to use the ones they ask you to refer to them by.



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Why do people use different pronouns?

People might use different pronouns depending on their gender identity and what feels most comfortable for them.

Pronouns are a way that people can express who they are and how they'd like to be treated.

So, using somebody's pronouns is an important way of showing that you respect them for who they are!



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Why are pronouns important to you?



The inclusion of 'they' in addition to 'she' feels most authentic to me.

If you know me at all, you know what it means to me to express this outwardly. Thanks for being the best.

Halsey
She/They



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Why are pronouns important to you?



I don't fit into the [gender] binary as it's commonly understood, period.

Which is why I say he/she/they, because it's like: I'm all of it, I'm none of it, my humanity is so much more than what you want to say... So just say anything!

Jonathan Van Ness
He/She/They



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Why are pronouns important to you?



I think it's all about just honoring your truth and your authenticity, and whatever that may look like.

Allow yourself to discover something new about yourself. Open up your mind to different possibilities, and listen to folks who are saying, 'Hey, this is who I am. This is how I feel inside and outside.'

Janelle Monáe
They/She



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Why do pronouns matter?

Using the right pronouns for people is important because pronouns are one way that people might express who they are and how they'd like to be treated.

If we use the wrong pronouns to refer to someone, that's called **misgendering**.

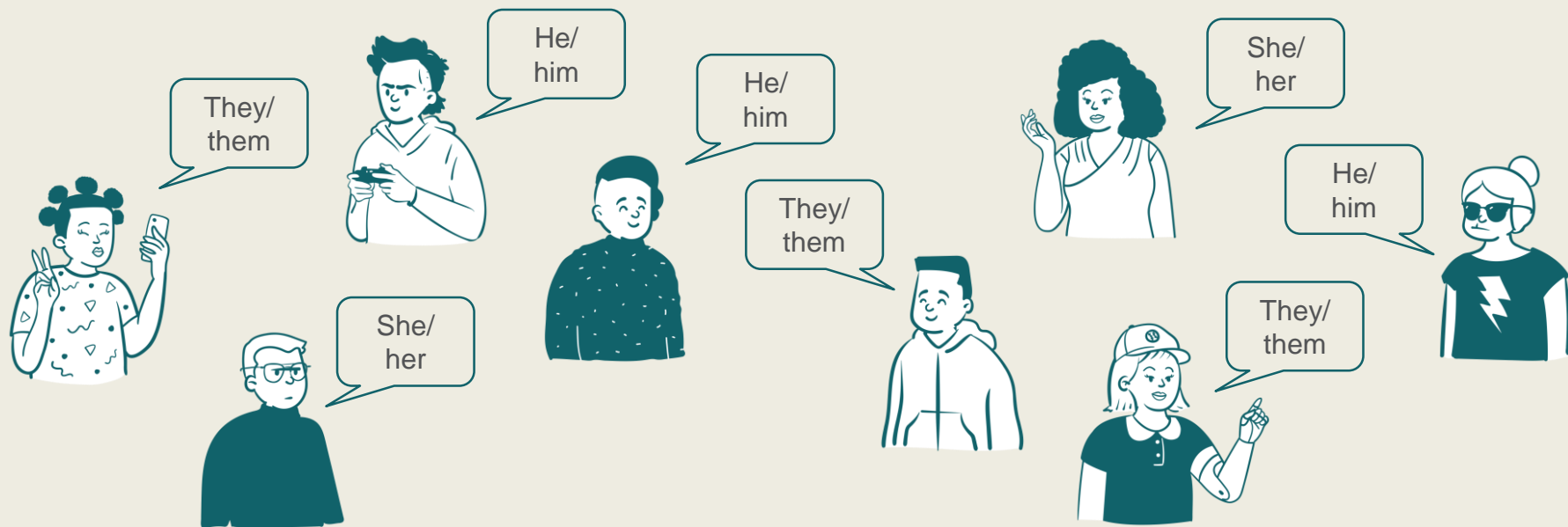
Misgendering can happen to anyone – cis, trans, non-binary or otherwise. If someone misgenders you (e.g. if someone called you “he” instead of “she”) it might feel a bit weird, uncomfortable or even upsetting.

Most of us like it when people use the right pronouns to refer to us. So it's important to respect other people's pronouns and make sure we use the right ones.



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You can't always tell what someone's pronouns are just by looking!



Gender isn't determined by your body parts or what you look like. Gender is a part of your identity – that means it's a part of who you are.



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The best way to know is to ask

- If we try to guess someone's pronouns based on what they look like, we might end up guessing wrong!
- A great way to make sure you get people's pronouns right is simply to ask.
- “What are your pronouns?” “Which pronouns do you use?”



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Which pronouns should I use?

- Use the pronouns that feel most comfortable and right for you.
- It's ok if you know straight away.
- It's also ok if it takes you some time to figure out what feels right.
- It's ok to be unsure, or to be questioning, which pronouns you want to use.
- It's ok to change your mind!

No matter which pronouns you use, people should always respect who you are and use the pronouns you've asked them to refer to you by.



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