LGBTQ+ Educational Outreach

Practical Allyship 101

Seacoast Outright's Queering Spaces Team

Seacoast Outright

★ We represent Seacoast Outright, a non-profit organization that supports LGBTQIA+ youth and their allies in the Seacoast area and beyond.
    ○ Services include:
        ■ Youth Groups- Little Outrighters and Teens
        ■ Resource Library
        ■ Support for Parents and Caregivers
        ■ Community Outreach and Advocacy

We're here to show you what it means to practice allyship.

Today's Agenda

★ Foundational Concepts of the LGBTQIA+ Community
  - ○ Understanding intersectional identities
  - ○ Breaking down the binary of sex assigned at birth
  - ○ Understanding gender identity, gender expression, and sexual/ romantic orientation

★ The importance of allyship and the role of bias on mental health outcomes
  - ○ 14% of LGBTQ+ youth attempted suicide in the past year, but having one supportive adult in a youth's life decreases suicide attempts by 40%
  - ○ Discrimination is linked to a variety of negative outcomes

★ Practical strategies to act as an ally to LGBTQ+ clients and coworkers

Group Norms

- ★ This is a safe space; there are no bad questions

- ★ If you do not know how to phrase something, we will help

- ★ If you have question at any time, raise your hand- there will also be time for questions at the end

- ★ You are welcome to ask us to repeat ourselves or slowdown

- ★ Assume best intent- challenge the idea, not the person

- ★ What is said here stays here, what is learned here leaves here

- ★ If speakers share the personal stories of their family and friends, they have explicit permission to do so

What is Identity?

Identity (noun) - the intersection of characteristics that create one's sense of self; the state of being who we are

In this context, it is not just your race, gender, and sexuality.

★   Think about your nationality, socioeconomic status, national origin, age, first language, religion, disability status, and relationship status

The intersection of our identities significantly impacts our lived experiences and perspectives.
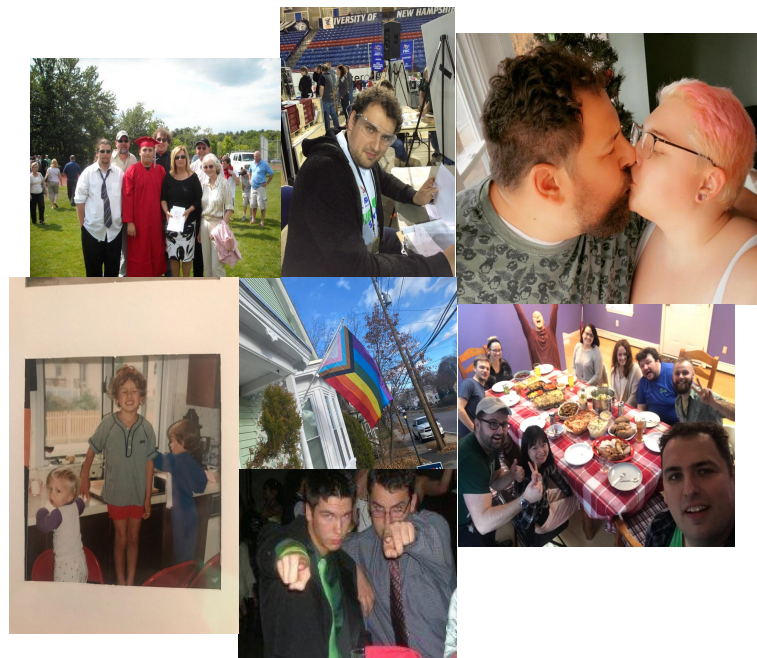
Your Presenters Today

Heather MacKinnon (she / her)

Ian Meier (He/Him/His)

# Foundational Concepts: The Gender Elephant

Gender Expression

External appearance of our gender identity, usually expressed through behavior, clothing, aspects of appearance, and/or voice

Sex Assigned at Birth

The label given to a child at birth, most often based on the child's genitals, hormones, and chromosomes

Romantic Orientation

Who we feel affection for. May include who we seek out to build a life or family with - desire for an intimate, emotional relationship
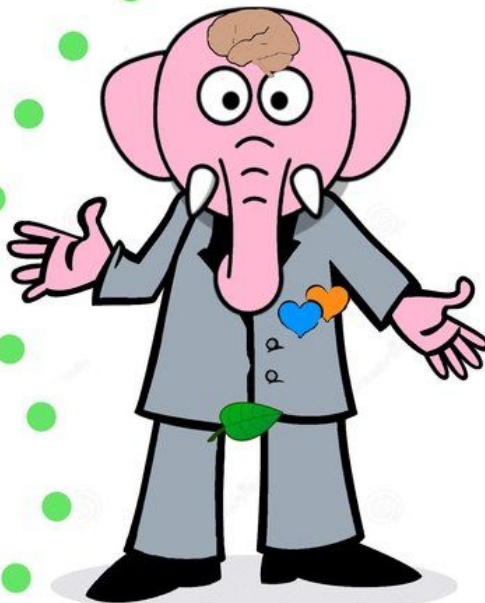
Gender Identity

Our innermost concept of self as woman, man, a blend of both or neither – how we perceive and name ourselves.

Sexual Orientation

Describes who we are sexually attracted to. This may include being attracted to people a particular gender, of multiple genders, or no genders. Some folks are not attracted to anyone.

Definitions adapted from HRC & USD

THE CANADIAN CENTRE FOR GENDER+SEXUAL DIVERSITY

LE CENTRE CANADIEN DE LA DIVERSITÉ DES GENRES + DE LA SEXUALITÉ

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Sex Assigned at Birth: the sex classification given to children at birth. It is typically based on their internal and/or external genitalia, hormones, chromosomes, and secondary sex characteristics

"What It's Like to Be Intersex?" As/Is, March 2015
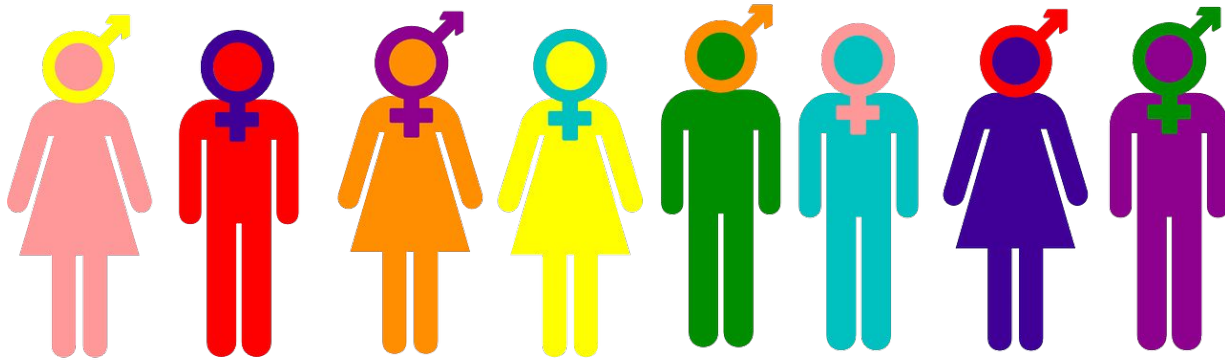
Gender Identity

What gender do you identify as? Gender identity is an arrow pointing inwards.
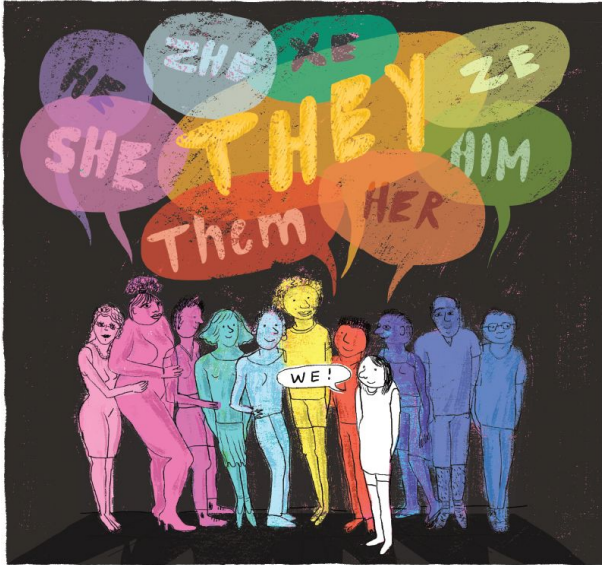
Cisgender: A term used to describe a person whose gender identity aligns with those typically associated with the sex assigned to them at birth.

Transgender: An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or expression is different from cultural expectations based on the sex they were assigned at birth. Being transgender does not imply any specific sexual orientation.

Definitions sourced from HRC terminology

Nonbinary and Genderfluid Identities

Gender, as a concept, is both socially and culturally specific. Western society has defaulted to a binary understanding of gender: woman and man. However, that has not always been the case.

There are folks who feel they are neither a woman or a man. Others identify with elements of multiple genders. Some don't identify with any gender. Common terms for identity include **genderqueer**, **agender**, **bigender**, and **non-binary**, with non-binary being one of the most common terms used.*

Gender Identity: "How Colonialism Killed My Culture's
Gender Fluidity" from the BBC World Service

'Gender is
fluid in my
culture'

BBC NEWS | WORLD SERVICE

GENDER QUEER

NONBINARY

GENDER FLUID

*From the National Center for Transgender Equality

Gender Expression

Folks can express their gender identity however they feel most comfortable (and safe) in doing so. Gender expression is an arrow pointing outwards.

★ Name
★ Pronouns
★ Clothing
★ Hairstyle
★ Makeup
★ Mannerisms
★ Hobbies

We are often taught that some things are for boys and some things are for girls. A boy can wear dresses and makeup. A girl can cut her hair short and play football.

Gender expression ≠ gender identity!

Sexual and Romantic Orientation

Common terms include:

(Sexual Orientation) Gay, Straight, Lesbian, Bisexual, Pansexual, Asexual
(Romantic Orientation) Homoromantic, Heteromantic, Biromantic, Panromantic, Aromantic
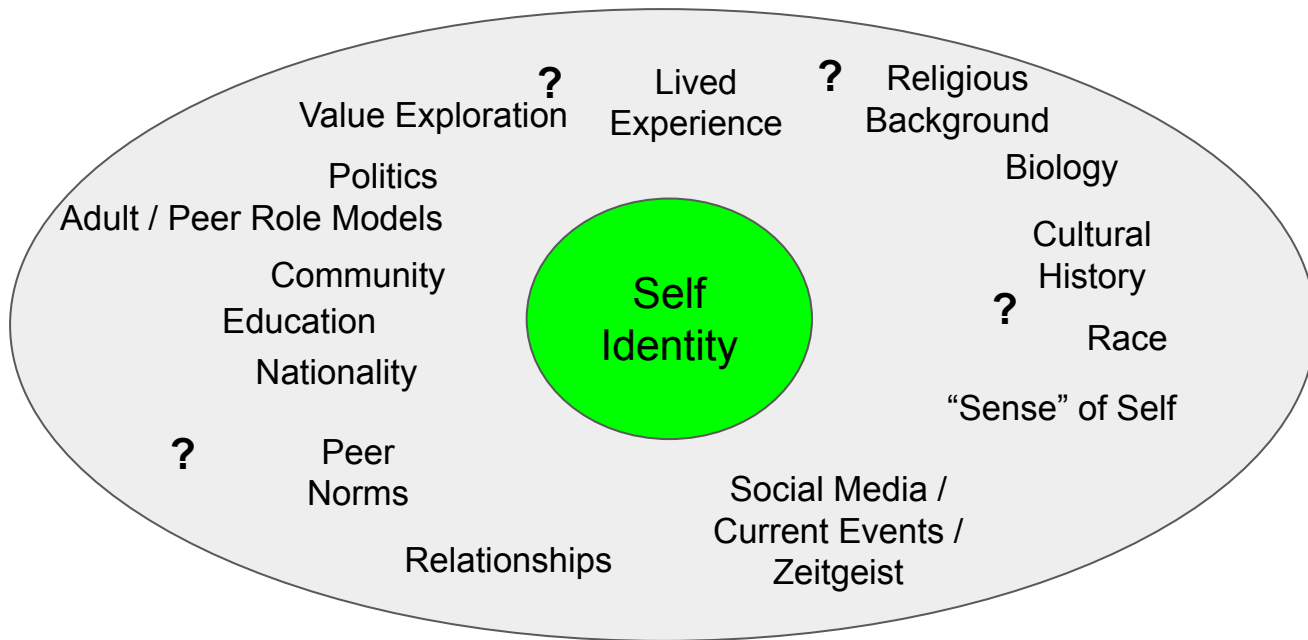
PFLAG National Glossary of Terms

https://pflag.org/glossary

Adolescent Identity Development
(Youth are exploring their identity… Erik Erikson Stage 5)

Question:
Why are adolescents and young adults changing so much?

? Value Exploration   Lived Experience   **?** Religious Background

Politics
Adult / Peer Role Models   Biology

Community   Cultural History
Education   **?**
Nationality   Race

Self Identity

"Sense" of Self

? Peer Norms

Social Media /
Current Events /
Zeitgeist

Relationships

Adolescence is a transformative experience and it is meant to be. There is experimenting with physical appearance, fashion, friendships, social group belonging, social behavior, cultural affirmation, romantic attractions, dietary choice, gender expression, sexual orientation, popular music, media icons, activity interests, personal ambitions and political beliefs, to name a few. – Carl Pickhardt PhD

Psychologist

Validating the healthy exploration of adolescent self expression promotes positive self-esteem and wellbeing

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LGBTQ+ Visibility/ Progress

★ Acceptance rates are increasing in the US and around the world. This is true especially for young people.
★ With increased visibility, more people feel safe to come out. A 2021 gallup poll showed that **one in five Gen Z adults identifies as LGBTQ** (born 1997-2003).

	LGBT %	Straight/Cisgender %	No response %
Generation Z (born 1997-2003)	20.8	75.7	3.5
Millennials (born 1981-1996)	10.5	82.5	7.1
Generation X (born 1965-1980)	4.2	89.3	6.5
Baby boomers (born 1946-1964)	2.6	90.7	6.8
Traditionalists (born before 1946)	0.8	92.2	7.1

Gallup, 2021

LGBTQ+ Youth Mental Health

★ 45% seriously considered suicide in the past year
★ 14% attempted suicide in the past year, including 20% of trans youth
★ 58% of reported experiencing symptoms of depression

Considered suicide in the past year		Attempted suicide in the past year
35%	Gay	11%
46%	Lesbian	13%
43%	Bisexual	13%
53%	Pansexual	21%
48%	Queer	14%
48%	Questioning	17%
39%	Asexual	11%

Considered suicide in the past year		Attempted suicide in the past year
28%	Cisgender boy/man	6%
37%	Cisgender girl/woman	10%
59%	Transgender boy/man	22%
48%	Transgender girl/woman	12%
53%	Nonbinary/ genderqueer	19%
48%	Questioning	14%

★ 73% report symptoms of anxiety; 91% of trans and nonbinary youth worried that anti-transgender policies would deny them access

1. Trevor Project 2022 National Survey on LGBTQ+ Mental Health; Trevor Project research brief-
Substance Use and Suicide Risk; 2022 Trevor Project Report on Homlessness
2. GLSEN 2019 State Snapshots from the National School Climate Survey

Discrimination Against LGBTQ+ Youth

★ LGBTQ+ Youth In New Hampshire schools,
  ○ 96% heard "gay" used in a negative way
  ○ Over 90% heard negative remarks about gender expression
  ○ More than half experienced harassment or assault at school
  ○ 49% experienced at least one form of discrimination due to school policies/ practices

★ Nationally, reported discrimination against LGBTQ+ students increased from 2019 to 2021, including restrictions on names and pronouns, being prevented from wearing clothing that aligns with their gender, school dances, and generally being disciplined for identifying as LGBTQ+

★ 28% of LGBTQ youth report experiencing homelessness or housing instability at some point in their lives; more than half of LGBTQ+ youth who run away report doing so for fear of mistreatment due to being LGBTQ+

The Impact of Discrimination

★ 36% of LGBTQ+ youth have been physically threatened or harmed due to their identity.

★ 73% of LGBTQ+ youth have experienced discrimination based on their identity at least once. These youth show much higher rates of having attempting sucide in the past year.

LGBTQ youth who attempted suicide in the past year, comparison across those who have ever experienced discrimination

Experienced discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity

19%

Did not experience discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity

7%

★ LGB youth in NH are more likely to drink, smoke, weed, and vape than their heterosexual counterparts. Nationally, LGBTQ+ youth who have experienced physical harm due to their identity are more likely to use substances regularly.

★ Alternatively, youth who **do not** experience anti-LGBTQ+ discrimination at school miss school three times less and their GPAs are higher. These youth are less likely to be disciplined at school, less likely to be depressed, and have higher self-esteem.
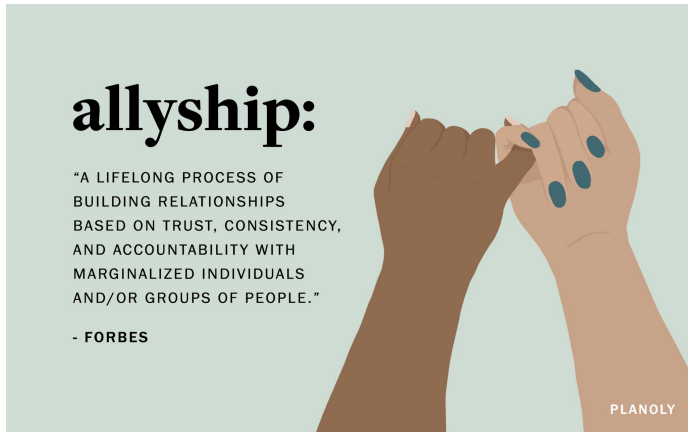
What can I do to be an ally?
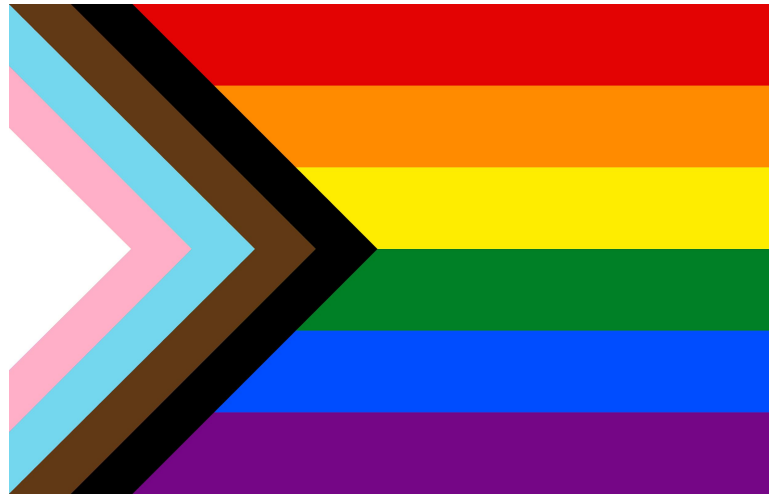
Having one supportive adult in a youth's life decreases suicide attempts by 40%

The Trevor Project Research Brief: Accepting Adults Reduce Suicide Attempts Among LGBTQ Youth, 2019

What is Allyship, and Why is it Important?

★ By practicing allyship, you are committing to being an active participant in advocating and acting for historically marginalized people.

★ Allyship is a verb and requires ongoing effort.

★ By being an ally, you show others that they can be themselves with you.

allyship:

"A LIFELONG PROCESS OF BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS BASED ON TRUST, CONSISTENCY, AND ACCOUNTABILITY WITH MARGINALIZED INDIVIDUALS AND/OR GROUPS OF PEOPLE."

- FORBES

PLANOLY

Strategy 0: Affirming Spaces (and Coming Out)

*the process in which a person acknowledges, accepts, and appreciates their sexuality and/or gender identity and begins share that with them self and/or others.**

If someone comes out to you:

Do

★ Thank them for trusting you.
★ Ask how you can validate their identity.
★ Ask how they would like you to communicate with others.
★ Look into agency policies and practices regarding inclusion and equity.
★ Stand up for them, even when they are not around. Remember, even "jokes" can be harmful and reinforce bias

Don't

★ Say things like, "I've always known."
★ Draw unnecessary attention that surpasses their comfort level.
★ Show negative emotion- be mindful of your body language
★ Assume you can share their identity with others. Never "out" someone without their permission

*Adapted from HRC's Definition

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Strategy 1: Acknowledge Privilege and Stereotypes

Privilege: "a right or immunity granted or available only to a particular person or group."

★ Can you go to the bathroom in public without fear of being harassed for how you look?

Stereotype: "a widely held but fixed and oversimplified image or idea of a particular type of person or thing."

★ Do you resonate with depictions of your identity in media, conversation, or politics?

★ Do you treat people differently based on assumptions you make about them?

Remember to try to address bias and discrimination when you see it or hear it from others.

Remember that even "jokes" can be harmful.

Privilege ≠ Intent

Having a privilege does not mean you have malice.

A simple way to think of privilege is something you do not feel you need to ask permission to do or have.

Definitions from Oxford Languages

Sometimes it's just recognizing our bias.

Strategy 2: Utilize Gender Neutral Language

You can practice allyship in your day-to-day life by using gender neutral language.

★ Using gender neutral terms helps all people feel recognized and respected
★ Avoid using binary language when talking about gender and sex assigned at birth
★ Address groups with gender neutral greetings ex. "Good morning folks!"
★ Practice using they/them pronouns as singular terms
★ Avoid assuming family composition

"The purpose of gender-neutral language is to avoid word choices which may be interpreted as biased, discriminatory or demeaning by implying that one sex or socialgender is the norm." *Source: Gender-Neutral Guidelines: European Parliament*

Strategy 2a: Exploring more Inclusive Language

Girls & Boys, Ladies & Gentlemen, Guys, Gals	Friends, Class, Students, Learners, People, Folks, Y'All, Everyone
Mom, Dad,	Parents, Your grown ups (inclusive of those without parents), care takers
Brothers / Sisters	Siblings
Husband / Wife, girl/boy-friend	Partner, Spouse, significant other
Fireman, policeman	Fire fighter, police officer
freshman	1st year
Mr., Mrs., Ms.,	Mx. or Use a person's full (and preferred) name. Tip: Ask which they prefer?

Practice listening to your language usage and challenge yourself.

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Strategy 3: Ask and Tell Pronouns

PRONOUNS
A Helpful Resource

Pronouns are words that substitute for nouns. Gender pronouns are used in place of a person's name. This list is not exhaustive but is a good place to start!

Binary and Gender Neutral Pronouns

	Nominative (Subject)	Objective (Object)	Possessive Adjective	Possessive Pronoun	Reflexive
She	She	Her	Her	Hers	Herself
He	He	Him	His	His	Himself
They	They	Them	Their	Theirs	Themself
Ze	Ze	Hir	Hir	Hirs	Hirself
Ey	Ey	Em	Eir	Eirs	Eirself

"Hi, my name is _____. My pronouns are _____.

Or:

Hi, my name is _____ and my pronouns are _____. If you are comfortable, I would love to know your pronouns, too.

Transgender and nonbinary youth whose pronouns are entirely or mostly respected attempted suicide at half the rate of those whose pronouns were not respected

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Taking Action

Do these protections/ inclusive practices exist? If not, bring concerns to agency administration.

❑ Fairly enforced non-discrimination and anti-harassment policies that explicitly protect LGBTQ+ folks
❑ Forms and applications that are inclusive of all identities and family structures
❑ A gender-neutral dress code
❑ Gender-neutral and/or private bathrooms and changing areas

Other ways to be an ally in your everyday work:
★ Put a few small LGBTQIA+ flags or stickers in a visible spot on your desk or lanyard
★ Avoid assumptions about identity based on outward appearance
★ Celebrate Pride Month (June) / Recognize LGBTQIA+ Visibility Month (Oct)
★ Ensure promotional materials are inclusive
★ If you make a mistake, apologize in the moment then move past it

Takeaways

★ Understand the difference between gender identity, gender expression, sex assigned at birth, and sexual orientation

★ Recognize bias and speak up against intolerance

★ Practice using gender neutral terminology and avoid assumptions

★ Ask and respect pronouns

★ Display symbols of allyship in your space or on your lanyard

★ If you make a mistake, apologize then move past it

★ Advocate for agency policy to be more inclusive

★ Remain open to learning

★ Let's get started!

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Resources and Sources

If you'd like to know more you can visit these sites.

National Center for Transgender Equality: https://transequality.org/

The Trevor Project: https://www.thetrevorproject.org/

Human Rights Campaign: https://www.hrc.org/

GLSEN: https://www.glsen.org/

PFLAG: https://pflag.org/about

InterACT: https://interactadvocates.org/

Questions? Contact Us! cultural@seacoastoutright.org

Connect with us!

Facebook: Seacoast Outright

Twitter: @outrightpride

Instagram: @outright_pride

Youtube: Seacoast Outright

Tik Tok: @seacoastoutright

Q & A- What Other Questions Do You Have For Us?