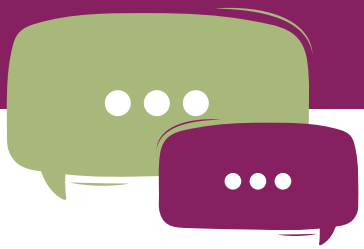
Tips for Affirmative Language



	✗ AVOID	✓ USE
GENDER EXPRESSION androgynous feminine masculine gender non-conforming *...and many more!*	"Looks like a man/male/woman/female" "Acts like a man/male/woman/female" "Has a male/female presentation" "Presents as a male/female"	"Expresses themself in a [*gender expression*] way" "Has a [*gender expression*] gender expression"
ASSIGNED SEX intersex female male *...and many more!*	"Born a male/female" "Has a male/female body" "Biologically male/female" "Anatomically male/female"	"Was assigned [*sex*] at birth"
	"Opposite sex" "Both sexes"	"Another sex" "All sexes", "All bodies"
GENDER IDENTITY genderqueer agender bigender nonbinary two spirit (trans/cis) woman (trans/cis) man gender non-conforming genderfluid third gender *...and many more!*	"Gender preferences/prefers" Transgender as a noun/verb: (i.e. "a transgender," "transgenders," "transgendered." etc.)	Transgender as an adjective ("transgender people," "trans communities," "a trans woman," etc.)
	"Decided that they were [*gender identity*]" "Chose to be [*gender identity*]" "Feels like they are [*gender identity*]" "Used to be [*gender identity*]"	"[Name] is [*gender identity*]" *Note: Be sure to use a trans person's current, correct name & pronouns, even if you're talking about them in the past tense.*
	"Getting a sex change/'the surgery'" "Changing to [*gender identity*]"	"[Name] is transitioning" "[Name] is pursuing gender-affirming care"
	He or she* Husband or wife/Boyfriend or girlfriend Man or woman Mom/dad Sister/brother	They Spouse/Partner/Significant Other, etc. Person Parent Sibling ***Note**: Use they/them if your goal is to be affirming and/or gender neutral in general. If someone doesn't use they/them pronouns, use the person's correct pronouns.*
SEXUAL ORIENTATION asexual gay pansexual queer lesbian bisexual straight/heterosexual *...and many more!*	"Sexual Preference/Preferences" "Homosexual/Homosexuality" "Choice/Chooses _____" "Lifestyle" As a noun (i.e. "gays", "queers", etc.)	"[Name] is [*sexual orientation*]" Person-first or community-centered language: "People who are [*sexual orientation*]", "Queer community", etc.