

LGBTQ-INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE DOs and DON'Ts

AVOID SAYING... **SAY INSTEAD...**

WHY?

EXAMPLE

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| "Hermaphrodite" | "Intersex" | Hermaphrodite is a stigmatizing, inaccurate word with a negative medical history. | "What are the best practices for the medical care of intersex infants?" |
| "Homosexual" | "Gay" | "Homosexual" often connotes a medical diagnosis, or a discomfort with gay/lesbian people. | "We want to do a better job of being inclusive of our gay employees." |
| "Born female" or "Born male" | "Assigned female/male at birth" | "Assigned" language accurately depicts the situation of what happens at birth "-bodied" language is often interpreted as as pressure to medically transition, or invalidation of one's gender identity | "Max was assigned female at birth, then he transitioned in high school." |
| "Female-bodied" or "Male-bodied" | | | |
| "A gay" or "a transgender" | "A gay/transgender person" | Gay and transgender are adjectives that describe a person/group | "We had a transgender athlete in our league this year. " |
| "Transgender people and normal people" | "Transgender people and cisgender people" | Saying "normal" implies "abnormal," which is a stigmatizing way to refer to a person. | "This group is open to both transgender and cisgender people." |
| "Both genders" or "Opposite sexes" | "All genders" | "Both" implies there are only two; "Opposite" reinforces antagonism amongst genders | "Video games aren't just a boy thing -- kids of all genders play them." |
| "Ladies and gentlemen" | "Everyone," "Folks," "Honored guests," etc | Moving away from binary language is more inclusive of people of all genders | "Good morning everyone, next stop Picadilly Station." |
| "Mailman," "fireman," "policeman," etc. | "Mail clerk," "Firefighter," "Police officer," etc. | People of all genders do these jobs | "I actually saw a firefighter rescue a cat from a tree." |
| "It" when referring to someone (e.g., when pronouns are unknown) | "They" | "It" is for referring to things, not people. | "You know, I am not sure how they identify." |