

What is trans+ identity?

Trans+ identity might mean something different for each person who identifies that way. The easiest way to understand the word "trans+" is as a term used to describe people who identify as a gender different than the one they were assigned at birth.

REMEMBER:

Everybody has the right to self-identify! No matter what definition you've learned, each person may define themselves differently.

The term "trans+" is often used as an umbrella term to include anybody who identifies as a gender different than the one they were given at birth. Trans+ includes everybody who isn't cis.

If you want to learn about trans+ identity, here are some words to understand. Keep in mind that these are just the way we understand these words; each person who identifies this way might understand a term differently:

CISGENDER PERSON

a person who identifies as the same gender that they were assigned at birth; ["cis" is Latin for "same side of"]

TRANSGENDER PERSON

a person who identifies as a different gender than they were assigned at birth; ["trans" is Latin for "across"]

GENDER DYSPHORIA

the feelings of extreme anxiety or stress surrounding the way society sees your gender and your body, rather than how you actually identify





BINARY GENDER

a gender that exists within a two-gender system; basically "man" and "woman"

NON-BINARY GENDER

a gender that exists outside of a two-gender system; basically any gender other than "man" and "woman"

Check us out online!

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Things to know:

- Trans+ is an adjective, not a noun. Don't refer to people as "a trans+", instead say: "a trans+ person".
- Trans+ people are at a higher risk of suicide, mental health problems, addictions, poverty, homelessness and experiencing violence.
- Trans+ people can have any sexual or romantic orientation. Trans+ people can be gay, straight, lesbian, bisexual, or queer. A trans+ person's sexuality is in reference to their actual gender, not the gender they were assigned at birth.
- Some trans+ people choose to have surgery, and others do not. There is no "right way" to be trans+.

NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY:

When a word has an asterisk (*) or a plus sign (+) after it, it means that the word is being used as an umbrella term.

Am I trans+?

The important thing to remember is that you don't have to use certain words to describe yourself, just because that's the "box" you fit into, but there are just some of the things that might apply to you if you're a part of the trans+ community:

- you feel like you shouldn't have the gendered body parts that you have (such as a vagina or a penis);
- you get really anxious or frustrated when people refer to you as the gender you were given at birth;
- you don't feel like you're a man or a woman; or
- you identify as a different gender than the one you were given when you were born.

Discrimination & Oppression:

Trans+ people tend to experience both transphobia and cissexism.

Transphobia is the fear, hatred, or intolerance of trans+ people.

Cissexism is the systemic oppression of people who are not cisgender.

A lot of transphobia and cissexism might not seem like a big deal, but to trans+ people, it can feel really violent.

Transphobia is...

Transphobia is ways that individual people might act that imply that being trans+ is a bad thing.

An example of transphobia is when people refuse to call a trans+ person by their pronouns, and instead use pronouns that correspond to the gender they were assigned at birth.

When trans+ people are referred to as the gender they were assigned at birth, it's called "misgendering".

Cissexism is...

Cissexism is ways that society has made being cisgender seem "normal", and everything else seem "bad" or "weird".

An example of cissexism is when trans+ people aren't allowed to use the bathroom that corresponds with their gender, and are forced to use a different one.

Another example is when people assume that all women have vulvas and uteruses, or all men have penises and testicles.

RCYK 201:

"201" sections are meant to provide you with a bit extra. It's helpful if you have a little background on queer and trans issues.

Trans+ Identity 201:

The way that we understand gender today, in North America, is very related to the dominant culture. The dominant culture in North America is European and white culture. This generally means that the terms we use and the way we discuss "gender" is really colonialist and dismissive of other cultures.

For example, some cultures have genders other than "man" and "woman". An example of this is the Hijra people in South Asia, the Fa'afafine people in Samoa or a number of other Indigenous groups across the world.

It's important to consider how culture, race or ethnicity might play into how somebody understands their own gender, or gender as a concept entirely.

Support & Help

If you're a trans+ person and you need some support, don't hesitate to give us a shout.

We support all trans+ people, no matter the age, gender, gender assigned at birth, race, or where they live in the NWT.

You can reach us by:

- calling us at 867-444-RCYK (7295)
- emailing us at info@rainbowcoalitionyk.org
- finding us online by searching "Rainbow Coalition of Yellowknife"
- visiting us in person at 5112 52nd Street in Yellowknife.