Easy Read Edition

Proud and Supported: Definitions and Beyond

Part 8: Beyond the Box
Words to Know in Part 8
Gender

How you feel and see yourself and what you call yourself. For example, “man,” “woman,” “non-binary,” and “genderqueer” are all genders.

Queer

Someone who isn’t straight and cisgender. Queer can mean many things. Some people identify as queer and another sexuality, like gay. Some people only identify as queer.
Questioning

Someone who doesn’t know their gender or sexuality.

Sexuality

Who you are attracted to. Some people are attracted to men. Some people are attracted to women. Some people are attracted to non-binary people. Some people are attracted to more than one gender.
Stereotype

Where someone thinks that everyone in a certain group is the same.
Beyond the Box

We talked about questioning your gender or sexuality.

Sometimes, people question their gender or sexuality because they don’t have words for how they feel.

Or, they feel that they don’t fit into any of the identities they know of.

That’s okay.
It is okay not to know.

If you don’t know, you could say you are questioning your gender or sexuality.

Or you could use a word like queer that doesn’t have one definition.

Or you could say you don’t have a label.
Sometimes, people say that all people of a certain sexuality should act one way.

Or, they say that people of one gender should act a certain way.

That’s wrong.

Those people are talking about stereotypes.

A stereotype is where someone thinks that everyone in a certain group is the same.
For example, an old stereotype is that all gay men “act like women.”

That is wrong.

It is not true.

But some people believe it.
You don’t have to act a certain way because of your gender.

You don’t have to act a certain way because of your sexuality.

Anyone can act how they want to.

It doesn’t matter what their gender or sexuality is.
Some people describe stereotypes as putting people in boxes.

We don’t want people to feel like they’re in boxes.

We don’t want people to feel like they have to act a certain way.

We want to get rid of stereotypes.

We want people to be able to act how they want.
This project was supported, in part by grant number C00018GG, from the U.S. Administration for Community Living, the Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C. 20201 through the New York State Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (NYS DDPC). Grantees undertaking projects with government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their findings and conclusions. Points of view or opinions do not, therefore, necessarily represent official ACL policy or the opinions, interpretation or policy of the NYS DDPC.