Easy Read Edition

Proud and Supported:
Definitions and Beyond

Part 9: Telling other people
Words to Know in Part 9
Cisgender

Someone whose gender is the same as the sex they were assigned at birth. A cisgender woman is a woman who was assigned female at birth. A cisgender man is a man who was assigned male at birth.

Coming out

Telling other people you are not cisgender or straight
Marriage equality

When LGBTQ+ people can get married, just like anyone else.

Gender

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

An acronym that stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, and more.

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.
Straight

Someone who is attracted to people of different genders from their gender.
Telling other people

You never have to tell anyone about your gender or sexuality if you don’t want to.

Some people say you have to tell your family about your gender or sexuality.

Or, they say that you have to tell people you know about your gender or sexuality.

That is wrong.
You never have to tell anyone if you don’t want to.

You might want to tell other people about your gender or sexuality.

Telling other people you are not cisgender or straight is called **coming out**.

You can come out to anyone you want to.
Some people you might come out to are:

• Your family.

• Your friends.

• Your support people.
Sometimes you might want to come out to someone.

But you might not know if it’s safe to come out to them.

They might not like LGBTQ+ people.

They might think being LGBTQ+ is a bad thing.

All of these things are wrong.
It is not nice to believe these things.

But some people do.
Here are some questions you can ask yourself.

You can ask these questions to figure out whether someone is safe to come out to:

• What do I want to say to this person?

• What good things could happen if I tell this person?

• What bad things could happen if I tell this person?
• What will I do if something bad happens when I tell this person?

• What can I do to calm myself down if I’m anxious about telling this person?
You can also talk to the person to try and figure out what they think about LGBTQ+ people first.

You could ask them:

• What they think about someone they know who is LGBTQ+, like a friend or a famous person.

• What they think about marriage equality. *Marriage equality* means that LGBTQ+ people can get married, just like anyone else.
• What they think about someone making mean jokes about LGBTQ+ people.

• How they handle big emotional events they don’t expect.
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.