

# LGBTQ-INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE DOs and DON'Ts

AVOID SAYING... SAY INSTEAD...

WHY?

EXAMPLE

|                                                                  |                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                          |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| "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<br>"Born male"                                  | "Assigned female/male at birth"                        | "Assigned" language accurately depicts the situation of what happens at birth<br><br>"-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<br>"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<br>"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,"<br>"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,"<br>"policeman," etc.                       | "Mail clerk,"<br>"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."                             |