

UNDERSTANDING

nonbinary

IDENTITIES

Many people—including transgender people (those who do not identify with the sex they were assigned at birth)—identify as either male or female, but **some people do not fit neatly or identify within the categories "male" or "female."**

For example, some people have a gender that blends elements of being a man or a woman or a gender that is different than either male or female. Some people don't identify with gender at all and some people's gender is fluid and changes over time.

Some societies—like ours—tend to recognize just two genders—male and female. The idea that there are only two genders is called a "gender binary." Therefore, **"nonbinary" is one term people use to describe genders that don't fall into one of these two categories of male or female.**

Facts about nonbinary people

Nonbinary people are nothing new.

Nonbinary people are not confused about their gender identity or following a new fad—nonbinary identities have been recognized for millennia by cultures and societies around the world.

Most transgender people are not nonbinary.

While some transgender people are nonbinary, most transgender people have an identity that is either male or female.

Respecting nonbinary people

Nonbinary people may use different pronouns. Since some nonbinary people do not identify as "male" or "female," they may have pronouns other than "he" or "she." Although some nonbinary people use "he/she" pronouns, many use the pronouns "they/them" (ex: "I am meeting Cris tomorrow. They are really excited!") or other pronouns. If you are unsure, just ask!

TERMINOLOGY

Transgender: a word that describes people whose gender identity that **does NOT** match the sex they were assigned at birth.

Cisgender: a word that describes people whose gender identity **DOES** match the sex they were assigned at birth.

Gender Binary: a system that categorizes gender as falling into one of two categories—male/female.

For more information, questions, or LGBTQIA+ support, contact the Youth Advocacy Department

LEARNING ABOUT GENDER
IDENTITY