



# Inside The Kaleidoscope

**A Toolkit & Resource Guide Created by Members  
of Two-Spirit, Trans, & Queer Communities**

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**“When you hold a kaleidoscope up to the light, that’s how I envision and conceive of our sexual and gendered beings: without borders nor ceilings nor floors, it is energy and light, multifaceted, iridescent, full of potential and possibilities.”**

**- Kiley May**



**"For me,  
personally and  
politically, there's  
no separating my  
womanness,  
my blackness,  
my transness  
from my  
me-ness."**

**Janet Mock  
Writer and Trans Activist**





# GOAL & ArtReach

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This guide is part of the larger GOAL (Grassroots Organizing and Leadership) Youth Workshop and Resource Series presented by ArtReach in partnership with Grassroots Youth Collaborative, City of Toronto, For Youth Initiative, and Toronto Community Foundation. Through the GOAL project, ArtReach provides free workshops across the city of Toronto as well as a comprehensive set of toolkits, videos, and other resources -- of which this important guide is just one. More information about the services offered by ArtReach can be found on our website, [artreach.org](http://artreach.org).

We would also like to acknowledge the support of the Ontario Trillium Foundation whose financial contributions have made this project possible.



## John Caffery

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John Caffery is a DJ, multi-disciplinary artist, and community worker. During his 15 year career he has engaged art in social change and worked on creative responses to oppression. His work as a multi-disciplinary artist has supported 2SLGBTQIAQQ communities. John spearheaded initiatives such as Trans+Sport, that deals with barriers to sport and physical activity for Trans people, and Think Twice focused on community responses to the criminalization of HIV. Both projects have honed his video activism skills. John works at Supporting Our Youth (SOY), a community development program for 2SLGBTQIAQQ youth. At SOY he coordinates three groups: Monday Night Drop In for homeless and street-involved youth, Alphabet Soup for teenagers, and H.E.A.T. for emerging youth leaders interested in social justice featuring a speakers bureau that identifies ways to make environments safer for 2SLGBTQIAQQ youth. As a founding member of artist collective Kids on TV, he toured internationally, produced film and video, as well as published. John has worked with art institutions including the Art Gallery of York University, National Arts Centre, Harbourfront Centre and was recently Artist in Residence working with Mammalian Diving Reflex at the Art Gallery of Ontario. John is part of a team of leaders from across Canada working with the Banff Centre for the Arts as consultants responding to complex social problems.

## Kusha Amir Dadui

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Kusha Amir Dadui was born in Tehran, Iran and came to Canada with their family as a refugee about 20 years ago. He has been working with the queer refugee community for the past 15 years and for the past three years has been the Trans Program Coordinator at the Sherbourne Health Centre.



## Kim Katrin Milan

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‘A daughter of the diaspora, Arawak, West African, Indian and Dutch, hailing from Trinidad and living currently in Toronto. Kim Katrin Crosby (Milan) is an award-winning multidisciplinary artist, activist, speaker and educator. Addressing audiences at Princeton, in Montreal at the International LGBT Film Festival and University of Texas in 2014 alone, her work has taken her across North America speaking on equity, liberation and care. She is co founder and executive director of The People Project, 8 years in the making; a movement of queer and trans folks of color and our allies, committed to individual and community empowerment through alternative education, art activism and collaboration. This year she was recognize by ‘The Root’ the premier news, opinion and culture site for African-American influencers as a young. Black feminist to watch as well as one of Autostraddle’s 100 LGBT Black Women to know sharing the list with Angela Davis, Marsha P. Johnson & Mia McKenzie. She has completed a residency both under D’bi Young and Buddies In Bad Times Theatre and has curated exhibitions, cabarets events and performed at stages across Canada. She is currently producing and co-curating the Buddies In Bad Times Cabaret Insatiable Sisters with Gein Wong. She also engages in community based healing initiatives including teaching Queer and Brown Girls Yoga, and hosting yearly healing retreats for femme identified Folks of Colour and Indigenous Folks.

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# Part One: Introduction





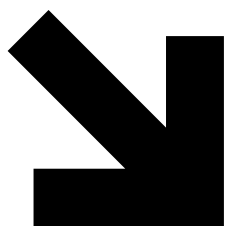


Photo Credit: Sydney Tam

**“What I love about being queer is the big space and big hearts of all the other queers out there who are all working so hard to unlearn all the painful ways we were told to hate ourselves. The ways we invite each other in our lives and find relationships that nurture and validate our deepest shame and intersections. The revolutionary and creative ways we bend sex and gender. And all the eye candies that make my heart swell. You are all so beautiful.”**  
**- charm torres**



# Getting Started



This toolkit is a revision of an original toolkit that was created by The People Project. It serves as an accompaniment to a workshop we used to deliver with diverse members of our community who had shared their lived experiences and wisdom with youth service providers in Toronto. This helped to create more positive space for Queer, Trans\*, 2 Spirit & Kaleidoscope people.

As our community and our work evolved, we recognized that the toolkit needed to as well. Kiley May said it best in her explanation of the term Kaleidoscope:

“I got the idea after becoming frustrated with the limitations of the spectrum concept. We do not have to position ourselves within this model, it’s not adequate or sufficient enough to accommodate our fluid identities and desires. When you hold a kaleidoscope up to the light, that’s how I envision and conceive of our sexual and gendered beings: without borders nor ceilings nor floors, it is energy and light, multifaceted, iridescent, full of potential and possibilities.”

This version speaks volumes to our diversity and multiplicity. We have made this resource to help guide would-be allies as well as to deepen the knowledge of those who are a part of the Kaleidoscope community. And just as before, over time it will also transition and grow as we do.

**Is the apple tree exactly like the baobab?**

**Is the iguana a dead ringer for the komodo dragon?**

**Is the anaconda indistinguishable from the garter snake?**

No to all of the above. Clearly, Mother Nature isn’t a big fan of uniformity. In fact, She tends to avoid it at all costs.

## Getting Started (cont'd)

As it turns out, this profoundly unnatural penchant for the crushing of diversity has become a favoured strategy among those of us for whom difference – specifically in the areas of sexual orientation, identity and expression - has all too often become synonymous with deviance.

The stubborn refusal to accept the reality of this manifestation of diversity is also regularly employed as a justification for all manner of violent and repressive responses aimed at those who refuse to conform to the stultifying demand to pervert themselves into something that they are not.

We need to again embrace what we once knew – namely, that difference is necessary, natural and beautiful. We can no longer endorse, through our silence, the vicious excising of our GLBTQI Relations from the ranks of the Human family. Our voices must be heard and the call must be made: that we are our Brothers' and Sisters' Keepers and that if you attack one of them (us), you attack us all.

To the parents of GLBTQI children, I say this: your sons, children, and daughters are a blessing, not a curse. Challenge yourselves to rebuild your relationships. Learn to (re)open your hearts to all the Blessed, indivisible parts of your {two-spirit, gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, intersex and genderqueer} offspring. And, most importantly, (re)learn to love them...without shame or apology.

Junior Burchall

# Definitions

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## Terms Commonly Associated with the Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning Communities.

Language is dynamic; it grows, evolves, and develops. This is particularly true of the language of diversity and the terms that we use to describe, understand or express ourselves. The creation of new terms also indicates new levels of consciousness around the diversity in human sexuality and gender. There are more than two genders, and more than two types of sexuality; there are as many as there are colours, and just as many combinations of both gender and sexuality.

As people who are engaged in the process of community building and bridging, we should strive to be sure that our language does not demean, exclude, or offend. Regardless of any of the terms, labels or contexts shared here, we must first and foremost allow others to self-identify. This guide is to give you a foundation for understanding, but definitions will vary for everyone.

### ➤ Two-Spirit

The term “two-spirit” comes to us with a rich background of history and importance. In contemporary times, with the advent of lesbian and gay liberation, “two-spirited” means Aboriginal people who identify themselves as gay or lesbian. The terms “gay” and “lesbian” are European in origin, so the term “two-spirit” is preferred because it is more culturally relevant to Aboriginal lesbians and gay men.

Some of our elders teach us that two-spirit people have a special place in our communities. We believe that two-spirit people have specific duties and responsibilities to perform. These include counseling, healing, being pipe carriers, visionaries (seers), and conducting oneself in accordance with our belief that respects all life. Based on historical evidence that comes from recorded material, out of ninety-nine tribes there were references to gay culture in eighty-eight of them, of which twenty made specific references to lesbianism. Among the Crow for instance, two-spirit men were responsible for cutting down the tree, which is used for the Sun Dance ceremony.

-- Taken from: “Another Mother Tongue” edited by: Judy Grahn, Beacon Press.

## Definitions (cont'd)

### ➤ Lesbian

This is one of the oldest and most positive terms that describes romantic relationships, sexual preference or orientation of women-identified people towards other women-identified people. Other terms that are often used to self-identify are dyke, stud, femme, butch or AG. These refer to the different ways that lesbian women express or perform gender. While okay for self-identification, some of these terms are still hurtful and should not be used unless the individual says it is okay.

### ➤ Gay

A male-identified person who forms his primary loving and sexual relationships with other male-identified people. A term adopted by the gay male community, though some lesbians use it also, as a sign of pride in their sexual orientation.

### ➤ Bisexual

A person who has an affectionate, emotional, romantic, and sexual attraction to people of all gender identities and expressions. The degree of preference for different gender identities varies for each bisexual.

### ➤ LGBTQ

Often referred to the gay alphabet or the spectrum, this acronym uses the first letter of common gender and sexual identities. The full acronym is currently LGBttQQ2siAA, which stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, transgender, transsexual, Queer, Questioning, 2 spirit, intersex, Asexual, Allies. These letters may sometimes be seen in different order (example: GLBtQ, BGLtQ, etc.).

### ➤ Homosexual

A clinical and technical term that is not generally used by lesbian and gay people to self-identify or identify their community. This term is often linked to the medical categorization of gays and lesbians as 'mentally ill', and is generally considered out-dated.

### ➤ Coming Out

A constantly changing process of self-acceptance and expression of one's sexual identity. It is an intrapersonal as well as interpersonal process and includes a public declaration of identity or political or social justice action in the larger society.

## Definitions (cont'd)

### ➤ **Being Out/Out of the Closet**

A term that refers to being open and public about holding a kaleidoscope identity. Some people are “out” in some settings (for example, with friends) and not “out” in other settings (for example, at work). People may choose to hide their sexual orientation or gender identity for fear of violence or rejection from community (including work, school and church), family and friends. Many people reject the process of coming out because heterosexual people are not required to come out, meaning that true equality won't be achieved until no one has to come out.

### ➤ **Out-ed**

Being “Out-ed” is a term used when a kaleidoscope individual's sexual or gender based identity is disclosed inappropriately and/or maliciously by another person without their consent.

### ➤ **Heterosexism**

The social/cultural, institutional, and individual assumptions and actions that assert or take for granted that heterosexuality is the only natural, normal, acceptable sexual orientation.

### ➤ **Sexism**

The belief in the inherent superiority of one sex or gender over others, and thereby it's right to dominance.

### ➤ **Heterosexist Privilege**

The benefits and advantages heterosexuals receive in society based on their ‘normal’ sexual orientation. Also, the benefits lesbians, gay men, and bisexual people receive as a result of claiming heterosexual identity or denying gay, lesbian, or bisexual identity.

### ➤ **Homophobia**

The irrational fear, hatred, or intolerance of lesbians or gay men, or of any behavior that is outside the boundaries of traditional gender roles. Homophobia can be manifested out of fear of association with lesbian or gay people or being perceived as lesbian or gay. Homophobic behavior can range from telling jokes to physical violence against people presumed to be lesbian or gay.

## Definitions (cont'd)

### ➤ **Biphobia**

The discomfort and fear others feel around bisexual people and the myths that exist about bisexuality. Bisexuality is often misperceived as an invalid sexual orientation. Bisexual people are not only stigmatized by heterosexual people, but also by lesbian and gay people, as it is perceived that they are accessing heterosexual privilege and are just 'sitting on the fence' between being gay or straight.

### ➤ **Heterosexual Ally**

A heterosexual person who confronts heterosexism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and heterosexual privilege in themselves and others out of a concern for the well-being of lesbian, gay and bisexual people, and a belief that heterosexism is a social justice issue.

### ➤ **Lover/Partner/Domestic Partner/Significant Other**

Gender-neutral terms that queer & trans people use to identify those people with whom they have long and/or short term romantic or sexual relationships. They are used as alternatives to traditional terms like boy/girlfriend, husband, or wife. Heterosexual allies who want to challenge heterosexism often use these terms as well.

### ➤ **Family/ Family of Origin/ Chosen Family**

Two or more people who share resources, responsibility for decisions, values and goals, and have commitments to one another over a period of time. It is a relationship of sharing and commitments that most accurately describes the family unit, regardless of blood, adoption, or marriage. In addition, these terms are used by kaleidoscope individuals to describe their close circle of support in the wake of any abandonment or rejection by their biological family.

### ➤ **Queer**

Originally a derogatory label used to insult lesbians and gay people, or to intimidate and offend heterosexuals. More recently, this term has been reclaimed by some kaleidoscope people as an inclusive and positive way to identify. However, some still dislike this word and view it as pejorative. Also, many trans people feel excluded under this term, as it has traditionally referred to sexual orientation and not gender identity.

### ➤ **Sexual Orientation**

Sexual orientation refers to the gender of the person(s) that someone is emotionally and physically attracted to, i.e., gay, lesbian, bisexual, heterosexual, asexual. This is a fluid concept, and can change once or many times over the course of an individual's life.

## Definitions (cont'd)

### ➤ LGBTQ Activist

An individual who engages in a variety of actions and activities advocating for civil rights and social justice for people of all sexual orientations and gender expressions. This type of activism can range from educating oneself on relevant issues, to recognizing and interrupting homophobic, heterosexist, and cissexist behaviours on a personal level, to participating in rallies, protests, letter writing campaigns, and other efforts with the aim of achieving political and social change on a large scale.

### ➤ Rainbow Flag

Artist Gilbert Baker first proposed the Rainbow Flag as the symbol for the 1978 San Francisco Gay Freedom Day Parade. The six colors of the flag displayed at the 1979 parade symbolized the following: red for life, orange for healing, yellow for sun, green for harmony with nature, blue for art, and purple for spirit. Within the first two years of production, the flag became so popular that it used up the world's supply of purple flag cotton.

### ➤ Gender Identity

Refers to how a person sees themselves socially: as a woman, as a man, as masculine, as feminine, as a combination, or as neither.

### ➤ Gender Expression

Refers to the visible or public ways we present our gender identity. This can include behaviours like the way we walk or carry ourselves, and appearances such as dress, hair, and make-up. A person's chosen name and pronoun are also common ways of expressing gender.

### ➤ Sex

A biological term that identifies a body as being a man, woman, or intersex person. It is determined by a range of factors that consider one's chromosomes, gonads, hormones, and internal and external organs. It may or may not align with one's gender identity.

### ➤ Intersex

A condition in which an individual has a combination of male and female reproductive structures. This makes it difficult to assign a newborn's sex as male or female. In this situation, medical professionals surgically alter the infant's genitals to give them an identifiable gender. An out-dated term for this is hermaphrodite. However because a person's gender identity cannot be known by their genitalia, an assignment by doctors at birth can be wrong.



## Definitions (cont'd)

### ➤ Cisgender

A gender identity where individuals' experiences of their gender identity match the sex they were assigned at birth. In other words, it refers to being non-trans.

### ➤ Transgender

A broad term that covers many parts of the kaleidoscope, including two-spirit or intersex people, those who cross-dress, people who express themselves androgynously, and transsexuals.

### ➤ Transsexual

Refers to those who blur the boundaries of socially constructed gender norms because of an incongruity between their gender identity and the sex they were assigned at birth. As a result, some may change their gender expression, their name, or their bodies as they see fit. Sex hormones, electrolysis, plastic surgery, or sex reassignment surgery can help people make a physical change that feels more congruent.

### ➤ FTM (female to male)

People who were assigned the female gender from birth, but whose gender identity does not match this assignment. FTM's thus seek to obtain a more 'male' appearing body.

### ➤ MTF (male to female)

People who were assigned the male gender from birth, but whose gender identity does not match this assignment. MTF's thus seek to obtain a more 'female' appearing body.

### ➤ Bigenderist

A person who develops and expresses a distinctly male persona and a distinctly female persona. A bigenderist might, for example, work as a women, then socialize as a man (or vice versa).

### ➤ Drag

Dressing in the clothing of the opposite biological sex, or in a manner different than how one will usually dress (i.e. "corporate drag" or "military drag"). "Drag" is often theatrical, and often presents a stereotyped image. Individuals who dress in "drag" may or may not consider themselves part of the transgender community, and hold a variety of sexual orientations.

## Definitions (cont'd)

### ➤ Female or Male Impersonator

A person who cross-dresses as performance art and/or as stage personalities. They may also consider themselves “drag performers”. They may or may not consider themselves to be bigenderists.

### ➤ Transition

The ongoing process of altering one’s gender expression to match their gender identity. This process looks different for each person, but can include steps like changing one’s pronouns, undergoing hormone therapy or top/ bottom surgery, legally changing one’s name and sex on identification documents, or changing one’s style of dress.

### ➤ Transphobia

Refers to irrational, fear-based discrimination against transsexuality and transsexual or transgender people. Many trans people also experience homophobia from people who incorrectly associate their gender identity with being kaleidoscope.

### ➤ Asexual

A person who does not experience sexual attraction.  
<http://www.asexuality.org/home/>



# Part Two: History & Culture



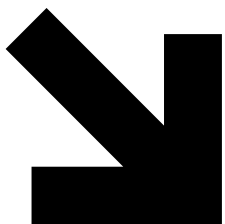


**“I love being queer because it’s a nice word. Say it: “queer.” It just feels nice in your mouth. Some people think of a queer identity or queer sexuality as only having been around for recent decades or as a North American thing and neither of those ideas are true. We go back centuries. Wherever there are people in the world, there are queer people.”**

**- Ryan G. Hind**



# Overview



Within the kaleidoscope community there is a vibrant, rich and dynamic history with strong roots in resistance. Our cultures are cultivated drawing on the aspects of our intersecting identities and are often reinvented through a queer context to be made more inclusive. Yet other Queer and Trans\* cultural practices have emerged in the fringes and top secret locations where they could be practiced safely and everyone could be their full self.

It is a challenge to gather the herstories of kaleidoscope people for multiple reasons. There is erasure by dominant population groups, rarely if ever do teachers educate students about Queer and Trans people. Their stories are not in the curriculum and rarely do teachers do the work to incorporate aspects such as the third gender in India, the Hijra who have a history dating back to antiquity, or about the Montreal writers Elsa Gidlow and Roswell George Mills who published *Les Mouches Fantastiques*, an underground magazine which is the first known Queer publication in Canadian, and possibly North American, history. Often the way we have been represented in the media is based on stereotypes and stigma and doesn't accurately reflect the reality of who makes up the diverse community.

There is also erasure within the community, recently artist Onya Finley Hogan toured her project *Lez Con* around the Lesbian and Gay archives of North America bringing attention to the issue that many of these archives are greatly lacking in lesbian content. Even within our own institutions which histories are prioritized or documented is massively disproportionate.

## Overview (cont'd)

There is also a lack of concrete documentation of our histories, a pivotal moment in the community is the Stonewall Riots, on the day that Judy Garland died, police once again harassed the clientele of a NYC bar that was frequented by Queer and Trans\* people but a riot broke out, sadly there are no photos of the actual Stonewall riots, only photos of the bar on the day after. This is a crucial moment in standing up for ourselves that had Trans women of colour at the forefront of the moment. Many cities hold their Pride festivals on the anniversary of this day and yet not a single photograph has been seen.

For all these reasons and more it is crucial to learn about the herstory of kaleidoscope people, to document our community moving forward, to celebrate the spectacular range of identities and cultures, and to understand the struggles that have led to the freedoms we experience today and ensure the next 100 years of history are undeniably recognized and celebrated.

John Caffery

# Trans Histories

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What we understand as transgender (in its many different forms) has been understood quite differently at various periods of time. In the earliest ages, people who were seen to bridge the genders were thought to possess wisdom that traditionally-gendered people did not, and were venerated for this. As societies transformed from matrilineal and communal societies into male-driven (patriarchal) societies with rigid class divisions and emphasis on property ownership, those male-driven cultures reduced the status of women. Because men were threatened by a persistent belief that those who blurred gender lines possessed some greater insight, they set out to specifically target gender transgressive people. Into the modern age, trans folk resurfaced, but it was a long climb back towards restoring any sense of equality.

In earliest civilizations throughout Europe, Asia, the Middle East and Northern Africa, various tribes venerated what they often identified as “The Great Mother.” In nearly all of these traditions, MTF priestesses presided (often castrated and having body modifications). These cultures were primarily communal systems that held women in high esteem due to their status as the source of all human life. Roman historian Plutarch depicts “The Great Mother” as an intersex deity from whom the two sexes had not yet split. Trans-gendered depictions of The Great Mother and Her priestesses are found in ancient artifacts dating back to the earliest civilizations in Mesopotamia, Assyria, Babylonia and Akkad. Some historians portray MTF priestesses as being sacred, while others are portrayed as undergoing castration in order to subvert matrilineal rule and wrest religious direction from the control of women.

## MOMENTS IN MODERN TRANS HISTORY

### **Dr. Magnus Hershfield**

Dr. Magnus Hershfield was a Prussian physician who earned a degree in medicine in 1892 from the University of Berlin. He is known for coining the term “transvestite” in 1910. He was a pioneering advocate for transgender rights, and wrote *The Transvestites*, the first large-scale piece of writing about transgenderism. Dr. Hershfield was both gay and Jewish, and was attacked by Nazi supporters as a result. Hitler ordered that all of his work be burnt, and ordered the demolishing of ‘The Institute for Sexual Science’ in Berlin, founded by Hershfield.

## Trans Histories (cont'd)

### **The Langley Porter Clinic**

It took until the mid twentieth century for the trans community to begin forming long-lasting organizations and building the base of their social movement. The staff and clients of the Langley Porter Psychiatric Clinic at the University of California (UCSF) played an important role in the trans movement under the direction of Karl Bowman, a former president of the American Psychiatric Association. The Langley Porter Clinic became a major centre of research on sexuality and gender in 1940's and 1950's.

### **Sylvia Rivera and Stonewall**

On Saturday June 28, 1969 when the police raided Stonewall Inn, a regular kaleidoscope hang out spot, a trans women named Sylvia Rivera sparked one of the largest changes in transgender political history. She long maintained that she threw the first beer bottle that started the violent resistance that infamous night. In 1970, Sylvia Rivera and another veteran of the Stonewall Riots, Marsha P. Johnson, started STAR (Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries). The main goal was to help street-involved trans and queer youth access basics, such as food, clothing, and shelter. Johnson, who was also a performer and activist, was found dead in 1992. The police ruled her death as suicide but many of her supporters have not accepted this and are adamant that she was murdered.

### **Maryam Molkara**

There also exists a rich history of trans activism internationally. An example of this is Iranian trans woman Maryam Molkara, who became the first trans person to openly discuss trans issues and access to surgery in Iran. Molkara spent years fighting for a fatwa (religious order) to legalize gender confirmation surgery for trans people in Iran. This fight lasted throughout the Iranian Revolution and the rule of two Shahs. A fatwa issued by Ayatollah Khomeini after a personal meeting with Molkara meant she was able to see her life's mission complete before she passed away on March 25, 2012 from a heart attack.



# Trans Communities & Immigration

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Members of the trans population face considerable barriers in attempting to enter Canada as a refugee or immigrant. One major barrier is that the gender and name on I.D documents do not reflect the person's actual identity, further complicating the process.

Trans refugees and newcomers often experience both racism and transphobia during the immigration process, which has a negative impact on the mental and emotional well being of this community.

In terms of accessing services, many Trans newcomers and refugees seek to attend English classes and different support groups. However the fear of being found out and the atmosphere of transphobia often prevent them from accessing these services. Additionally, it is traditional for city's shelter systems to be segregated by gender. This naturally raises issues of being sent to the 'wrong' shelter (like trans women being sent to a male shelter).

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## Trans Inclusion in Law

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When it comes to the law, the trans community (particularly black trans men and trans women of color) is overrepresented in the criminal justice system.

Some countries have adopted laws with anti-discriminatory components in order to offer protection for those discriminated against for their gender identity. However the onus often falls on the trans person to prove that they had been discriminated against, and fails to acknowledge systematic barriers and transphobia.

In other words, these laws do little to improve the maldistribution of equal opportunities for trans bodies. Examples of this include equitable access to washrooms, healthcare, housing, and the job market.

## Trans Inclusion in Law (cont'd)

A central issue is the incarceration of trans people for 'survival crimes', such as stealing food or clothing, getting involved in sex work, or using drugs in order to cope with mounting oppression. Like shelter systems, corrective institutions are segregated by gender, and again trans individuals are often misplaced. Furthermore, there is virtually no access to hormones or trans-specific care in most prison healthcare units.

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# Cultural Colonization

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The term "Two-Spirit" is a word that resists colonial definitions of who we are. It is an expression of our sexual and gender identities as sovereign from those of white GLBT movements. The coinage of the word was never meant to create a monolithic understanding of the array of Native traditions regarding what dominant European and Euroamerican traditions call "alternative" genders and sexualities...

I find myself using both the words "Queer" and "Trans" to try to translate my gendered and sexual realities for those not familiar with Native traditions, but at heart, if there is a term that could possibly describe me in English, I simply consider myself a Two-Spirit person.

The process of translating Two-Spiritness with terms in white communities becomes very complex. I'm not necessarily "Queer" in Cherokee contexts, because differences are not seen in the same light as they are in Euro-American contexts. I'm not necessarily "Transgender" in Cherokee contexts, because I'm simply the gender I am.

I'm not necessarily "Gay," because that word rests on the concept of men-loving-men, and ignores the complexity of my gender identity. It is only within the rigid gender regimes of white America that I become Trans or Queer.

## Cultural Colonization (cont'd)

While homophobia, transphobia, and sexism are problems in Native communities, in many of our tribal realities these forms of oppression are the result of colonization and genocide that cannot accept women as leaders, or people with extraordinary genders and sexualities.

As Native people, our erotic lives and identities have been colonized along with our homelands.

Qwo-Li Driskill

Stolen From Our Bodies:

First Nations Two-Spirits/Queers and the Journey to a Sovereign Erotic

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# Hi My Name Is Alec Butler

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Hi my name is Alec Butler.

I was born with an intersex condition in the 1950's

I make this declaration with a lot of trepidation and concern for my emotional safety right now.

Even in this space, this event which celebrates the trans community, I still don't feel safe talking about being intersexed.

I thought I would feel safe on my recent trip to Amsterdam where I attended the screenings of three of my films. There were signs up at venues stating "consent is sexy" and frequent announcements were made about not touching trans people and respecting each others gender expression. Even in this atmosphere of awareness of exoticizing and eroticizing trans people I was being inappropriately touched by another trans person.

When we can't even hear each other and respect each other's safety how can we even hope to build a healthy community?

## Hi My Name Is Alec Butler (cont'd)

Where do we begin to unburden ourselves of the eroticism that is attached to us by the non-trans community within our own psyches when we treat each other so disrespectfully?

I think these are issues that need to be discussed more openly not swept under the carpet for the sake of community solidarity.

I am proud that I named this abuse to my hosts immediately and did not shut down and retreat and think it wasn't important. This message was passed onto me by my past history of abuse.

Then there was the experience of crossing borders as an intersexed person, because I am not going in a direction to male or female as a trans person could claim when they are traveling, I am in a vulnerable position as my gender expression does not match my official identification. If I change it to claim a male identity I will be even more under scrutiny because I have female parts that I have not gotten rid of through surgery, and have no intention of getting rid of because I love my intersexed body, even if it confuses people.

It has taken me years and the patience and desire of my lovers to love this body. I won't give in to choosing a gender no matter how much pressure I feel from the powers that be (custom officers or my own community) because to do so would just serve to make it convenient for others.

I am an inconvenient truth, that there are more than 2 or even 6 genders, as the Navajo Nation and other First Nations have known for centuries.

Today I celebrate myself and my fellow two spirits and other intersex people who are not afraid to travel, who are not afraid to leave their homes most days, who are not afraid to be in a relationship because it is just too hard to explain. We celebrate those of us who risk our hearts over and over because there is no other way but the way of love. Take the risk even when it is just too hard on our hearts. Take the risk of rejection yet again, we risk it even if it might literally kill us.

I have been given the gift of the sacred medicines and the many blessings of the creatrix/creator to support me in my journey as an intersexed 2spirit queer trans member of the human race, and for them and the love of our loved ones, we give thanks.



# Part Three: Allyship



# I don't know what my son's sexual orientation is going to be

and because I don't know, I am about the business of creating a world where he can express himself in ways that are healthy and where he is safe to be who he is.



*Junior Burchall and son, Amari*

What if someone you love was denied access to employment, housing, or public services because of their sexual orientation? Bermuda's current Human Rights Act would not protect them from such discrimination. 🏳️‍🌈 It's time to include.

[www.twowordsandacomma.com](http://www.twowordsandacomma.com)



Photo Credit: Ruth Skinner

**“Being queer doesn’t paraphrase my identity, it doesn’t water it down or make it any easier to understand - it acknowledges the richness of my lived experience. It’s personal but it’s not selfish: queerness doesn’t seek the erasure of others’ personal histories; it intermingles with them to create a community that is inclusive at its core. I lurrve that.”**

**- Emanuel Alec Ilagan**



# On Allyship

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I have always assumed that everyone desires civil liberty and human rights and that when asked, wants this for others. So I've always approached even those who disagree with me about all things political and social with that assumption.

Hence I had the Deputy Leader Christine Elliott of the ONPC Party as co-signer of Toby's Act-granting human rights to Trans folk. Using the 'big tent' approach of human rights can and does gain consensus on LGBTQ issues.

Building a bigger tent by allowing disagreement and yet still holding to one's own principles moves discussion into social change. The question is always "What core principles do we agree on? What actions do they demand?"

Try it. It works.

Cheri DiNovo  
MPP, Parkdale-High Park



# Anti-Homophobia 101

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## How to Be the A(lly) in LGBTQQ2SIAA into another.

- Understand the difference between tolerance and acceptance. No one wants to be tolerated, so agree to work towards a place of acceptance for all kaleidoscope people.
- Attend training sessions on kaleidoscope issues, receive resource materials, and request additional supports.
- Identify yourself as an ally by displaying a rainbow flag (a button or sticker, or something even more creative) in your community space, your office or your home.
- Become aware of community programs and services for referrals through training.
- Help report harassment or discrimination (while still maintaining confidentiality, if possible).
- Consciously do not assume that everyone you meet is heterosexual. Try to be open to the fact that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (kaleidoscope) people are present in every walk of life, in every community.
- Allow people to self identify, ask people what personal pronoun they identify with, and whether they like to be called “he”, “she”, “hir”, “z” or something else entirely.
- There can be a lot of risk associated with being open about your gender performance or sexual orientation, don’t “out” people based on your own assumptions. This is not your place.
- Use non-gender specific language. For instance, ask “Are you seeing someone?” or “Are you in a relationship?,” instead of “Do you have a boyfriend/ girlfriend?” or “Are you married?” Use the word “partner” or “significant other” instead of “boyfriend/girlfriend” or “husband/wife.”
- Do not assume the sexual orientation of another person even when that person is married or in a committed relationship. Many bisexuals, and even some gay men and lesbians, are in heterosexual relationships. The same goes for trans individuals, who hold the same range of sexual orientations as cisgendered individuals.
- Do not assume that a kaleidoscope person is attracted to you just because they have disclosed their sexual identity. If any interest is shown, be flattered, not flustered. Treat any interest that someone might show just as you would if it came from someone who is heterosexual.

## Anti-Homophobia 101 (cont'd)

- Interrupt offensive language, mimicking behavior, or insensitive jokes. Let people know that the language, behavior, and jokes are unacceptable- even between kaleidoscope people.
- Validate people's gender expression. For example, if a biologically male person identifies as female, refer to that person as "she" and use her chosen name.
- Review your organization's policies, by-laws or mission statements. Suggest changes ensuring that documents are inclusive of all sexual orientations and gender identities. If appropriate, add or include publications or links specific to the needs of the kaleidoscope population (health services brochures, kaleidoscope support materials, etc.). Doing this shows the kaleidoscope and allied members of the community that spectrum individuals are not invisible and that they are valued.
- Educate yourself about kaleidoscope history, culture, and concerns.
- Read kaleidoscope publications such as the *Advocate Xtra!*, or *out* magazine. See movies that are by and about diverse kaleidoscope individuals like the *Aggressives*, *Venus Boyz*, and *Living With Pride: Ruth Ellis @ 100*. Understand that the same systemic racism and oppression that affects the heterosexual community and makes people of colour invisible, is also present within the kaleidoscope community. Work extra hard to unearth these stories.
- Incorporate kaleidoscope issues and individuals into programming or curriculum. Many important historical and literary figures were gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender.
- Continue to educate yourself about issues facing kaleidoscope people. If you don't understand something, look to local or online resources, read an article or a book, or participate in discussions related to kaleidoscope issues and individuals.
- Understand that the expression of homophobia is an attack that is spiritual, emotional, mental, and sometimes physical. It is also a violation of every person's freedom and human right to be who he or she wants to be. Homophobia also affects heterosexual people in profound ways: it means that girls who fix cars get called 'dykes' and boys who like sewing get called 'faggots'. Homophobia is just one of the symptoms of a larger system of gender-based oppression and prevents all people from being who they really want to be. As Martin Luther King Jr. so brilliantly said, "injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

## What You Can Do As A Trans Ally

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- Call people by their preferred name and pronoun. (If you're not sure ask!)
- Don't ask the person to see pictures from before or ask their birth name.
- Don't disclose the person's gender identity without consent.
- Don't describe past situations by saying when [person] was [gender] (ex. "When Jenny was a boy, he used to...")
- Never use the words "tranny", "she-male", "he-she".
- Don't ever ask about someone's genitals, whether they've had surgery, or how they have sex. This is not inappropriate.
- Don't make assumptions about someone's sexual orientation. Trans people hold the same diversity of sexual orientations that cisgendered people do.
- Don't make comments that fetishize trans people (like "I love trans guys, they're so hot!").
- If you do mis-gender someone apologize once and move on. By constantly apologizing and highlighting it, you will make the person feel uncomfortable.
- Be mindful that gender-specific public bathrooms may be awkward for a trans person. Never question the bathroom a trans person chooses to use.
- If someone makes a transphobic comment, call them out on it.
- Advocate for intake forms or general institutional forms that have a line in which one can identify their own gender.
- Trans people are forced to be their own medical advocates (for those who are able to speak out/up) and are often obligated to educate their own healthcare providers on having a trans body. Stigma and judgment by the healthcare community is cited as a primary barrier to access. One thing you can do as an ally is to attend doctor's appointments with your trans friend if they request it.

# 10 Ways Homophobia Affects Straight People

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1. Homophobia makes men feel pressured to act “macho” and women must be “passive”. This restricts our ability to be ourselves.
2. The societal expectation of homophobia encourages heterosexual people to act aggressively or violently towards kaleidoscope people.
3. Homophobia establishes very clear rules of what it looks like to be friends with people of the same sex.
4. Homophobia can strain or break up families and communities, despite otherwise positive relationships.
5. Homophobia can mean that young queer, trans or questioning people feel pressured to become sexually active in order to prove that they are “normal.” This often leads to traumatic experiences, unplanned pregnancy and STIs.
6. Homophobia means that important information on safe queer and trans sex and sexuality isn’t taught in schools. Without this information, young people are put at a greater risk for HIV/AIDS and other STIs.
7. 3 out of 10 people who are targeted in a verbally or physically abusive way because of homophobia identify as heterosexual. It is often because they are not conforming to a specific standard of what it means to be “straight”.
8. Homophobia makes it hard for straight people and kaleidoscope people to be friends.
9. Homophobia, along with racism, sexism, classism, etc., is all a part of the social factors that make it hard to put an end to AIDS.
10. Homophobia makes it impossible to appreciate the diversity of sexuality and gender and prevents all people from being able to explore the possibilities for love and self-expression.

# Getting to Know Gender-Neutral Pronouns

|                                       |  |                                  |                                    |                                   |   |
|---------------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| <b>Feminine</b>                       | She laughed  | I called her                     | Her eyes gleam                     | That is hers                      | She likes herself                         |
| <b>Gender Neutral (Singular They)</b> | They laughed                                       | I called them                    | Their eyes gleam                   | That is theirs                    | They likes themselves                     |
| <b>Gender Neutral (Ze)</b>            | Ze laughed (pronounced “zee” as in the letter “z”) | I called hir (pronounced “here”) | Hir eyes gleam (pronounced “here”) | That is hirs (pronounced “heres”) | Ze likes hirself (pronounced “here-self”) |
| <b>Masculine</b>                      | He laughed   | I called him                     | His eyes gleam                     | That is his                       | He likes himself                          |

## Words That Are Transphobic And Why

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- **“You’re such a Tranny”**. Calling someone a Tranny, whether they identify as Trans or not, can be offensive. This may be a term people within the community use for themselves, but should not be as a joke or without a person’s consent.
- **Using the wrong pronouns or making assumptions about others’ gender identity**. It is important to respect the names and pronouns people prefer. If you are not sure, ask: “what are your preferred pronouns?”
- **Asking others about transperson’s identity or offering information about someone**. Inquiring about someone’s identity to someone else is inappropriate. Ask yourself why you want to know. If you are concerned about using the person’s preferred pronouns ask the person directly.
- **“That person doesn’t really look like a man/woman”**. What does a man or woman really look like? There is no one way to look like a man or a woman. It should also not be assumed that all Transmen want or have to strive to be masculine or that Transwomen should be feminine. Gender presentation is fluid and we should support all the ways people choose to present their gender.
- **“Why would you transition if you are going to be gay?”** Gender identity and sexual orientation are two separate aspects of one’s identity. This question demonstrates how heterosexual identity is more valued in our society and reinforces homophobia & heterosexism.
- **Transphobia**: the fear or hatred of transgender people or people who do not meet society’s gender role expectations. Transphobia is closely linked with homophobia & biphobia.
- **“What is your REAL name? I mean the one you were given at birth?”** Asking this question implies that the person’s chosen name and gender identity are not “real”. It is important to respect people’s choices around sharing or not sharing personal information.
- Calling someone “it” or “he/she” is demeaning and does not validate their identity or respect them as a person.

## Words That Are Transphobic And Why (cont'd)

- **“What are you REALLY? Have you had surgery, if not then you are not really a man/woman.”** Asking anyone personal questions about their bodies and/or surgeries is invasive and inappropriate. We don't ask non-Trans people what is under their clothes, nor should we ask Trans people. It is important to honor everyone's gender identity and not question their validity.

For more information contact the UC Davis LGBT Resource Center  
530-752-2452

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# Pro Homo & Radical Trans Teaching (Excerpt)

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Created by Kim Katrin Milan

- The absence of evidence is not the evidence of absence.
- Another's experience does not invalidate your own, but it should and necessarily does complicate your own.
- Privilege happens at the expense of others.
- Treat others the way that they want to be treated. Ask.
- Imagine that your allyship card expires at the end of the day.
- It is no one's responsibility to educate you but your own.
- Listen. Learn. Practice. Repeat.
- Acknowledge Privilege. Dissolve Guilt.
- Take up less space. Fall back.
- Collect your folks.
- Center. Listen. Acknowledge. Inquire. Move towards resolution. (CLAIM)

The full presentation is available online at:  
<http://prezi.com/7samgcfvle4/pro-homo-radical-trans-teachings/>

# Not Your Mom's Trans 101

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There is a huge problem in this society with the way that people are taught about gender. Children are indoctrinated from a young age to believe that there are only two sexes, corresponding with only two genders. Both sex and gender are taught as immutable, non-voluntary and completely beyond our control. This worldview is called the gender binary, and it has no room in it for us.

Trying to teach a new perspective to the victims of this extremely aggressive brainwashing can be daunting. In fact, the task can seem downright impossible. The temptation, therefore, is to “dumb things down” for the benefit of a cisgendered audience. This situation has given rise to a set of oversimplifications collectively known as “Trans 101.” These rather absurd tropes, such as “a [blank] trapped in a [blank]'s body” causes confusion among even well-meaning cis folks and feeds internalized transphobia among trans people. It also provides an endless straw-man fodder for transphobic ‘radical feminists,’ entitled ‘cisgender academics’.

Near the beginning of my transition, I myself taught “Trans 101” this way. I did this because I didn't know any better; because I had been taught to think of myself in terms of these same useless tropes, as an “FTM,” as a “female man,” as somebody who was “changing sexes.” Eventually, through a lot of intense discussions and a lot of tough love from people who were more knowledgeable, more radical, and more politically sophisticated than myself, I came to see things very differently.

I haven't tried to teach Trans 101 since extracting my head from my rectum. But I think the time has come for me to tackle the problem of explaining and defining what it means to be transgender without resorting to cissexist language. It strikes me as I contemplate this task, that Trans 101 is generally not only dumbed-down, but also declawed. There are truths that I must speak here that are incredibly threatening to a cissupremacist worldview, that attack its very foundations. But I for one am willing to do that. I am not here to make cis people comfortable or to reassure them that they are still the center of the gendered universe. In fact, I am totally fine with doing the opposite.

Without further ado, let's begin.



## Gender Assigned At Birth

Let's start at the beginning. A baby is born. The doctor says "It's a boy" or "It's a girl" based on the appearance of the child's genitals. If the genitalia cannot be easily categorized according to binary standards— that is, if the child is intersex— the doctor makes a decision. Surgery is then generally performed on the unconsenting infant to render its body more socially acceptable.

Whether the baby is intersex or not, the child is then raised as whatever arbitrary gender the doctor saw fit to assign.

"Cisgender" is the term for people who have no issue with the gender that they were assigned at birth. For whatever reason, they are able to live somewhat comfortably within the gender in which they have been cast. No one really knows why so many people are capable of fitting into such arbitrary categories.

Transgender people do not and cannot accept our assigned genders. We know ourselves to be something different than what we were told to be. We do not see the random gender scripts we were given by society as relevant to us. We know that there is a different way, a way of autonomy, self-creation, and self-definition. This is the path we must follow, because we can never be happy with the parameters that have been mandated for our behaviour and our bodies.

## The Binary

All cis people and many trans people are binary-identified. Given the options of "man" or "woman," we who are binary-identified are able to be comfortable with one, even if it is the opposite of what we were assigned. For example, I am a man who was assigned to live as a woman, therefore I am a trans man. My father is a man who was assigned to live as a man, therefore he is a cis man. Both of us are binary identified, both men, even though he is cis and I am trans.

## The Binary (cont'd)

It is a mystery why so many people are comfortable being categorized in just one of two ways. Just as nobody knows why there are so many cis people, nobody knows why there are so many binary identified folks.

In typical Trans 101 discussions, right now I would probably be explaining to you that “gender is a spectrum” and drawing a cute little line graph labeled “m” at one end and “f” at the other. But this would be fallacious, as well as total bullshit. Gender is not a line; gender is a huge three-dimensional space too big to be bounded by the concepts of “male” and “female.” Being trans is not always about falling “in between” binary genders, it’s about being something too expansive for those ideas to have meaning at all.

## Self-Determination For All Trans & Non Trans Folks

There are many trans people who are neither male nor female. They cannot be categorized as “either/or.” These people may use terms for themselves like genderqueer, androgynous, agender, or neutrois. They often use gender-neutral pronouns such as “ze/hir/hirs” or “they/them/their/theirs.” They can be both male and female, or neither, multi-gender, genderless, or something else completely.

Gender is a very personal and large spectrum. In my experience working with folks around gender, I have found that there are no two people who see gender the same way -- and that is beautiful.

## Self Identification

The language of self-identification is often used to describe trans people. “George identifies as a man”, “I respect Judy’s identification as a woman”, “Chris just told me that ze identifies as ‘genderqueer.’ Oh dear, that pronoun is going to take some getting used to.” In an effort to be trans friendly, an organization I know has posted small signs on their bathroom doors, underneath the “MENS” and “WOMENS” signs, saying “Self-identified men welcome” and “Self-identified women welcome” and “please be respectful of diversity.”

This co-opting of the language of self-identification is not only condescending, it completely missed the point. Cis people seem to think that self-identification is only for trans folks. They don’t have to “identify” as men and women– they just ARE! Their gender isn’t “self-identified,” it’s “self-evident!” What they fail to understand is that self-identification is the only meaningful way to determine gender. Any other method is wholly dependent upon what that doctor said way back when we were still wrinkly, writhing, screaming newborn messes, completely unformed as individuals and without any identity at all to speak of. The fact is that cis people self-identify too – they just happen to agree with what the doctor said all those years ago. Anybody who answers the question of “are you a man?” or “are you a woman?” with “yes” has just self-identified.

I know what you’re thinking. You’re thinking “but what about bodies? What about genitals? What about chromosomes? What about hormones? What about SEX? Doesn’t that have any bearing on gender?” Be patient, my darlings. I’ll get to that in just a moment.

## Bodies

Almost every Trans 101 will contain the truism “Sex is between your legs, gender is between your ears.” Gag. Or they may say, “Sex is physical, gender is socially constructed.” This simply isn’t true.

Sex is no more an immutable binary than is gender. There are intersex people who are born with non-binary genitalia, as I have already mentioned. There are people with hormonal anomalies. In fact, hormone levels vary wildly within the categories of cis male and cis female. Chromosomes too, vary. If you thought “XX” and “XY” were the only two possible combinations, you have some serious Googling to do. In addition to variations like XXY, XXYY, or X, sometimes cis people find out that they are genetically the “opposite” of what they thought they were— that is, a ‘typical’ cis man can be XX, a ‘normal’ cis woman can be XY.

The fact is that the concept of binary sex is based on the fallacious idea that multiple sex characteristics are immutable and must always go together. In fact, many of them can be changed, many erased, and many appear independently in different combinations. “Female” in sex binary terms means having breasts, having a vagina, having a womb, not having a lot of body hair, having a high-pitched voice, having lots of estrogen, having a period, and having XX chromosomes. “Male” means having a penis, not having breasts, producing sperm, having body hair, having a deep voice, having lots of testosterone, having XY chromosomes. Yet it is possible to isolate, alter, and remove many of these traits. Many of these traits do not always appear together, and before puberty and after menopause, many of them do not apply.

And what about women who get hysterectomies? Or who have had mastectomies for reasons related to breast cancer? Are they not women? What about a male soldier whose dick gets blown off by a mine? Is he not a man? The fallacies of binding identity to bodies, which are fragile, changeable things, subject to injury, mutilation, maiming, decay and ultimate destruction, should by now be clear.

Sex is as much a social construct as gender, as much subject to self-identification, and besides all that, quite easy to modify. Surgical and hormonal techniques are only becoming more sophisticated. If there ever was a need to consider biological destiny, that time is surely past.

## Bodies (cont'd)

The entire concept of “sex” is simply a way of attaching something social (gender) to bodies. This being the case, I believe the most sensible way to look at the question of sex now is this: a male body is a body belonging to a male— that is, someone who identifies as male. A female body is a body belonging to a female— that is, someone who identifies as female. Genderqueer bodies belong to folks who are genderqueer, androgynous bodies belong to androgynes, and so forth.

This is why I question the value of phrases like “man in a woman’s body” or “male to female.” Who is to say we ever were the “opposite sex?” Personally I will never again describe myself as “born female.” I was born a trans male and my years of confusion were due to being forcefully and repeatedly told that I was something else. This body is not a woman’s. It is mine, and I am not trapped in it.

None of what I say here is to minimize the necessity of surgery. Many trans people do experience body dysphoria. Many of us do seek hormones, surgery, and other body modifications. But the point is that, while such modifications may be necessary for our peace of mind, they are not necessary to make us “real men” or “real women” or “real” whatevers. We’re plenty real right now, thank you.

## Oppression

This brings us to what I think is the most important topic of all, and the topic which is most commonly left out of any Trans 101: transphobia and cissexism and how to stop them.

“Cissexism” can be defined as the system of oppression that considers cis people as superior to trans people. Cissexism is the belief that it is “natural” to be cis, and that being trans is aberrant. Cissexism holds the genders of trans people to more intense scrutiny than the genders of cis people. Cissexism defines beauty and attractiveness based on how cis people look. Cissexism prioritizes cis people’s comfort over trans people’s ability to survive. Cissexism believes that cis people have more right to have jobs, go to school, date and have sex, make decisions about their bodies, wear the clothes they want, or use public restrooms than trans people do.

## Oppression (cont'd)

Transphobia is the irrational fear and hatred of trans people. Transphobia is Silence Of The Lambs. Transphobia is referring to transgender surgery as self-mutilation. Transphobia is believing that trans people habitually “trick” or “fool” others into having sex with us.

Transphobia is believing that we are out to rob you of your hetero-or-homosexuality. Transphobia is trans people being stared at, insulted, harassed, attacked, beaten, raped, and murdered for simply existing.

If you want to be a good ally, you need to start taking cissexism and transphobia seriously right now. That means getting our goddamn pronouns right and not expecting a cookie for it. That means learning our names. That means not asking invasive questions or telling us how well we “pass.” (‘Passing’ generally means “looking cis.” Not all of us want to look like you, thank you very much.) That means deleting the words “tranny” and “shemale” from your vocabulary. That means understanding the immense privilege you have in your legally recognized, socially approved, medically assigned gender.

That means realizing that this is just the beginning, and that you have a lot to learn. That means realizing that it would be intrusive and importunate to ask the nearest trans person to explain it all to you, as if they didn’t have better things to do. That means hitting credible sites on the Internet and doing all that you can to educate yourself. And once you’ve done all that, maybe you can call yourself an ally, that is, if you’re still genuinely willing to join us in the hard work of making the world a less shitty place to be trans.

This will be a work in progress. I expect to receive a lot of commentary on this piece. I expect that it will be edited and possibly revised almost beyond recognition. I am OK with that. As always, there is more work to do. Trans 101 is a huge deal. Revising the way that it is discussed and taught is not a task for just one person. It’s something the entire community must take on.

This is only a first step. But I still hope we learned something today.

Kusha Amir Dadui



# Part Four: Community- Based Responses





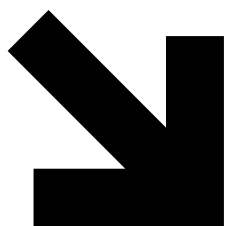
Photo Credit: R. Kelly Clipperton

**“What I love about being queer is that it is a blessing. I never fit within heteropatriarchy. I’m too bossy, too sexual, too loud. Being queer has offered me community with other women like me, women who are beautifully perfect already. I thank god for that and for all queers. It is with you that I find community, connection, transformation, a way forward and a way out. Everyone has gifts, queerness is ours.”**  
**- Chanelle Gallant**





# Overview



This chapter examines the power in our numbers, the potential in our collectivity, and the brilliance in our creative collaborations. Our individual actions are influenced by our family, friends, neighbours, community, and whoever else occupies the spaces we live in. Community-based responses are about unifying efforts of all of these people to heal wounds and ensure the fairest outcomes for all. Within restorative justice circles, this process involves both victims and offenders. Rather than involving the state in a resolution of an offence, the restorative justice circle prioritizes the healing of the individuals and community on their own terms.

A community-based response moves the spotlight away from the individual leader or genius auteur that can solve social issues independently. This shift shines a light on the collective talent and intelligence within a group of people. Community-based responses are about combining our skills, knowledge, and resources to provide care and support to prevent people from falling through the cracks in society.

Where oppressive circumstances become structural and systemic forces, it takes the convergence of genuine people to make sure everyone is held and heard. Community-based responses are about valuing different approaches, experience levels, and feelings in order to respond to complex situations.

John Caffery

# GSA Charter

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## From the 2013 OUTShine National GSA Summit

The Charter document below is a work in progress, meaning it represents our most recent efforts to reflect the ideas shared by LGBTQ and allied youth and educators from across the country. At the root of the Charter Project is an acknowledgement that no one document can completely reflect each of our unique and complex experiences within our own communities.

Information has been grouped under 5 themes by OUTShine organizers. The themes of Self, Visibility, Rules/Policy, Access, and Education recurred frequently throughout the Charter source materials, and serve as one framework for organizing and representing the input shared throughout the Charter creation process.

The Charter document shared here is one interpretation of the vast amount of data provided at OUTShine 2013, and online in the lead up to the Summit. There will be future opportunities to change this charter document, as well as to create your own!

### Self

- We are all unique and need respect.
- We do not need to be assimilated – we need to be celebrated!
- We need relationships based on trust, consent and empathy.
- Our self-care is activism.
- We ask for help.
- When we feel safe, we have an obligation to act in support of others.

## Visibility

- We are in every community!
- We need to see ourselves acknowledged in our schools, health classes, curriculum, libraries, communities, community events, social events, sports, theatre, music, drama, parades!
- We need all community centres to see us as central to our communities and to provide free community education classes (all ages) that teach anti-oppression practices and principles, and provide free pamphlets on sexual & gender diversity, and to host multi-generational events & story sharing sessions.
- We need information to be provided to families to help them become more accepting.
- We need an annual national summit with federal funding – which is widely promoted. We need our summit to be inclusive and accessible; ASL interpretation, workshops in different languages, always held in wheelchair accessible spaces, having support services (support groups, etc.) and especially working to bring out diverse racial & ethno-cultural youth.
- We have a right to be visible, fabulous and open about who we are and who we love.

## Rules/Policy

- Any student, in any school has a right to have a GSA. GSAs need to be part of the school culture, with public announcements, events, assemblies and our photos in the yearbook.
- If schools must have dress codes they must not be enforced differently for different genders.
- We need our schools, teachers and administrators to impose more serious implications or consequences for bigotry in high schools (racism, sexism, ageism, homophobia, gender phobia, ableism, classism, etc).

## Access

- We know our own names and pronouns. Let us tell you who we are.
- We need gender-neutral change/locker rooms/bathrooms.
- We need funding. Schools and governments need to provide us with this support.
- We need an online database of resources for GSAs with surveys, data collection & reports, a calendar of national/provincial/local events, highlighting exposure for smaller communities, leveraging funding and strategies to help create events in less resourced communities, creating more large scale and long term national goals and projects!

## Education

- Our teachers need education.
- They need to take student initiatives seriously.
- They need mandatory training on working with LGBTQ youth & parents.
- STUDENTS CAN EDUCATE TEACHERS.
- We need all our teachers and administrators to openly and outwardly support LGBTQ youth and be firm about challenging homophobia, transphobia and biphobia. We all need more education on identifying and breaking stereotypes.
- We need schools to provide safe spaces and resources that accommodate drop outs & youth who work, including providing flexible times, resources for negotiating social anxiety, and counseling.
- We need education about self-care, anti-oppression, consent, cultural appreciation, and queer history stories.
- We need un-biased, sex education that is inclusive of all bodies.
- We are peer educators.

# Leaving Evidence Archiving Project

Leaving Evidence is a community archiving project where Queer, Trans, 2 Spirit & Kaleidoscope community members are documented through a variety of mediums- sharing their contributions, hopes and fears for our intersecting communities.

In our curriculum and workshops, The People Project has worked to include past and present local content of the contributions and representations of 2 Spirit, Queer & Trans communities. We know how important it has been for our own reflections to learn that we have always existed, in rich diversity as scientists, sex workers, healers, cultural producers, community workers and creative imaginaries. This project was born out of a series of consultations with elder community



members including Punam Kholisa from our Advisory Council where they identified that they had so much to share about their work in the past, but nowhere to put it. Our youth members echoed that they were hungry for the stories of their elders and community members.

We also are interested in archiving any non-text information including flyers, photos, audio-visual material related to arts, culture, community-building, care- taking/giving and resilience. The project is ongoing, so please reach out to us to learn more, or if you have information that you want to offer to be archived.

This project can be found online at <http://leavingevidencearchiving.tumblr.com>.

Kim Katrin Milan



# The Fat Boi Diaries: Why Selfies?

Last week at an apartment party in Chicago’s Andersonville neighborhood on the North side, I whipped out my iPhone 5, told the folks at the gathering to press together, and clicked away. Posting the picture to my Instagram and linking it to my Facebook account completes a ritual that happens at least a hundred times a day. But, before I could put the camera away I heard a friend joke, read, throw a little shade (?) my way and say: **“Watch, tomorrow there will be like five picture of himself up there.”**

Yes, guilty as charged, I am a ‘Selfie’: one of those annoying people who take tons of self-pictures, declaring to the world that I look good and you know it. This is so true that the same friend had earlier brought up the topic with me; apparently he and another friend occasionally discussed my self-pictures. My narcissism flagged alarm. But, here is the thing: **No one ever asked me, “Why do you take so many selfies?”**

I mean, I am not traditionally phine, cute, or awkwardly endearing. I am fat. Daaaaaark. My nose is wide. My hair is kinky (a biracial friend once used my hair texture to describe to a white stranger what “bad hair” is, mind you, at the time my hair was short, combed, and nap-free, but I digress). My eyebrows are not plucked, and I swear my pores are visible. But this is the point.

I live in a world where this is celebrated and attainable:



(Photo from Black Men Dating Club on Facebook)

## The Fat Boi Diaries: Why Selfies? (cont'd)

I could go on, but you get the point. That is beautiful. No argument there. They may all be assembly line phine, but they are each phine. I even fail on quirk level:



Now note: I have limited the photos to black men; the reality is that in the GAY me of Trones, white boys tend to be the Lannisters (the most powerful, most often desired, and the ones most likely to toss their beauty privilege around), but I just figured for once we could focus on just us.

## The Fat Boi Diaries: Why Selfies? (cont'd)

I take my selfies because I am that guy who, unless he takes the picture or suggests it, doesn't get his picture taken. The friend who called me out on my selfies truthfully had very little right to judge- everyone takes pictures of him, with him, and for him. The same is true of almost all my friends. I live in a world where I didn't hear someone romantically call me beautiful and desirable till I was 26. I live in a world where either body privilege or race privilege is always against me. So I point my camera at my face, most often when I am alone, and possibly bored, and I click; I upload it to Instagram, and I hold my breath because the world is cruel and I am what some would call ugly, but I don't see it. At first I clicked so I could see what others saw, but I don't. So now I click and post and breathe, waiting for others to see what I see: beautiful dark skin, Afrika's son, a dream un-deferred, pretties eyes, and nice lips, and a nose that fits my face. I want them, you, to see that I am human, and there is a reason why I got to this size, but I owe you no explanation or justification for any part of my existence. I owe you no explanation or justification for my smile or my swag or my selfie. Hell I didn't even owe you this.



Like I said, I owe you nothing, but I owe myself everything.

Maurice Tracy



# Scenarios

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## Role Play & Forum Theatre Activity Developed by John Caffery

Explore both what is helpful and what is not helpful in your response.

1. In a discussion about movies, Luke shares that he saw a new movie on the weekend “That movie is so gay!” Joel replies. Kim tells Joel “don’t say that’s so gay”. “I didn’t mean it like that” Joel answers. How do you respond?
2. In a large drop-in environment, Matthew puts a music playlist on which includes songs with lyrics such as “Shoot the Bati boy”. Cheryl hears this lyric and looks upset. Matthew sees Cheryl’s reaction and tells her, it is just music, loosen up and dance to the hot beat”. How do you respond?
3. Maria is a new person to the community. She has a seat next to Pat, Joe and Starfish. Immediately Pat asks Maria if she is a boy or a girl. Maria replies, “My name is Maria”. Pat then asks in front of the group “Are you a real girl?” How do you respond?
4. You’ve noticed that Kelly has been attending the youth group for the past few months. She presents in a tomboy/stud manner and appears similar to studs in the lesbian community. Kelly has not identified herself in any way. She doesn’t seem to be connecting with the other youth and is generally pretty isolated and quiet. How do you respond?
5. The group is having an open and frank discussion about sex and it has been centered around gay male sexuality. The group in your corner of the room has 8 men and 5 women. Lisa and Olivia begin to discuss whether menstruation interferes in sexual play. Doug, Peter and Assan recoil and get upset and act rudely about the turn in the conversation. Doug tells the three people that he doesn’t want to hear about their bodies because he is gay. How do you respond?

## Scenarios (cont'd)

6. A large discussion about Halloween is occurring. A youth named Stella brings out their phone and shows pictures of them and a group of their friends dressed up as Indians. When Kumari, who is another youth in the group challenges them on their choice of costume, and tells them it is very problematic. Stella says she is tired of the politically correct police. She further explains that she has a friend who identifies as Two-Spirit who never said anything about it when they saw it. Stella said she just wants to have fun on Halloween. How do you respond?
7. A youth has a negative opinion about sex work and makes specific negative comments about people who are sex workers. He voices his opinion 'Sex work is disgusting and wrong' and offends another youth who is a sex worker. You are present during the conversation. The second youth spoke well in defense of themselves and their work. How do you respond?
8. Four youth are engaged in a conversation at your table. Julia has announced that she is getting married to Ella and that they are planning a cute and romantic wedding that will celebrate aspects of their cultures. She shares with the group that Ella identifies as bi-racial. Fei bluntly states that Ella is white. The fourth youth at your table is Edward, who is Ella's cousin. Edward and Julia seem upset and Fei unwilling to listen and simply continues her argument. How do you respond?
9. There is a large group discussion about whether in dating people have a particular "type". Manuel shares that for him "No Femmes and No Fatties" is what he posts online when using dating apps. How do you respond?
10. Mohammad and Louisa are at a Queer-centric event. They are having a discussion with some people about how they both identify as bisexual. Some people start saying they aren't "really queer" because they are in a romantic relationship with each-other. A heated debate arises. How do you respond?



# Part Five: Resource Guide





Photo Credit: Rodrick Valentine

**“Queer fits. It fits because it encapsulates the dynamism of my sexuality without imposing restrictions on my gender expression. Queer makes room for my femme ness and dis ability embodiment in a way that gay and same gender loving doesn’t. For me, queer means radiant darkness, radical love, and a million and one ways to resist and decolonize. Queer is imbued with deep spirituality and sweetness.”**  
**- Edward Ndopu**



# Useful Resources

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Prepared by SOY

These are a collection of resources that folks may or may not find helpful in supporting yourself or referring to another member of the Kaleidoscope community.

Trust yourself when you are accessing services and connecting to institutions. Take the time to perform self-assessment and check in with yourself about how the whole process is making you feel. When you are accessing a new service, when possible, bring a friend or ally. Ask as many questions as you need to and feel free to bring a notepad. If any place feels unsafe for you, you are allowed to leave. These are not one-size fits all solutions and we all deserve the support that we need.

Below we have also included a link to an Emotional First Aid Kit. “When I talk about Emotional First Aid I mean simple, body-based practices that can help us shift from triggered, reactive states, into centered, creative states. I’ve put together a “kit” of these portable, easy-to-learn tools to soothe us when we are in crisis-mode, so we can make better choices.”

<http://www.vanissar.com/blog/emotional-first-aid-for-the-holidays-or-anytime/>

## USEFUL INFORMATION & HELP LINES

### LGBT Youthline

The Lesbian Gay Bi Trans Youth Line is a toll-free service provided by youth for youth. “We’re here to offer support, information and referrals specific to your concerns”.

Phone: 1-800-268-9688

Website: <http://www.youthline.ca/index.php>

### Distress Centre

24 hour confidential and anonymous phone support for any concerns.

Phone: (416) 408-4357

Website: <http://www.torontodistresscentre.com>

## Useful Information & Help Lines (cont'd)

### **Foodlink Hotline**

FoodLink is a volunteer-staffed telephone referral service that connects people with food programs in their neighbourhood. The FoodLink database contains over 1300 food program listings in Toronto.

Phone: (416) 392-6655

### **Kids Help Phone**

Free, anonymous and confidential phone and on-line professional counseling service for youth. Big or small concerns. 24/7. 365 days a year.

Phone: 1-800-668-6868

Website: <http://www.kidshelpphone.ca>

### **Teen Sex Info Line**

Confidential telephone information and referral on sexual health issues. Youth 13-16.

Phone: 416-961-3200

Website: <http://www.spiderbytes.ca>

Address: 36B Prince Arthur Ave, Main Floor, Toronto

### **Aids and Sexual Health Info Line**

Free anonymous service/ Anonymous and non-judgmental counseling/Detailed information and support on HIV, AIDS, STDS/risk assessment/Safer sex activities/Birth control options/Emergency Contraception/Sexuality & Sexual Orientation/ Relationship Concerns/Issues related to harm reduction, including injection drug use, crisis intervention/ assistance in problem solving and decision making/ referral to appropriate clinics & community agencies.

Phone: 416-392-2437

Website: <http://www.toronto.ca/health>

Toll Free: 1-800-668-2437

### **Assaulted Women's Helpline**

Provides free crisis counseling & emotional Support/Information and referrals via telephone to women in up to 154 languages- completely anonymous and confidential. Available 24 hours a day.

Phone: 416-863-0511

Toll Free: 1-866-863-0511

## Useful Information & Help Lines (cont'd)

### **Drug and Alcohol Treatment Info Line**

Provide information about treatment services and supports in your community/ Listen, offer support and provide strategies to help you meet your goals/ Provide basic education about drug and alcohol problems.

Phone: 1-800-565-8603

Website: <http://www.drugandalcoholhelpline.ca>

## **HEALTH SERVICES**

### **Anishnawbe Health Toronto Q+ T+**

Health centre for the Native community, with traditional healers, nurses, and doctors. Counseling / Medical care & Dental care/ Traditional healing / Condoms. No OHIP required.

Crisis Line: 416-360-0486

24/7 Mental Management Service: 416-891-8606

Website: <http://www.aht.ca>

|            |                                |                      |
|------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| Locations: | 225 Queen Street East, Toronto | Phone: 416-360-0486  |
|            | 179 Gerrard St. East, Toronto  | Phone: 416-920-2605  |
|            | 22 Vaughan Rd, Toronto         | Phone: 416- 657-0379 |

### **Hassle Free Clinic Q+ T+**

Sexual health clinic/ STD testing and free treatment (drop in) 4pm- 6pm Tues & Thurs/ Condoms / HIV counseling and anonymous testing (by appointment) / Sexual Assault & Domestic Violence Crisis Support/ Birth Control Methods and Hormonal Contraceptives/ Fertility Awareness Methods/ Pregnancy Testing and Counseling/ Abortion referral/ Post abortion check ups/ Prenatal referral/ Pap test/ Hep A, Hep B and HPV Vaccine. No OHIP Required. Arrive an hour before closing to insure being seen.

Phone: WOMEN 416-922-0566 (by appointment only)

MEN 416-922-0566 (drop-in only)

Website: <http://www.hasslefreeclinic.org>

Address: 66 Gerrard Street East, 2nd Floor, Toronto

## Health Services (cont'd)

### **Planned Parenthood of Toronto Q+ T+**

Community sexual health centre for youths 13-29. Medical care/ Birth control/ Immunizations/ Nutritional Services/ Prenatal Services/ Pregnancy tests and counseling/ STD testing and treatment/ Anonymous HIV testing/ Counseling/ Assistance finding Food, Housing, Employment or Legal Aid. Offers both appointments and a drop-in clinic.

Phone: 416- 927-7171

Clinic Phone: 416-961-0113 ext. 165

Website: <http://www.ppt.on.ca>

Email: [ppt@ppt.on.ca](mailto:ppt@ppt.on.ca)

Address: 36B Prince Arthur Avenue, Ground Floor, Toronto

### **Shout Clinic Q+ T+**

No OHIP required. All Ages. Evening appointments available. Medical clinic/ Legal clinic/ Dental clinic/ Employment clinic/ Foot care clinic/ Checks-ups/ Treatments for illnesses and injuries/ Birth control/ STD test & treatment/ Health Counseling and education/ Pap test/ family doctor/Pregnancy tests/ Anonymous HIV testing/ Immunizations/ Needle exchange + Harm Reduction Program/ Safer sex supplies/ Counseling for stress and emotional problems/ Employment counseling/ Parenting counseling.

Phone: 416-703-8482

Website: [http://www.ctchc.com/site\\_st](http://www.ctchc.com/site_st)

Email: [info@ctchc.com](mailto:info@ctchc.com)

Address: 168 Bathurst Street, Toronto

## **QUEER & TRANS SPECIFIC SERVICES**

### **Anti-Violence Program (519) Q+ T+**

Addresses the problem of anti-gay and anti-lesbian violence, and meets the needs of men and woman who have been victimized by anti-gay and anti-lesbian attacks. Assistance with reporting/ Assistance with criminal justice system/ Court support/ Referrals to legal, medical, social and counseling services/ Self-defense courses/ Information and training on hate-motivation violence and same-sex partner abuse.

Phone: 416-392-6878 ext. 117

Website: <http://www.the519.org>

Email: [avp@the519.org](mailto:avp@the519.org)

Address: 519 Church Street, Toronto



## Queer & Trans Specific Services (cont'd)

### **LGBTQ Parenting Network**

The LGBTQ Parenting Network promotes the rights and well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and queer parents, prospective parents and their families through education, advocacy, research, social networking and community organizing.

Phone: 416-324-4100 ext. 5219

Website: <http://www.lgbtqparentingconnection.ca>

Email: [parentingnetwork@sherbourne.on.ca](mailto:parentingnetwork@sherbourne.on.ca)

Address: Sherbourne Health Centre, 333 Sherbourne St, Toronto

### **Parents, Friends of Lesbians and Gays of Metro Toronto (PFLAG) Q + T +**

Peer support for parents and friends of lesbians and gays. Monthly support meeting/ Telephone support line/ Home visits/ Confidentiality assured.

Monthly support meeting takes place on the 1st Wednesday of Every Month at 7:30pm at Kimbourne Park United Church, 200 Wolverleigh Blvd.

Phone: 416-406-6378

Website: <http://www.pflag.ca/toronto.html>

Email: [toronto.office@pflag.ca](mailto:toronto.office@pflag.ca)

Address: 200 Wolverleigh Blvd. Toronto

## **TRANS SPECIFIC SERVICES**

### **Meal Trans (The 519 Community Centre) Q + T +**

A drop-in program serving nutritious meals to low income and/or street-active transsexuals and transgender people. Monday drop-in for transsexuals and transgender people to socialize, find resources, and eat a free meal. Films, speakers, workshops, etc. Outreach / Referrals / Information / Resources / Advocacy / Support / Condom and lube distribution to transsexuals and transgender sex workers.

Phone: 416-392-6978 ext. 104

Website: <http://www.the519.org>

Email: [mpage@the519.org](mailto:mpage@the519.org)

Address: 519 Church Street, Toronto

## Trans Specific Services (cont'd)

### **Trans Youth Toronto (Trans Programmes) Q+ T+**

Drop-in run by trans-youth for transsexual / transgendered youth age 27 and under. Get together / Access resources / Information and referrals.

Phone: 416-392-6878 ext.104

Website: <http://www.the519.org>

Email: [jgonsalves@the519.org](mailto:jgonsalves@the519.org)

Address: 519 Church Street, Toronto

## **COUNSELING & SUPPORT GROUPS**

### **Central Toronto Youth Services (CTYS) Q+ T+**

Mental health centre for youth. Direct service/ Advocacy/ School Out Reach Program/ Group Work program/ Individual and Group Counselling/ Community support & intervention programs/ Youth Hostel Outreach Program/ Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Youth Program/ Black Youth Program/ Various Youth Justice Support Programs (Early Release Support program, Transition from Open Custody program/ New Outlook program).

Phone: 416-924-2100

Website: <http://www.ctys.org>

Email: [mail@ctys.org](mailto:mail@ctys.org)

Address: 65 Wellesley St., Suite 300, Toronto

### **East Metro Youth Services Q+ T+**

Mental health centre for youth 12-18 years old. Individual, assessment/ Consultation/ Treatment/ Individual and Family Counselling/ Referral/ Non-residential and residential treatment/ Community support/ Immigrant Settlement and Adaption Program/ Out and Proud Program.

Phone: 416-438-3697 ext. 421

Website: <http://www.emys.on.ca>

Email: [emys@emys.on.ca](mailto:emys@emys.on.ca)

Address: 1200 Markham Road, Suite 200, Scarborough

## Counseling & Support Groups (cont'd)

### **Family Services Toronto**

Family Service Toronto (FST) helps people face a wide variety of life challenges/ assist families and individuals with counseling/ community development/ advocacy and public education programs. Services are available to Toronto residents.

Phone: 416-595-9230

Website: <http://www.familyserVICEToronto.org>

Email: [sau@familyserVICEToronto.org](mailto:sau@familyserVICEToronto.org)

Address: 355 Church Street, Toronto

### **David Kelly LGBTQ Counseling Program**

Provides professional, short-term, individual, couple and family counseling to people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans or queer.

Phone: 416-595-9618

### **Griffin Centre**

The Griffin Center is an accredited non-profit, charitable, multi-service, mental health agency providing flexible and accessible services to youth, adults and their families.

Phone: 416-222-1153

Website: <http://www.griffin-centre.org>

Email: [contact@griffin-centre.org](mailto:contact@griffin-centre.org)

Address: 24 Silverview Drive, North York

### **519 Church Street Community Centre      Q+ T+**

Counselling and Advice/ Anti-Violence Program/ Various social, community and peer support groups/ Meal Trans program/ Queer Immigrant and Refugees Program.

Drop-in for homeless people and hostel residents.

Phone: 416-392-6874

Website: <http://www.the519.org>

Email: [info@the519.org](mailto:info@the519.org)

Address: 519 Church Street, Toronto

## Counseling & Support Groups (cont'd)

### **Supporting Our Youth (SOY)**

Community development project designed to improve the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered and transsexual youth in Toronto through the active involvement of adult communities. Soy also provides programs and opportunities for youth to engage in various social, art & culture and recreation activities.

Phone: 416-324-5077

Website: <http://www.soytoronto.com>

Email: [soy@sherbourne.on.ca](mailto:soy@sherbourne.on.ca)

Address: 333 Sherbourne Street, Toronto

### **TWO-SPIRITED PEOPLE OF THE FIRST NATIONS Q+ T+**

For Aboriginal Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered people in Toronto/ Counseling & Referrals/ Outreach and Education/Research Programs/HIV-AIDS Information / Same-sex domestic violence counseling / Talking circles / Traditional teachings / Services lodges / Social events

Phone: 416-944-9300

Website: <http://www.2spirits.com>

Address: 140 Front Street East, Suite 105, Toronto

## **SHELTERS**

### **Central Intake For Emergency Shelter**

Phone: 416-338-4766

Toll Free: 1-877-338-339

### **Covenant House**

Shelter and support for homeless youth.

Phone: 416-204-7030

Toll Free: 1-800-435-7308

Website: <http://www.covenanthouse.ca/Public/Home.aspx>

Address: 20 Gerrard St. East. Toronto

## Shelters (cont'd)

### **Eva's Place Satellite Shelter For Youth Q+ T+**

Co-ed youth shelter in North York 16-24 years old. Employment programs/ Housing programs/ Counselling/ Recreation/ Food/ Transportation/ Referrals

Phone: 416-229-1874

Website: <http://www.evasinitiatives.com>

Email: [info@evas.ca](mailto:info@evas.ca)

Address: 5248 Yonge Street, Toronto

### **Eva's Phoenix Q+ T+**

Transitional shelter and employment training facility for youth ages 16-29.

Housing Program/ Mentor Support Program/Employment training/ Life skills/

Apprenticeship programs

Phone: 416-364-4716

Website: <http://www.evasinitiatives.com>

Email: [info@evas.ca](mailto:info@evas.ca)

Address: 11 Ordnance Street, Toronto

### **Eva's Place Q+ T+**

Co-ed youth shelter 16-21 years old. 32 beds/ Food/ Clothing/ Hygiene/ Shower/ Housing and employment resources/ Referrals/ Counselling/ Case management/ Life skills/ In-house programming. Call ahead for intake.

Phone: 416-441-1414

Website: <http://www.evasinitiatives.com>

Email: [info@evas.ca](mailto:info@evas.ca)

Address: 360 Lesmill Road, Toronto

### **Nellie's Q+ T+**

Emergency shelter for women, or women with children, who are homeless or leaving violence. 36 beds/ Counseling/ Clothing/ Food/ Crisis intervention/ Advocacy/ Information and referrals/ Accompaniment to legal and medical appointments/ social, recreational and educational programs/ in-house programs such as parenting, housing, health, art, employment and anti-oppression/ Maximum stay 4 months

Crisis Line: 416-461-1084

TTY: 416-461-756

Website: <http://www.nellies.org>

Email: [community@nellies.org](mailto:community@nellies.org)

Address: 970 Queen Street East, Toronto

## Shelters (cont'd)

### **Second Base Youth Shelter    Q+ T+**

Co-ed youth shelter 16-21 years old/ Referrals/ Food/ Clothing/ Crisis intervention/ Counseling/ Employment Counseling/ Drop-in/ Call ahead

Phone: 416-261-2733

Website: <http://www.secondbaseyouthshelter.org>

Email: [info@secondbaseyouthshelter.org](mailto:info@secondbaseyouthshelter.org)

Address: 702 Kennedy Road, Scarborough

### **Stop 86**

(Women's Crisis Shelter- age 16-25)

Phone: 416-922-3271

Address: 86 Madison Ave. Toronto

### **1st Stop Woodlawn (YWCA-Toronto)    Q+ T+**

Shelter for young women 16 and up who are homeless or fleeing violence. 12 transitional beds for up to 2 years stay. Call for more information, or about vacancies. Private and shared dorm style furnished rooms/ shared washrooms (also wheelchair accessible washrooms)/ breakfast, bagged lunch, dinner/ lockers/ laundry/ T.V. rooms and lounges/ resource library with computer access/ community garden/ recreational activities and trips/ housing assistance/ assistance finding employment or getting into school/ counselling/ individual and group support programs. 24 hours staff / Counselling / Referral. Can stay up to 3 months

Phone: 416-961-8100 or 1-888-843-9922

Website: <http://www.ywcatoronto.org>

Email: [info@ywcatoronto.org](mailto:info@ywcatoronto.org)

Address: 87 Elm Street, Toronto

### **Turning Point Youth Services    Q+ T+**

Shelter for young men, 16-24/ Day program/Residential care and treatment/ Life skills / Connection to community resources/ Employment assistance/ Education/ Counseling & Clinical support/ Health/ Community building & housing support/ Recreation and Leisure activities/Referrals

Phone: 416-925-9250

Website: <http://www.turningpoint.ca>

Address: 95 Wellesley Street East, Toronto

## Shelters (cont'd)

### **YMCA House     Q+   T+**

Emergency shelter for men 16-24. Call for vacancies, or just come by. Hot break fast/ Dinner/ Housing worker/ Community outreach worker/ Counseling/ 50 beds/ Can stay up to 21 days, or possibly be extended to 3 months. ID required

Phone: 416-504-9700

Website: <http://www.ymcatoronto.org>

Address: 485 Queen Street West, Toronto

## **SEXUAL ASSAULT**

### **Sexual Assault & Domestic Violence Care Centre     Q+   T+** **(Women's College Campus)**

Emergency entrance on Grosvenor street west of Bay street. Medical assessment and treatment/ Collection of medical and legal evidence at request of client/ Social and psychological support/ Follow up medical and psychological services as required/ Safety planning/ Cultural interpreters/ Short term counseling (up to 20 sessions)/ Services offered for men and women

Phone: 416-323-6040

Website: <http://www.womenscollegethospita.ca/programs-and-services/abuse-and-sexual-assault/>

Address: 76 Grenville Street, Toronto

### **Toronto Rape Crisis Centre: Multicultural Women Against Rape     Q+   T+**

Court support & accompaniment/ Non-judgmental/ Respect of diversity/ Counseling/ Support/ Referral/ Self-help groups/ Information on alternative to legal system/ Court support/ Accompaniment/ Advocacy/ Support groups/ Library/ Children's room

Phone: 416-597-8808

Website: [www.trccmwar.ca](http://www.trccmwar.ca)

Email: [info@trccmwar.ca](mailto:info@trccmwar.ca) / [crisis@trccmwar.ca](mailto:crisis@trccmwar.ca)

Address: 25 Esplanade, Toronto

## DROP-INS

### **Evergreen Centre For Street Youth**

For street-involved youth under 25. Drop in/ Employment Center/ Health Care

Phone: 416- 929-9614

Website: <http://www.ysm.on.ca/evergreen.php>

Address: 381 Yonge Street, Toronto

### **Meeting Place (St. Christopher House)**

Drop-in for socially isolated and homeless people. Coffee/ Showers/ Laundry/ Phone and computers access/ Counseling/ Community kitchen/ Information and referrals/ Social and recreational programs/ Weekly Housing Worker/ Weekly legal worker (helps with landlord issues), Ontario Works/ Ontario Disability/ Support Program

Phone: 416-504-4275

Website: <http://www.stchrishouse.org/adults/meeting-place>

Email: [info@stchrishouse.org](mailto:info@stchrishouse.org)

Address: 588 Queen Street West, Toronto

### **Youthlink Inner City Q+ T+**

Individual, family and group counseling for youth 12-21. Residential treatment home for young women 14-18/ 3 co-op residences for young women 16-21/ Co-op residence in Scarborough for young men 16-24/ Street-involved youth 16-24 years

Phone: 416-703-3361

Website: <http://www.youthlink.ca/contact>

Email: [info@youthlink.ca](mailto:info@youthlink.ca)

Address: 747 Warden Ave, Toronto

## EMERGENCY ROOMS

### **Hospital For Sick Children - Emergency Dept.**

Phone: 416-813-5807

TTY: 416-813-0215

Website: <http://www.mtsinai.on.ca>

Address: 555 University Avenue, 7th Floor, Toronto



## Emergency Rooms (cont'd)

### **St. Michael's Hospital - Emergency Dept.**

Phone: 416-864-5094

Website: [www.stmichaelshospital.com](http://www.stmichaelshospital.com)

Address: 30 Bond Street, Toronto

### **Mount Sinai Hospital - Emergency Dept.**

Phone: 416-586-5054

TTY: 416-586-8305

Address: 600 University Avenue, Toronto

### **Toronto General Hospital - Emergency Dept.**

Phone: 416-340-3946

Website: [www.uhn.ca/TGH](http://www.uhn.ca/TGH)

Address: 200 Elizabeth Street, Toronto

### **Toronto Western Hospital - Emergency Dept.      Q + T +**

Phone: 416-603-5757

Website: [www.uhn.ca/TWH](http://www.uhn.ca/TWH)

Address: 399 Bathurst Street, Toronto

## LEGAL ASSISTANCE

### **Justice For Children and Youth      Q + T +**

Legal services for children and youth under 18, specializing in protecting the rights of those facing conflicts with the legal system, education, social service or mental health systems.

Legal advice/ Information and assistance/ Community outreach/ Public legal education/ Advocacy. Street youth legal services program (SLYS)

Phone: 416-920-1633

Toll Free: 1-866-999-JFCY (5329)

Website: <http://www.jfcy.org>

Email: [info@jfcy.org](mailto:info@jfcy.org)

Address: 415 Yonge Street, Suite 1203, Toronto

## HIV/AIDS

### **HIV & AIDS Legal Clinic (Ontario) Q + T +**

Non-profit, community-based legal clinic serving low-income people living with HIV/AIDS in Ontario.

Address: 65 Wellesley St. E, Suite 400, Toronto

Phone: 416-340-7790

Toll Free: 1-888-705-8889

TTY: 416-922-2352

TTY Free: 1-866-513-9883

Website: [www.halco.org](http://www.halco.org)

Email: [talklaw@halco.org](mailto:talklaw@halco.org)

### **Toronto People With AIDS Foundation**

We engage people living with HIV/AIDS in enhancing their health and wellbeing through practical and therapeutic support services and broader social change, and we inspire them to live into their dreams and discoveries.

Phone: 416-506-1400

Fax: 416-506-1404

Email: [info@pwatoronto.org](mailto:info@pwatoronto.org)

Address: PWA, 200 Gerrard St. E, 2nd Floor, Toronto

### **Positive Youth Outreach**

PYO is a peer based program at ACT that offers a variety of services to young people ages 16 - 29. PYO empowers, supports, and affirms the lives of young people under 30 living with HIV.

Phone: 416-340-8484 ext. 265 or ext. 281.

Address: 399 Church Street, 4th Floor, Toronto

Web: <http://www.actoronto.org/home.nsf/pages/positiveyouthoutreach>

## SUBSTANCE USE / SUPPORT / HARM REDUCTION

### **Narcotics Anonymous**

Self-help twelve program dealing with substance abuse. Call for more information.

Phone: 416-236-8956

Toll Free: 1-888-696-8956

Website: <http://www.torontona.org>

E-mail: [mail@torontona.org](mailto:mail@torontona.org)

Address: 33 Russell Street, Toronto

### **Maggie's Q+ T+**

Street outreach/ Resource centre/ Drop-in/ Support for victims of sexual assault/

Information on legal issues surrounding sex trade/ Promotion of safe sex practices/

Information and supplies/ Referrals/ HIV+AIDS+STD education/ Condom distribution / Bad trick and bad call sheets (Updated list of men who abuse sex workers).

Phone: 416-964-0150

Website: [www.maggiestoronto.ca](http://www.maggiestoronto.ca)

E-mail: [maggies.coord@rogers.com](mailto:maggies.coord@rogers.com)

Address: 298 Gerrard Street East, 2nd Floor, Toronto

### **Substance Abuse For African Canadians & Caribbean Youth, CAMHP**

SAPACCY is an empowering and capacity-building program aimed at providing services to a diverse clientele of black youth aged 13 to 24 in Toronto, Canada.

Phone: 416 535-8501 ext. 6767

### **The Works Q+ T+**

Harm reduction program for injection drug users. Needles/ Condoms/ Information about safer injection and smoking equipment/ Methadone & Suboxone/ Referrals to drug treatment and detox/ Testing for HIV+Hepatitis+TB / Counseling/ Two vans for injection drug and sex trade workers/ ID clinic

Phone: 416-392-0520

Address: 277 Victoria Street, Toronto

### **YMCA - Youth Substance Use Program (YSAP)**

For youth 14-24 years of age.

Non- residential treatment/ Assessment/ Crisis Intervention/ Counseling/ Outreach

Phone: 416-603-6366

Address: 7 Vanauley Street, Toronto

## EDUCATION

### **Triangle Program (Toronto District School Board) Q+ T+**

Transitional full-year program for students who have left school or are thinking of leaving because they have been harassed by homophobia. Continuous intake. Students are assisted in making plans to re-entering the mainstream educational world.

Phone: 416-393-8443

Website: <http://www.schools.tdsb.on.ca/triangle>

Email: [steven.solomon@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:steven.solomon@tdsb.on.ca)

Address: 115 Simpson Avenue, Toronto

## EMPLOYMENT / HOUSING ASSISTANCE

### **YES - Youth Employment Services**

Employment counseling/pre-employment training/ job placement services/self-employment business skills training/ job search assistance/ job development services/various workshops and information sessions

Website: <http://www.yes.on.ca/>

555 Richmond St W #711, Toronto Phone: 416 504 5516

1610 Bloor W, Toronto Phone: 416 535-8448

2562 Eglinton W, York Phone: 416 656-8900

### **St. Stephen's Employment & Training Centre Q+ T+**

Helping youth prepare for, and find work. Career counselling/ Resume preparation/ Job Connect Program for young aged 16-24 who are out of work and out of school. Employment & Career counselling/ Access to job postings/ On-the-job training/ Resume assistance/ Free workshops/ On-going support. Employment Resources Centre: Free services included computer use/ Internet access/ Job search workshops/ Job listings/ Books/ Newspapers and other resources/ Fax machines

Phone: 416-531-4631

Website: <http://www.ststephenshouse.com> / <http://www.jobhouse.ca>

Address: 1415 Bathurst Street, Suite 201, Toronto

## Employment/Housing Assistance (cont'd)

### **St. Stephen's Employment & Training Centre     Q+ T+**

Helping youth prepare for, and find work. Career counselling/ Resume preparation/ Job Connect Program for young aged 16-24 who are out of work and out of school. Employment & Career counselling/ Access to job postings/ On-the-job training/ Resume assistance/ Free workshops/ On-going support. Employment Resources Centre: Free services included computer use/ Internet access/ Job search workshops/ Job listings/ Books/ Newspapers and other resources/ Fax machines

Phone: 416-531-4631

Website: <http://www.ststephenshouse.com> / <http://www.jobhouse.ca>

Address: 1415 Bathurst Street, Suite 201, Toronto

### **Woodgreen Community Services**

Self-help employment centre. Information on community resources, job listings and job fairs/ Reference library with job search and career information/ Internet/ Computers/ Photocopier, printer, fax, phone, voice mail/ Workshops.

Email: [employmentservices@woodgreen.ca](mailto:employmentservices@woodgreen.ca)

Employment Resource Centre

Phone: 416-462-3110 ext. 2316     1080 Queen Street East, Toronto

Phone: 416-615-1515     1450 O'Connor Drive, Building 1, Unit 4, Toronto

### **Homelessness and Housing Help Services**

Homelessness and housing help services. One-on-one housing search support/ Private landlord registry / Hostel bed registry/ Information and referral/ Eviction prevention and landlord/ tenant mediation/ Long term case management services to obtain and maintain housing/ Harm reduction housing support and education/ Emergency relocation for rooming house tenants/ Budget counseling/ Telephone and fax access/ Landlord information and education. Rent Bank access centre. Access for Winter Warmth Fund.

Phone: 416-645-6000 Ext. 1142

Email: [housinghelp@woodgreen.org](mailto:housinghelp@woodgreen.org)

Address: 650 Queen Street East, Toronto

## Employment/Housing Assistance (cont'd)

### **Immigrant Services**

For youth ages 13 to 24. Settlement services/Counseling/Information and referral/Newcomer workshops/Worker and parent network support groups/Newcomer volunteer program/English language café/Microsoft Computer Certification Program/Social and recreational activities/Job Search Workshops. Services available in English, French, Mandarin, Cantonese, Tamil, Urdu, Bengali, Hindi Gujarati, Turkish, Swahili, Tagalog, Portuguese, German and Vietnamese. Call for appointment.

Phone: 416-645-6000 Ext. 2100 and Ext. 2315

Email: [jriddell@woodgreen.org](mailto:jriddell@woodgreen.org)

Address: 815 Danforth Ave, Suite 300, Toronto

### **Youth Job Centre**

Self-help employment Centre

Access to resource library/Internet/Computers/Photocopier, fax, phone, voice mail/Workshops

Phone: 416-462-3110 Ext. 2316

Website: [www.woodgreen.org](http://www.woodgreen.org)

Email: [whiwh@web.net](mailto:whiwh@web.net)

Address: 1080 Queen Street East, Toronto

# Trans-Specific Resources & Info

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## **Clinical & Community Resources for Trans People & Gender-Incongruent Youth**

[http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting\\_ClinicalCommunityResourcesForTrans\\_2013.pdf](http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting_ClinicalCommunityResourcesForTrans_2013.pdf)

## **Electrologists & Laser Technicians for Trans Women**

[http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting\\_LaserTechTransWomen\\_2012.pdf](http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting_LaserTechTransWomen_2012.pdf)

## **Guidelines for Trans Care**

[http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting\\_GuidelinesforTransCare\\_2012.pdf](http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting_GuidelinesforTransCare_2012.pdf)

## **Lawyers for Trans People**

[http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting\\_LawyersforTransPeople\\_2012.pdf](http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting_LawyersforTransPeople_2012.pdf)

## **Massage Therapists for Trans People**

[http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting\\_TransPositiveMassageTherapists\\_2012.pdf](http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting_TransPositiveMassageTherapists_2012.pdf)

## **Physicians & Endocrinologists for Trans People**

[http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting\\_PhysiciansForTransPeople\\_2013.pdf](http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting_PhysiciansForTransPeople_2013.pdf)

## **Psychiatrists, Psychologists & Psychotherapists for Trans People**

[http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting\\_TransPositivePsychotherapistsPsychologists  
Psychiatrists\\_2013.pdf](http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting_TransPositivePsychotherapistsPsychologistsPsychiatrists_2013.pdf)

## **Recommended Readings on Transgenderism**

[http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting\\_RecommendedReadings\\_2012.pdf](http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting_RecommendedReadings_2012.pdf)

## **Resources for Parents, Partners & Children of Trans People & Gender-Incongruent Youth**

[http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting\\_ResourcesForFamilyMembersPartnersofTrans  
People\\_2012.pdf](http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting_ResourcesForFamilyMembersPartnersofTransPeople_2012.pdf)

## **Resources for Trans & Queer Seniors**

[http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting\\_ResourcesforTrans&QueerSeniors\\_2012.pdf](http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting_ResourcesforTrans&QueerSeniors_2012.pdf)

**Resources on Disorders of Sex Development (Intersex)**

[http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting\\_DisordersSexDevelopment\\_2012.pdf](http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting_DisordersSexDevelopment_2012.pdf)

**Resources on Trans People with HIV/AIDS**

[http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting\\_ResourcesonTransPeoplewithHIVAIDS\\_2012.pdf](http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting_ResourcesonTransPeoplewithHIVAIDS_2012.pdf)

**Resources on “Two-Spirit” People**

[http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting\\_TwoSpiritPeople\\_2012.pdf](http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting_TwoSpiritPeople_2012.pdf)

**A Shorter Reading List on Transgenderism**

[http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting\\_ShortReadingList\\_2012.pdf](http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting_ShortReadingList_2012.pdf)

**Speech Therapists for Trans Women**

[http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting\\_SpeechTherapists\\_2012.pdf](http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting_SpeechTherapists_2012.pdf)

**Surgeons for Trans Men**

[http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting\\_SexReassignmentSurgeonsForTransMen\\_2013.pdf](http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting_SexReassignmentSurgeonsForTransMen_2013.pdf)

**Surgeons for Trans Women**

[http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting\\_SexReassignmentSurgeonsForTransWomen\\_2013.pdf](http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting_SexReassignmentSurgeonsForTransWomen_2013.pdf)

**A (Trans) Gender Glossary**

[http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting\\_TransGenderGlossary\\_2012.pdf](http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting_TransGenderGlossary_2012.pdf)

**Trans & Queer - Welcoming Faith Communities**

[http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting\\_TransQueer\\_WelcomingFaithCommunities\\_2012.pdf](http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting_TransQueer_WelcomingFaithCommunities_2012.pdf)

**Trans & Queer - Welcoming Meditation & Yoga**

[http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting\\_TransQueer\\_MeditationYoga\\_2012.pdf](http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting_TransQueer_MeditationYoga_2012.pdf)

**Trans Rights & Trans Activism**

[http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting\\_TransActivism\\_2012.pdf](http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting_TransActivism_2012.pdf)

**Trans-Specific Groups**

[http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting\\_TransSpecificGroups\\_2013.pdf](http://rrconsulting.ca/docs/RRConsulting_TransSpecificGroups_2013.pdf)



# How To Deal With Police

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From: Justice For Work & Youth

## **If you're questioned or arrested by police...**

- You should give your correct name and age (you should also give your address if you have one).
- Because they may be arresting you, ensure that you ask if you are free to go.
- If you're arrested, do not resist.
- The police must tell you right away why you're under arrest
- You do NOT have to say anything. It's best to remain silent and contact a lawyer
- If English isn't your first language, you can ask for someone who speaks your language.
- You have the right to call a lawyer AND a parent or adult you trust. The police must give you the phone number for a lawyer. Police have a list of Duty Lawyers that you can request. You get as many calls as you need.
- Get advice from a lawyer before you say anything to the police. You have the right to have a lawyer with you if you decide to say anything.
- The police cannot carry out any threats or promises to make you say or write anything.
- Remember, anything you say may be used against you in court.

## **If you are under arrest...**

You can be arrested only when a police officer believes that:

- You have committed an offence
- You are committing an offense
- He or she has a warrant for your arrest

The police can decide whether or not to arrest you and to lay charges. In making the decision, they may look at such things as:

- Your criminal record
- Previous police warnings you have received;
- Your attitude during contact with the police

## How To Deal With Police (cont'd)

If you do not know if you are under arrest, ask the police officer. The police must tell you if you are under arrest and on what charge(s). If you are not under arrest, you are free to go your own way.

### **If you are stopped and questioned...**

- A police officer should not stop you for questioning without a reasonable basis for thinking you have broken or are about to break the law.
- If the police stop you and ask you for your name, address, age etc. It is a good idea to answer politely. You might want to ask the police officer why he wants to talk to you.
- If the police believe that you have committed an offense, they will sometimes let you off with a warning, but if you do not give your name, address and age they might feel that they need to arrest to obtain this information.
- If police ask you other questions, you do not have to answer. You cannot be arrested for refusing to answer another question.

### **Being searched...**

- The police can search you once you have been arrested, or when they believe you are carrying illegal drugs or a weapon.
- The police can also search you when they believe you have liquor in your possession and you are under the legal drinking age.

### **Making a Complaint...**

There are two types of complaints. They relate to: the policies of services provided by a police service; or the conduct of a police officer.

Only the person directly affected by the incident may make a complaint. A complaint must be in writing and must be signed by the person making the complaint. You may write your complaint in a letter or you may use a standard form, which you can get from your local police station. You must usually make a complaint within 6 months that the incident took place. A complaint must be mailed, faxed or delivered to any municipal police station.

# Essence at SOY

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Essence at SOY is a place for youth to gather to uncover, discover and recover their deeper selves. Youth come to learn, socialize and share wisdom through workshops, guest speakers and discussions about different non-denominational and queer-positive ideas and practices of spirituality, faith and community.

The Essence program at SOY is very unique in its design and delivery. Through experiential exercises, youth learn how to creatively and courageously manage and work with healing personal trauma in a non-clinical, non-therapeutic environment; they discover new and beautiful aspects about their value and worth as queer and trans people; they learn about traditions that place positive spiritual value on queer and trans identities; they have many opportunities to unpack the discrimination that they experience from their communities of origin around religious homophobia and transphobia; through peer support and adult mentors they are able to further develop their self-esteem and confidence; they have many opportunities to validate, reclaim and redevelop their spiritual identities; through ongoing exploration youth learn to develop a keen sense of self-awareness and personal power that is based in self-knowledge, and so much more.

Participants have expressed continuously that finding Essence was and is a huge relief for them. Many participants found themselves alienated from their communities of origin upon coming out, or in some cases, have chosen to leave their communities of origin based on fear of the treatment they would receive if they came out. Many of these communities of origin were also the youths' only connection to a religious community.

Often religious communities provide the foundation for communities of origin. Without access to these communities, youth often find themselves left with a profound lack of community and the need for a space to continue with their spiritual explorations. Essence has offered them a place to reconnect with that part of themselves, in the company of other youth with similar stories, and adults who have walked down a similar road.

Adam Benn

# The Ontario Rainbow Alliance of the Deaf

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The Ontario Rainbow Alliance of the Deaf is a not-for-profit Ontario-wide organization that serves deaf, deafened and hard-of-hearing people who are part of the LGBTQ community. ORAD's main goal is to provide social and educational events that bring the Deaf community together and raise awareness on issues of the Deaf LGBTQ communities.

ORAD has played a really important role in my life for the past few years. I grew up wearing hearing aids and had to endure a lot of bullying because of that. Growing up I knew no one who was Deaf, hard-of-hearing or who wore hearing aids, so I always felt very isolated in that sense. When I entered middle school I refused to wear hearing aids in order to prevent bullying, but was then picked on for not being straight. ORAD provided me with a space to reconcile the two parts of my identity that I had struggled with all my life.

One of the things that I love about ORAD is the closeness of the community. In terms of community, Canada is very different from my native Venezuela. In the queer Deaf community I felt welcomed and included and people were very close, they even hugged when saying hello and goodbye! I soon made new friends, started learning a new language (American Sign Language) and I was nominated to join the board of directors in 2011. I was only 18 when I was nominated, and I was very nervous and did not know what I was getting into. The past 2 years as a board member have been a constant and important learning process. I was able to connect with many people in different communities, learn advocacy skills and developed skills that are useful in my professional life.

I have a lot to thank ORAD for; it has given me community, a sense of identity and a sense of pride.

Javier Cacheiro  
ORAD Secretary

**ORAD Materials are available for loan at the ArtReach office – for more information, contact [info@artreach.org](mailto:info@artreach.org)**

# The Forever Fierce

## Queer Newcomer Youth Does Jane's Walk Guided by: SOY's Express group (Queer Newcomer Youth)

The fierce walk of the newcomer queer youth began at the Aids Memorial (The 519 Church Street Community Centre), where experiences of friendship have built emotional support and friendships. Next, the group walked south along Church Street, where many club scenes and coffee places have been the scene of funny stories! Then, we went along Carlton Street until we reached our final destination: the Sherbourne Health Centre, where Supporting Our Youth is held and celebrated throughout the year. Indeed, our walk can give you a glimpse of the many activities that capture the queer newcomer young hearts.

Supporting Our Youth (SOY) is a dynamic community development program designed to improve the lives of 2SLGBTIAQQ youth in Toronto. SOY's goal is to create healthy and inclusive spaces that help provide supportive housing and employment opportunities.



The Express support group is part of the SOY program, specifically held for queer newcomer youth in need of settlement services, recreation, and legal advice. The drop-in service is on a weekly basis, every Tuesday from 6pm-8pm. This walk was the only one that was lead by queer youth, so it was very important to stand out fiercely. As the organizer, I made sure of this by coming up with a super queer title. The day of the walk, I could not believe my eyes: the group came up with what I ended up calling 'the royal blue couture realness fierceness' (hahaha). It was such an awesome look that they even captured the attention of Richard Rhyme, photographer and media organizer of The 519 Church St. Community Centre. I was just truly amazed at how happy and motivated the group was. In better words, their motivation was turned visible.

A video of the event can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PC5dz-nw9Ls>

# Queerstory

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Produced by Year Zero One YZO

Explore the sites and sounds of Toronto's vibrant and storied queer history with Queerstory, a free locative app. This walking tour app will lead you to more than 30 points of interest where significant events occurred. Navigate through intriguing sites and uncover the political, cultural and social history of Toronto's queer community. Experience unique mini-docs with rare archival footage, hidden stories and site interviews with a colourful cast of characters. Meander through two queer sites where performance artist Keith Cole and new media artist Caitlin Fisher lead you on their mediated interpretations of queer history. Discover site related excerpts of documentaries from queer Canadian filmmakers David Adkin, Lynne Fernie, Harry Sutherland and others embedded along points in the tour.

You can access the app here: <http://www.queerstory.ca>



Kiley May

Toronto

What I love about being QUEER is... I'm a diamond amongst stones. It makes me special, precious and outstanding. As a genderqueer trans woman, I stand out from the other queers. I'm FREE, and people will never forget me.

