



My Drift

Title: The LGBTQIA2S+ Community

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The “WHAT?” Community. I must live a sheltered life since I didn’t have a clue what some of those letters mean before doing research for this article. Just in case you want to know what LGBTQIA2S+ means, here you go:

LGBTQIA2S+ is an acronym for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, Two-Spirit, plus the countless affirmative other ways in which people choose to self-identify.



The New Overall LGTBQIA2S+ Rainbow Pride Flag

Did you know that there are now 68 terms that describe gender identity and expression?

Did you know that there are already over 100 terms to describe a person’s sexuality and there will surely be more in the future?

Simple me! Until later in life, I thought there were two human gender identities: Male and Female. I also thought there were two terms for a person’s sexuality: Heterosexual and Homosexual. Sorry – the word “homosexual” is now considered a bad word and should not be used.

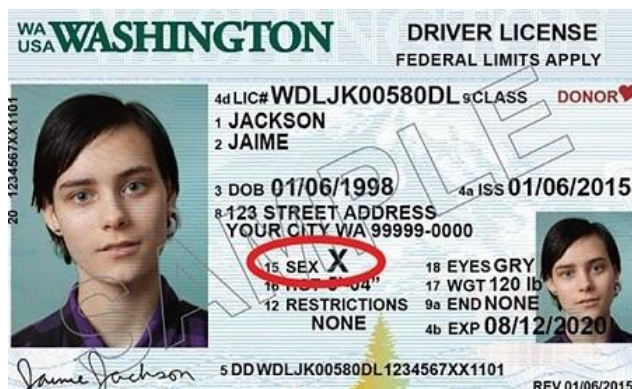
In this article, we will look at some of the more popular sexual orientation and gender identity descriptions and expressions.

GENDER IDENTITY AND EXPRESSION

A person's gender (sex) is currently assigned at birth based on one's physical biology. Yes, the doctor looks “down there” and determines if you are a boy or a girl. However, in rare cases (about 1 in 4,000 births), the doctor looks “down there” and can't tell if the baby is a male or female – it appears to be both. In this case, the birth certificate can show the third gender option that can be “Intersex” or “Non-binary” or “X”.



If the gay pride community have their way, gender will be removed entirely from a person's birth certificate.



In about half of US States including Hawaii, a gender designation of “X” on the driver's license is valid. It is also valid on all US passports. Again, “X” means a person's gender is not exclusively male nor female.

Mx. (Instead of Mr. or Ms.) is the title used for gender neutral.

Non-Binary is an umbrella term for gender identities that are not solely male or female—identities that are outside the gender binary.

Can you assign any gender identify you want to yourself? Yes – apparently so. The term “gender identity” first appeared in the 1960s. It referred to a person's inner sense of belonging to the category of male or female. In time, the term came to include people who identify in other ways. It refers to a person's own sense of their gender, regardless of the sex a doctor assigned to them at birth.

Here is the short version of how the LGTBQIA2S+ rainbow pride community describes it:

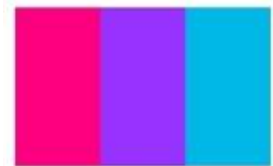
- ✚ One's sex (male, female, or intersex) is usually assigned at birth based on one's physical biology.
- ✚ One's gender (male, female, genderqueer, etc.) is one's internal sense of self and identity.
- ✚ One's gender expression (masculine, feminine, androgynous, etc.) is how one embodies gender attributes, presentations, and roles.

Gender Identities and Expressions



Let's look at a few of these gender identities and expressions terms. Most have their own communities along with a rainbow pride flag.

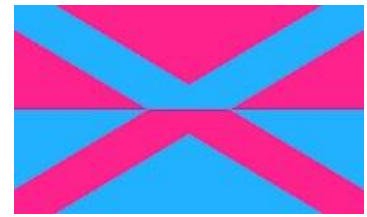
Androgyny - The mixing of masculine and feminine gender expression or the lack of gender identification. This term is sometimes used by people who identify as genderless, non-gendered, beyond or between genders, or some combination thereof.



Cisgender - A gender identity that society considers to “match” the biological sex assigned at birth. The prefix “cis” means “on this side of” or “not across from.” A term used to call attention to the privilege of people who are not transgender.



Crossdresser - A person who wears the clothing of the “opposite” gender, and who is someone who considers this an integral part of their identity may identify as a crossdresser (Note: the term crossdresser is preferable to transvestite, and neither should be used to describe a transgender or transsexual person). Cross-dressing is not necessarily tied to erotic activity or sexual orientation.



Genderqueer/Third Gender/Gender Fluid - These terms are used by people who identify as being somewhere between and/or other than male or female. They may feel they are neither, a little bit of both or they may simply feel restricted by gender labels.



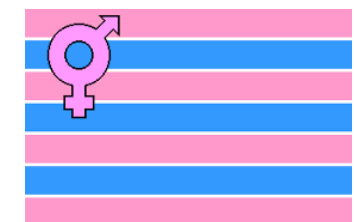
Intersex - A general term used for a variety of genetic, hormonal, or anatomical conditions in which a person is born with a reproductive or sexual anatomy that doesn't seem to fit the typical definitions of female or male. Some intersex individuals identify as transgender or gender variant; others do not.



Transgender - First coined to distinguish gender benders with no desire for surgery or hormones from transsexuals, those who desired to legally and medically change their sex. Recently, transgender has become an umbrella term popularly used to refer to all people who transgress dominant conceptions of gender, or at least all who identify themselves as doing so.



Transsexual - The term transsexual has historically been used to refer to individuals who have medically and legally changed their sex, or who wish to do so. Most transsexual people feel a conflict between their gender identity and the sex they were assigned at birth.

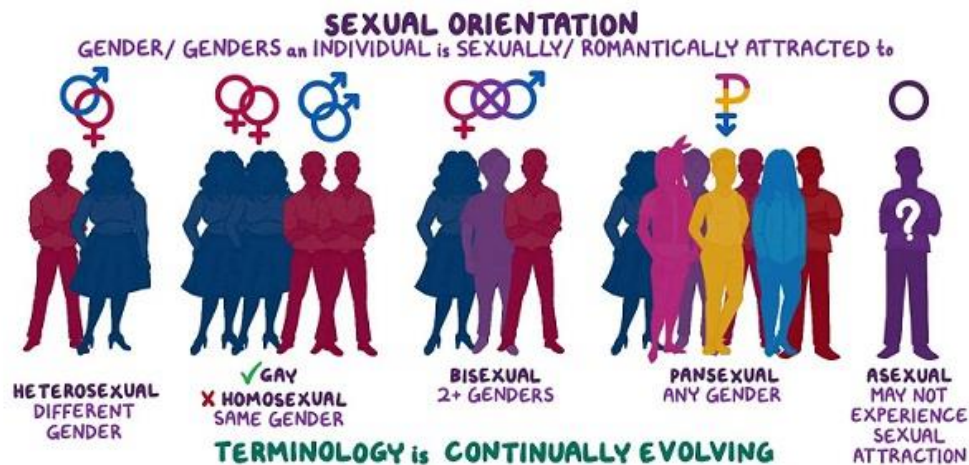


Two-Spirit – A person who identified with the Native American tradition of characterizing certain members of the community as having the spirit of both the male and female genders.



SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Sexual orientation is about who you're attracted to and want to have relationships with. The primary sexual orientations include gay, lesbian, straight, bisexual, and asexual.



Sexual orientation is different from gender and gender identity. Sexual orientation is about who you're attracted to and who you feel drawn to romantically, emotionally, and sexually. Gender identity isn't about who you're attracted to, but about who you ARE — male, female, genderqueer, etc.

This means that being transgender (feeling like your assigned sex is very different from the gender you identify with) isn't the same thing as being gay, lesbian, or bisexual. Some people are attracted to people of a particular gender, others are attracted to people of more than one gender. Some are not attracted to anyone.

Let's look at a few of these sexual orientations along with their associated pride flag.

Asexual – A person not sexually attracted to anyone and/or no desire to act on attraction to anyone. Does not necessarily mean sexless. Asexual people sometimes do experience affectional (romantic) attraction.



Bisexual – A person attracted to people of one's own gender and people of other gender(s). Two common misconceptions are that bisexual people are attracted to everyone and anyone, or that they just haven't "decided."



Gay – Gay generally refers to a man who is attracted to men. Sometimes refers to all people who are attracted to people of the same sex. The term “homosexual” has been used for this also, but it has been replaced by the words “gay” and “lesbian”.



Lesbian - A lesbian is a woman who is physically and romantically attracted to other women.



Pansexual/Fluid – A person who is attracted to people regardless of gender. The terms “omnisexual” or “polysexual” are sometimes used and have a similar meaning.



Questioning – A person who may be unsure of, reconsidering, or chooses to hold off identifying their sexual identity or gender identity or expression.



Queer – This has been traditionally a derogatory term, but it has been reclaimed and appropriated by some LGBTQ individuals as a term of self-identification. It is an umbrella term which embraces a matrix of sexual preferences, gender expressions, and habits that are not of the heterosexual, heteronormative, or gender-binary majority.



Straight – A person attracted to people of the “opposite” sex. It is also generally used to refer to people whose sexualities are societally normative. Alternately referred to as “heterosexual.”



Sapiosexual - You might be seeing this word used in social media and dating app bios more often these days. A sapiosexual person is someone whose attraction is based on intelligence rather than sex or gender.



GAY PRIDE MARCHES

Gay pride or just pride marches are happening across the U.S. in almost every major city.



New York City – 50th World Pride March



San Francisco



Honolulu

INTERESTING POLL AND STATISTICS

A new poll published in Feb 2022 has found that more adults identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender than ever before. According to a recent Gallup poll, 7.1% of United States adults identify as LGBT. That's up from 4.5%, based on the company's 2017 data. In 2012, when Gallup began tracking the measure, that number was 3.5%.



For the first time, Gallup also asked respondents to indicate their precise sexual orientation, as opposed to responding "yes" or "no" to whether they identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. The poll found that more than half of LGBT adults (54.6%) identify as bisexual, about a quarter (24.5%) as gay, 11.7% as lesbian and 11.3% as transgender. An additional 3.3% used a different non-heterosexual term to describe their sexual orientation, such as queer or same-gender-loving. Respondents could give multiple responses, bringing the total to over 100%.

Notably, the generational group that has the highest percentage of people who identify as LGBT is the youngest -- Generation Z (born 1997 to 2002) -- with 15.9%. That compares to 9.1% of millennials (born 1981 to 1996), 3.8% of Generation X (born 1965 to 1980), 2% of baby boomers (born 1946 to 1964) and 1.3% of traditionalists (born before 1946).

THE LGBTQIA2S+ COMMUNITY PROBLEMS AND ISSUES

LGBT people were more likely to have a lower annual income, lack money for food or healthcare, and be unemployed. They were also more likely to experience health problems, suffering from more mental health and substance abuse issues than their heterosexual peers.

Bullying, family rejection, and homelessness are also real threats to the health and well-being of LGBT young people. Every day, thousands of LGBT youth in the United States face injustice in schools, danger in their homes, or uncertainty on the streets.

Fact Sheet on Injustice in the LGBTQIA+ Community

Violence - LGBTQIA+ people are still four times more likely to experience violence in their life than their straight counterparts. FBI data from 2019 illustrates a rise in anti-LGBTQIA+ hate crimes, including higher rates of police brutality. LGBTQIA+ people frequently face threats, harassment, and violence online, and regularly see comments that deny their humanity and right to exist.

Racism - People of color face discrimination from within the LGBTQIA+ community. Narratives and positions of power are often monopolized by white-middle and upper-class members of the community, resulting in discrimination in representation.

Transphobia (Irrational fear of, aversion to, or discrimination against transgender people) - A record-breaking number of murders against trans people occurred in 2020 — the majority of whom were women of color. The risk of sexual violence is also increased for trans people; 50% of transgender people have been sexually assaulted at least once in their life. White transgender people are also twice as likely to be unemployed due to discrimination, with trans people of color being four times more likely.



Workplace Harassment and Bullying

Sexual Assault and Harassment - Forty-four percent of lesbian women have experienced rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner in their lifetime, while 26% of gay men have as well (that number increases to 37% for bisexual men). Bisexual women, trans women, and women of color experience higher risks. 70% of LGBTQIA+ members of the community have been sexually harassed at work, and 66% were afraid to tell their employer for fear of being outed.

Poverty - Members of the LGBTQIA+ community are more likely to experience poverty than their straight counterparts. This is tied to higher rates of employment discrimination, housing discrimination, and denial of adequate health services — made even worse amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mental Health and Suicide - Due to the stress and threat of discrimination, LGBTQIA+ individuals are twice as likely to experience mental health issues in their lifetime and have more than double the rate of depression than the heterosexual population. Suicide is a leading cause of death for LGBTQIA+ people ages 10-24, and across their lifespan, LGBTQIA+ people attempt suicide at a disproportionate rate. LGBTQIA+ youth are more than five times more likely to die by suicide than their heterosexual peers.

The Denial of Inclusive Identities - There is still a great deal of exclusion that occurs in the LGBTQIA+ community. Trans-exclusionary feminists deny transgender women the right to identify themselves as women and believe they should not be allowed to access women's restrooms or participate in sports. Bisexual individuals often face discrimination within the community when individuals see them as straight or "not queer enough" or are thought to be confused and not truly a member of the community. This is similar for asexual individuals, who are regularly met with disbelief from others about the nature of their identity or dismissed as "confused." Individuals who identify in the + category, such as pansexual, demisexual, sapiosexual, etc., are often mocked for their sexual orientation as well. Conversion therapy, which attempts to "cure" people with prayer, electric shocks, or other painful and abusive methods, has been historically used against members of the LGBTQIA+ community, and is still a practice used in the United States.

Trauma and Family Conflict - LGBTQIA+ individuals experience trauma at a higher rate than their heteronormative counterparts. Forty-six percent of homeless LGBTQIA+ youth ran away because of they were disowned by their family due to their sexual orientation and/or gender identity; 43% were kicked

out of the house by their parents; and 32% faced physical, emotional, or sexual abuse at home. LGBTQIA+ adults face regular institutional discrimination when attempting to adopt a child and unequal access to health care when married, or when denied the right to marry.

Isolation and Hostility - Forty-two percent of LGBT people report living in an unwelcoming environment in the USA and face potential hostility when traveling abroad. In a recent survey, 97% of gay and bisexual men and 99% of lesbians chose discrimination as their greatest concern when travelling. Twenty-one percent of transgender travelers reported anxiety about air travel due to intrusive security checks, identification or misnaming/misgendering, and general discrimination, while 45% of travelers feared being physically or verbally abused or harassed due to being transgender.

More than 50% of LGBTQ workers reported to having hide the nature of their personal relationships or romantic partnerships out of fear of hostility at work, while approximately one-fourth altered aspects of their personal or work lives in an attempt to avoid discrimination.

Representation - Lack of diverse and inclusive accurate depictions of LGBTQIA+ people in media and popular culture is both common and harmful. Even when included in media, LGBTQ people are overwhelmingly viewed in terms of hyper-stereotypical depictions and are rarely main characters but frequently villains. LGBT characters were more likely to die or face unfavorable outcomes.

Overburdening - LGBTQIA+ people are continuously burdened to undertake immense emotional and literal labor in service to educating others, or in intervening upon the aforementioned disparities. There is also a disproportionate expectation to make others “feel okay” in their presence or in social situations. Society often has the unjust assumption that LGBTQIA+ people are obligated to educate others on social issues, or that it’s okay to ask questions about their sexuality or gender identity. Thirty-three percent of transgender patients reported that they had to teach their doctor about transgender issues in order to receive appropriate care.

LGBTQIA+ people are also overburdened in doing the work of whistleblowing, activism, LGBTQIA+ scholarship, and in ensuring inclusive spaces for the community at large.

There is currently a Coordinated Attack on Trans Student Athletes

Transgender athletes want to participate in school sports for the same reason as anybody else: to find a sense of belonging and social engagement, to be a part of a team, and to challenge themselves. But states and schools across the country are trying to exclude trans people from enjoying the benefits of sports on equal terms with their cisgender peers. Not only do these proposed laws discriminate against trans youth in ways that compromise their health, social and emotional development, and safety, they also raise a host of privacy concerns.

The organizations leading these attacks on trans athletes' rights are the same organizations that pushed false myths about trans people in restrooms. Just like it was never about restrooms, today's fight is not about sports. It's about erasing and excluding trans people from participation in all aspects of public life. It's about creating "solutions" to "problems" that don't exist and, in the process, harming some of the most vulnerable young people in the country. Meanwhile, leading advocates for women's sports support inclusion of women and girls who are transgender and warn that these efforts will ultimately harm all athletes in women's sports.



Swimmer Lia Thomas becomes first transgender athlete to win an NCAA D-I title

University of Pennsylvania swimmer Lia Thomas became the first transgender athlete to win an NCAA Division I title after finishing first in the women's 500-yard freestyle event on 23 Mar 2022.

Thomas pulled away in the final 150 yards to win in 4:33.24.



Lia Thomas

Thomas, who previously swam for the men's team at Penn, has come to personify the ongoing debate on trans women's participation in sports and the balance between inclusion and fair play.



Lia Thomas

Will Thomas

So, what do you think? Was it fair to the other competitors for transgender Lia Thomas to win this NCAA title? I'm all for LGBTQIA+ and transgender rights but I think this might be going a little too far. I don't think it was fair! Do you?

Alright, time to talk about everybody's favorite topic – What restroom should transgenders and crossdressers use?

Because safe and equal bathroom access is a fundamental human right, as well as the law of the land, every person has the right to use the bathroom consistent with their current gender identity, regardless of their gender assigned at birth. It is illegal to discriminate against an individual on the basis of gender identity or expression, including denying access to bathrooms.



Schools and public places across America have been ordered to ensure that their restrooms accommodate everyone. With that said, discrimination and threats happen all the time against transgender and other LGBTQIA+ people.

Most businesses, schools, and other public places in the U.S. still have two (2) restrooms labeled “Male” and “Female” or “Men” and “Women” or like this picture:



Straight women don’t like to see men in their restroom. Most men don’t care if a lady walks into the men’s restroom and goes into a stall. In the past couple of years, I have been in several women’s restrooms. No, I didn’t have a sex change

or become a cross dresser. I became a caregiver for my wife, and she requires a wheelchair when she goes to various doctors and other places outside our home. Well, on most of these trips, she needs to use the bathroom, so I have to take her into the women's restroom. Most of the time there is no problem because we make sure that no one is in the restroom, and we can lock the door. However, some restrooms don't have any locks or require a key to get in and there is no way to lock the door from the inside. Once in a while a lady will come into the restroom while I'm standing around waiting for wife to do her business. Most of the time, the lady will see the wheelchair and understand why I'm in there but there are some women who give me the "stink eye" and ask why I'm in the women's restroom. Being a caretaker is no fun!

Solutions to the Restroom Issue

The easiest solution to this issue is to just make all existing restrooms "Gender Neutral" or "For Everybody". I know there will be some unhappy people who want the same gender restrooms (Male or Female) as before. In this case, many places are adding a third restroom for "All Genders". I think the key to success here is to provide some privacy while using the restroom. This means being able to lock the door from the inside. However, there no way to make everybody happy so no sense trying. Do what the law requires, and people will get used to it.



TIMELINE

October 14, 1979 - The first National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights takes place. It draws an estimated 75,000 to 125,000 individuals marching for LGBTQ rights.

December 3, 1996 - Hawaii's Judge Chang rules that the state does not have a legal right to deprive same-sex couples of the right to marry, making Hawaii the first state to recognize that gay and lesbian couples are entitled to the same privileges as heterosexual married couples.

April 1997 - Comedian Ellen DeGeneres comes out as a lesbian on the cover of Time magazine, stating, "Yep, I'm Gay."

June 2003 - The US Supreme Court strikes down the "homosexual conduct" law, which decriminalizes same-sex sexual conduct, with their opinion in *Lawrence v. Texas*. The decision also reverses *Bowers v. Hardwick*, a 1986 US Supreme Court ruling that upheld Georgia's sodomy law.

May 17, 2004 - The first legal same-sex marriage in the United States takes place in Massachusetts.

September 20, 2011 - “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” is repealed, ending a ban on gay men and lesbians from serving openly in the military.



President Obama

May 9, 2012 - In an ABC interview, Obama becomes the first sitting US president to publicly support the freedom for LGBTQ couples to marry.

September 4, 2012 - The Democratic Party becomes the first major US political party in history to publicly support same-sex marriage on a national platform at the Democratic National Convention.

July 27, 2015 - Boy Scouts of America President Robert Gates announces, “the national executive board ratified a resolution removing the national restriction on openly gay leaders and employees.”

June 24, 2016 - Obama announces the designation of the first national monument to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBTQ) rights. The Stonewall National Monument will encompass Christopher Park, the Stonewall Inn and the surrounding streets and sidewalks that were the sites of the 1969 Stonewall uprising.

August 5-21, 2016 - A record number of “out” athletes compete in the summer Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro. The Human Rights Campaign estimates that there are at least 41 openly lesbian, gay, and bisexual Olympians – up from 23 that participated in London 2012.

November 9, 2016 - Kate Brown is sworn in as governor of Oregon, a day after she was officially elected to the office. Brown becomes the highest-ranking LGBTQ person elected to office in the United States. Brown took over the governorship in February 2016 (without an election), after Democrat John Kitzhaber resigned amidst a criminal investigation.

April 4, 2017 - The 7th Circuit Court of Appeals rules that the Civil Rights Act prohibits workplace discrimination against LGBTQ employees, after Kimberly Hively sues Ivy Tech Community College for violating Title VII of the act by denying her employment.

June 27, 2017 - District of Columbia residents can now choose a gender-neutral option of their driver's license. DC residents become the first people in the United States to be able to choose X as their gender marker instead of male or female on driver's licenses and identification cards. Similar policies exist in Canada, India, Bangladesh, Australia, New Zealand and Nepal.

February 26, 2018 - The Pentagon confirms that the first transgender person has signed a contract to join the US military.

March 23, 2018 - The Trump administration announces a new policy that bans most transgender people from serving in military. After several court battles, the Supreme Court allows the ban to go into effect in January 2019.

November 6, 2018 - Democratic US Representative Jared Polis wins the Colorado governor's race, becoming the nation's first openly gay man to be elected governor.

September 22, 2019 - Billy Porter becomes the first openly gay Black man to win the Emmy for best lead actor in a drama series.

June 15, 2020 - The Supreme Court rules that federal law protects LGBTQ workers from discrimination. The landmark ruling extends protections to millions of workers nationwide and is a defeat for the Trump administration, which argued that Title VII of the Civil Rights Act that bars discrimination based on sex did not extend to claims of gender identity and sexual orientation.

January 25, 2021 - President Joe Biden signs an executive order repealing the 2019 Trump-era ban on most transgender Americans joining the military. "This is reinstating a position that the previous commanders and, as well as the

secretaries, have supported. And what I'm doing is enabling all qualified Americans to serve their country in uniform," Biden said, speaking from the Oval Office just before signing the executive order.

June 21, 2021 - Carl Nassib, a defensive lineman with the Las Vegas Raiders, becomes the first active NFL player in league history to announce that he is gay.

June 30, 2021 - The State Department announces it will be updating its procedures to allow applicants to self-select their sex marker for passports and that it "will no longer require medical certification" if an applicant's self-selected sex marker doesn't match the sex listed on other official identity documents.

October 27, 2021 - The State Department announces that the US has issued the first US passport with an X gender marker. "As the Secretary announced in June, the Department is moving towards adding an X gender marker for non-binary, intersex, and gender non-conforming persons applying for a U.S. passport or CRBA," State spokesperson Ned Price says in a statement.

WHAT DID WE LEARN IN THIS ARTICLE?

We learned that there are many (more than a hundred) terms for sexual orientation and gender identity.

We learned that a gender designation of "X" on a driver's license or passport is valid meaning that means the person's gender is not exclusively male nor female.

We learned that thousands of LGBTQIA+ people are coming out of the "closet" and joining Gay Pride Marches across America.

We learned that a recent Gallup poll reported 7.1% of United States adults identified themselves as belonging to the LGBTQIA+ community. If you do the math, that comes out roughly to 18 million people.

We learned that life is not always that great for a LGBTQIA+ person. He/she or however the person identifies themselves is more likely to experience the following issues than their heterosexual peers:

- ✚ have a lower annual income
- ✚ more health problems including mental health and substance abuse
- ✚ bullying, family rejection, and homelessness
- ✚ face injustice in schools, danger in their homes, and/or uncertainty on the streets.

We learned that there are organizations in several states that want to exclude transgender athletes from completing. The fact that University of Pennsylvania swimmer Lia Thomas became the first transgender athlete to win an NCAA Division I title has upset a lot of people.

We learned that during the Obama presidency, several laws were passed ensuring that the LGBTQIA+ community have the same basic human rights that all Americans are given.

We learned that every person (including transgenders, crossdressers, and other LGBTQIA+ people) has the right to use the bathroom consistent with their current gender identity, regardless of their gender assigned at birth. It is now the law of the land.

And finally, we learned that schools, medical facilities, and other public places need more “Gender Neutral” restrooms with wheelchair access. This would be especially helpful for caregivers who must take their spouses to restroom.

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