

# ***Pronouns***

**MY PRONOUNS ARE**

***By queer youth, for queer youth***



# *What are pronouns?*

Pronouns are words that can be used to replace a noun or name in a sentence.

- Contrary to the belief that only queer people use pronouns, they are actually used very frequently in every day life!

Pronouns are often organized into different "sets."

- The four more common sets are he/him, she/her, they/them, and neopronouns.

This resource will explain how to use each of these four sets, provide tips and tricks for understanding newer pronouns, and suggest other ways you can be supportive with pronouns.



# ***Pronoun Misconceptions***

It is ok to use a transgender persons former name and pronouns

- Unless they request it, you should never use a transgender persons former name and pronouns. If unsure, ask them first.

Gender = Pronouns

- Gender does not equal pronouns. There is no way to tell someone's pronouns simply by looking at them. Asking is the best way to be sure, but remember not everyone may be comfortable with this, especially if they aren't yet out.

Pronouns are for queer people only

- Pronouns are used by all people. A lot of people outside the queer community seem to believe pronouns are something that trans people just "made up." This is not true!



# ***Pronoun Tips & Tricks***

Ending Rule: if you do not know how to use a pronoun in a sentence, you can look at the first pronouns ending sound.

- E ending
  - if it ends in an "e" sound, it will be followed by the word "is." (he, she, etc)
    - He is going to the store
- Ay ending
  - if the pronoun ends in an "ay" sound, it will be followed by the word "are." (they, etc)
    - They are going to the store

## **Just Ask!**

- if you are unsure of how to use a particular pronoun in a sentence, you can ask the person for an example!



# *He/Him*

- He/him is one of the most common pronoun sets
- He/him pronouns are most commonly used by male or masculine identified people.  
Example: He asked for a pencil, so I gave him one.

# *She/Her*

- She/her is the other most common pronoun set
- She/her pronouns are most commonly used by female or feminine identified people. Example: She asked for a pencil, so I gave her one.



# They/Them

- They/them pronouns are most commonly used by nonbinary people
  - Nonbinary people are people who do not identify as male or female!
- Example: They are giving me a hug today.
- Note: see how this example uses "they are" and not "they is." These pronouns are referring to one person, yet they look plural. This is the correct usage.
  - Try using the ending rule to remember this! Since they ends with an "ay" sound, it is used with the word "are" instead of "is"



# *Neopronouns: Xe/Xem*

- Neopronouns are pronouns that many nonbinary people use instead of they/them
  - in terms of creation, neopronouns all have their own unique histories, and are drawn from many different places, including historical sources
  - **these pronouns are not a fad or a trend!**
- While neopronouns may seem confusing at first, you can figure them out by using the ending rule
  - let's use xe/xem (pronounced zee/zem) as an example. We know xe has an "e" sound ending, so it will be followed by the word is.
  - That means you might say something like "Xe is my best friend! I love spending time with xem."



# *Multiple Pronouns*

Some people also use multiple sets of pronouns. Some common examples are she/they, he/they, and he/she. This just means the person uses either set of pronouns, typically interchangeably.

- Some multiple pronoun users don't have a preference for one set, while others indicate a preference by listing their preferred pronoun set first.

People may have multiple sets of pronouns because they don't feel a single set fully explains their identity

- many genderfluid people use multiple pronouns for this reason!
- some people also use "any" or "all" pronouns, meaning they want all pronouns to be used for them, or don't have a preference.
- some trans people have multiple names as well, either for safety and legal reasons, or to have more ways to express themselves!



# ***Pronoun Support***

## Ask about pronouns

- if you're confused about how to use a pronoun set, ask the person! Asking helps alleviate confusion, and increases your knowledge on different sets.

## Share your pronouns

- sharing your pronouns is a great way to show solidarity to the queer and trans community.
- you can share your pronouns when introducing yourself, or put them in your email signatures and social media bios.

## Correct misgendering

- don't hesitate to correct someone if they continue to mess up, but be sure to do it kindly and simply, so as not to draw unwanted attention to the mistake.



# *Thank you for reading!*



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