CREATING GENDER INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS
YOUTH & GENDER MEDIA PROJECT STUDY GUIDE
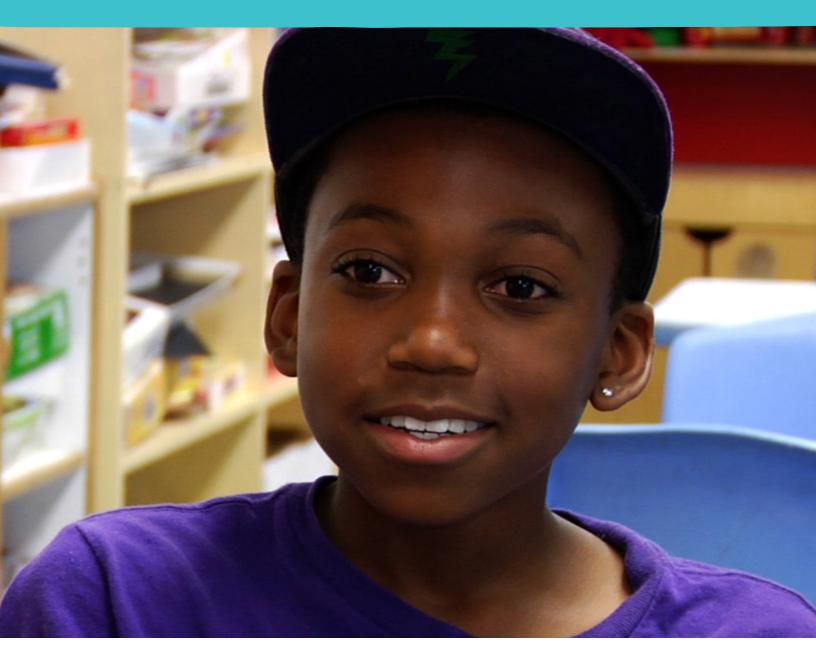
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

WELCOME!

Welcome to the Youth & Gender Media Project study guide for *Creating Gender Inclusive Schools*. We're pleased that you've decided to join the effort to create inclusive communities for all youth, regardless of where they fall on the spectrum of gender identity and expression. By doing this work, you are joining a growing number of educators, parents, and other professionals who understand that young people need safe environments where they can be true to their own internal sense of gender in order to effectively learn and thrive. And the good news is that gender inclusion work intersects beautifully with all the other work that needs to be done to embrace and celebrate diversity. We look forward to supporting and hearing from you as you join us on this fascinating and fun journey around re-defining gender for the 21st century.

ABOUT THE FILM AND GUIDES

Creating Gender Inclusive Schools takes us inside a pubic elementary school that trains the entire community to be gender inclusive, and demonstrates that a gender inclusion project at the grade school level can be both safe and fun. This film is ideal for school district leaders, administrators and teachers who are beginning or considering such a project in their own institutions.

The four films and accompanying study guides of the Youth & Gender Media Project can be used individually or in combination. Each film targets a particular audience that together encompasses all stakeholders in K-12 communities. To learn more about the other films in the project and see additional short videos that you can incorporate into classroom activities, please visit youthandgendermediaproject.org.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide is designed to accompany screenings of *Creating Gender Inclusive Schools* in workshops for teachers, administrators, staff and parents. It is meant to spark discussion about gender—not to be a comprehensive training curriculum for teaching about this very important topic. For more thorough trainings on incorporating gender into your school's curricula, please see the resources section of this guide. You may also view information about Gender Spectrum's Professional Development programs and other services at genderspectrum.org/we-can-help/trainings-schools.

This guide is flexible to suit the needs of various audiences and time constraints. For example, if you have only one hour to devote to the film, you can screen the film and use the group discussion questions provided to reflect on the topics.

If you have a longer time period, feel free to incorporate any of the activities below that make the most sense for you, your goals, your time frame, and your group. You can pick and choose discussion questions and activities that resonate with you most.

Before implementing any of these activities, you may want to familiarize yourself with the concepts in the film, and reflect upon the role of gender in your life. As a facilitator, you are also learning. Some of the language in this guide may be new to you, but you don't have to be an expert to be understanding and compassionate. Learning these concepts takes time, and there are many resources

to help you continue on your journey.

This guide will help you begin to create the kinds of safe spaces that are necessary for thoughtful discussion and reflection about gender. However, some activities may be more or less appropriate for your particular setting. Please use your judgment when selecting activities, keeping the comfort and safety of your participants as your number one priority. The most important thing to remember is that we all want to create a safe and supportive learning environment for our students—and educators—to thrive.

WHY I CREATED THE YOUTH & GENDER MEDIA PROJECT

I was a gender nonconforming child who loved to play with both dollhouses and Hot Wheels, wear pants and dresses. Like any child, I wanted it all! Around second grade, I started to get teased and bullied for my "sissy" ways and decided to give up "girly" things in order to evade the harassment that I intuitively knew would only get worse as I grew older. But this also meant that I abandoned an important part of myself.

In the early 2000s I began to read about children who were gender creative and transgender and were living in communities that supported them. These children and their families were doing what my community hadn't been able to do when I was a child. As a social change filmmaker, I wanted to document and help grow the movement that embraces rather than suppresses children with gender expansive identities.
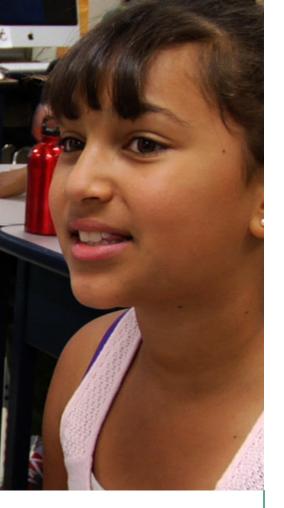
In 2007, I began work on a film that eventually turned into the Youth & Gender Media Project, a series of short films about gender expansive young people like Anneke and Johanna, and their families and communities. I'm happy to say that the films have screened in festivals around the world and are being used in hundreds of middle schools, high schools and colleges throughout North America to help make the world safe for youth of any and all manifestations of gender identity and expression.

Joel Baum at Gender Spectrum and I first talked about documenting a school inclusivity training several years ago, but it took more than two years for us to find a school community that would be willing to let us come in with cameras to document the process. It was worth the wait. We are grateful to Peralta principal Rosette Costello, who understood not only the value of inclusion, but also the importance of demonstrating that value to other school administrators and educators in the form of a film.

ABOUT THE FILMMAKER

Jonathan Skurnik's many award-winning documentaries have broadcast on PBS and cable channels in the US and on European television. His films have screened at over a hundred film festivals and art galleries around the world. As an activist and educator, Jonathan creates ground-breaking grassroots outreach and engagement projects for his films that provide transformational educational experiences through facilitated screenings, activities and discussions and immersive digital resources on handheld devices and the web. Jonathan also teaches documentary filmmaking classes at universities, writes and directs narrative films, and creates video art installations.

WHY TALK ABOUT GENDER WITH EDUCATORS?

In recent years, gender has become an increasingly prevalent topic of discussion in our culture, and it has become clear that the issue needs to be brought up and addressed in different contexts over time—not just for students, but for teachers, administrators and parents as well. For more detailed information about addressing gender at school, refer to Gender Spectrum's "Common Questions and Concerns" tool, available at genderspectrum.org/commonquestions.

As educators, we are all invested in providing safe environments for our children to learn. Teaching and learning about gender can help prevent and transform bullying behaviors—which are often based on gender stereotypes—at home, at school, and in our communities. In addition to cultivating empathy and compassion for young people who express their gender in different ways, teaching about this topic can help foster a culture of respect that celebrates *all* youth, regardless of the ways in which they express or identify their gender.

Addressing this topic early and often can also help youth who feel isolated because of other people's reactions to their gender identities or expressions. These youth are at greater risk of suffering harassment, bullying, dropping out of school, and committing suicide. According to GSLEN'S 2013 National School Climate Survey, 75.1% of transgender students feel unsafe at school because of the way they are treated regarding their gender expression. Transgender youth experience bullying at alarming rates—73.6% of transgender youth experience verbal harassment at school, 32.5% experience physical harassment, and 16.2% experience physical assault.[1] Tragically, *half of transgender youth have contemplated suicide, and a quarter of them have attempted it*.[2] While it is impossible to know how many deaths can be traced back to bullying and harassment at school, clearly there would be a world of difference if school curricula and policies actively created safe environments for all youth.

CULTIVATING RESPECT

In order to cultivate a culture of respect, it's important to know what not to say.

- Don't out people.
- Don't make assumptions about a person's gender or the gender of partners, family members or friends.
- It is not respectful to ask about a person's anatomy, surgery, hormones, birth names, etc. It's important to respect a person's privacy and asking such personal questions can potentially trigger emotions that negatively impact a person's well-being.
- Always use preferred pronouns and names [see opposite page].

PROBLEMATIC VERSUS PREFERRED TERMS

PROBLEMATIC	PREFERRED
Tranny/trannie, transgendered, transgenders, a transgender	Transgender (as an adjective, not a noun)
He/she, she-male, "it," shim, lady man, freak	Transgender (and always use preferred pronouns)
Transvestite	Cross-dresser
Hermaphrodite	Intersex

GENDER BASICS

Whether this is your first time teaching about gender, or if you just need a refresher, it's helpful to review some key terms. The language we use about gender is critical to understanding this topic. Language is constantly evolving, and what matters is not who is using the terms "the right way," but how we are using the terms right now!

Biological Sex/Birth-Assigned Sex: At birth, people are assigned a biological sex—male, female or intersex—based on physical attributes such as reproductive anatomy.

Gender: While many people incorrectly use "sex" and "gender" interchangeably, "gender" refers to *cultural* ideas of what it means to be a man or woman or other gender. These expectations can vary significantly depending on the particular cultural and historical context.

Gender Binary: The cultural idea that there are only two distinct and very different genders: female and male.

Gender Expression: The ways in which people express themselves to others through clothing, hairstyle, physical attributes and ways of speaking, moving, and behaving. What is deemed appropriate gender expression for a particular gender is largely dependent on the specific cultural and historical context.

Gender Identity: A person's internal sense of themselves as female, male, some combination of the two, neither, both, or one of the many other ways people identify their gender. While many people's internal gender identity matches their biological sex, plenty of people have a gender identity that is different from the sex they were assigned at birth. And for some people, gender identity is fluid and changes over time.

Gender Spectrum: The idea that gender is not binary, but rather a spectrum with infinite possibilities for how a person may express and/or identify their gender.

Cisgender: When someone's biological sex, gender identity and gender expression align.

Transgender: Someone whose gender identity is different from the sex they were assigned at birth. The words transgender or trans* (trans followed by an asterisk) are sometimes used as a broad term to describe a range of gender identities, expressions, and experiences that are not cisgender.

There are infinite combinations of ways for people to present and understand their own gender—and not everyone who identifies or expresses gender outside of the gender binary necessarily identifies as transgender. These identifications may be different from rigid cultural expectations of gender and are referred to as **gender expansive**, **gender creative**, **genderqueer** or **queer**, **non-binary**, and **gender nonconforming**, among many other terms. In addition, this terminology tends to change over time, as society's understanding of gender continues to evolve.

People understand and experience gender in a wide variety of ways. Unfortunately, when youth step outside of our traditional ideas of how boys and girls should look or behave, they can encounter cruelty, harassment, bullying from other students—and sometimes from adults as well, including teachers, school staff and parents of their peers. Much of this negative behavior stems from a lack of education and appreciation for gender diversity.

As educators, parents, and community members, we all have our own ideas about gender based on our lived experiences. Regardless of what your personal beliefs regarding gender are, we are all in agreement that our goal is to create safe spaces for *all* of our youth in order to protect them from emotional, verbal and physical harm. This means creating spaces where young people can feel free to be who they are, regardless of their gender identity or expression. Students who feel free to be themselves at school—without the fear of judgment and harassment—also perform better academically.[3]

PREFERRED GENDER PRONOUNS

Preferred gender pronouns are the pronouns or set of pronouns that a person prefers. Some people feel more comfortable using a pronoun different from those associated with their biological sex, regardless of their gender identity or expression. Gendered pronouns like "he" and "she" can be uncomfortable and limiting for some people who prefer gender-neutral pronouns or to be referred to by name only. The English language is evolving to include some gender neutral pronouns. Currently, a lot of people who don't identify with pronouns like "her" or "him" are using a singular "they" instead.

HELLO

My name is

My preferred pronouns are

[1] Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network. The 2013 National School Climate Survey. http://www.glsen.org/article/2013-national-school-climate-survey

[2] Grossman, A.H. & D'Augelli, A.R. (2007). Transgender Youth and Life-Threatening Behaviors. Suicide and Life-Threatening Behaviors. 37(5), 527-37.

[3] Op. cit.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CREATING SAFE SPACES

Before you screen the film or complete any of the activities in this guide, explain to participants that you will be learning about how different people experience gender. This will involve reflecting on our own experiences with gender, so it's important that we first agree upon how we will discuss these issues so that everyone feels safe and comfortable participating.

Ask participants, "What are our shared agreements about our discussion here today? How do we want people to treat each other so that everyone feels comfortable participating?" If someone names "respect" as an expectation, ask the group to name specific ways they can demonstrate respect toward each other. What does respect look like? Write their expectations on the board or a flipchart so that you can refer back to it throughout the discussion and group activities if necessary.

Each group's agreements will be different. However, you may want to begin with some sample expectations, like:

- Confidentiality: Don't share outside of this room.
- Use "I" statements.
- Be specific: Don't generalize about people or groups.
- Allow others to speak without interrupting.
- Respect all of the different perspectives in the room.

WHAT TO DO IF SOMEONE ACTS DISRESPECTFULLY

If someone violates your shared agreements by acting disrespectfully, follow these guidelines:

Try to turn it into a teachable moment.

If someone is being disruptive, call out the behavior and explain why it's inappropriate or hurtful. Refer back to the agreements that were created at the beginning of the session and make it clear why this kind of behavior is not accepted by your school.

After you address the disrespectful behavior, redirect the group to the discussion or group activity.

If someone insists on repeating slurs or hurtful phrases, it may be necessary to ask them to leave.

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS

Before facilitating any group discussions or activities, take some time to reflect on your own potential biases and limitations based on your knowledge and training. What are your own thoughts on gender? What are your thoughts about the information presented in *Creating Gender Inclusive Schools*? Watch the film by yourself beforehand and think about how you would answer the discussion questions.

Consider completing your own "My Gender Journey" as preparation for holding the space you wish to create with your colleagues.

Be open and respectful of the differences in the room. Help to create a safe space where all can participate by demonstrating a positive and non-judgmental attitude.

Be fellow learners—be honest about what you do and don't know. Don't be afraid to say, "I don't know," and refer to the resources in this guide to learn more.

Be aware you may have participants who are out as transgender or non-binary, some who are not out, and others who are questioning. Don't make assumptions about them, and don't rely on participants who are out to speak for the whole community.

Ensure everyone is heard. Ask, "Is there anyone who hasn't spoken yet who has something to share?" However, do not push anyone who is not comfortable to share or participate.

Remember you are not in the role of therapist. If someone shares something that may require further intervention, acknowledge it positively (e.g., say, "That was brave, thank you for sharing that."). Then bring it back to the group (e.g., "Can other people relate to this?")

HOW TO BE A SAFE ALLY

Maintain confidentiality: Let the person know that what they tell you is confidential—unless you know that they are in danger or in danger of hurting themselves or others.

Don't make assumptions: Don't assume anything about the person who is talking to you until they tell you or you ask them.

Show respect: Respect the pronouns the person prefers to use and affirm them.

Educate yourself: Continue to educate and update yourself on current gender terminology, laws, and policies that are in place so that you can be a trusted resource.

Advocate: Speak up for the needs of transgender and non-binary youth at your school. Advocate for staff trainings. Talk about people of all genders in a positive way in your school.

Provide access: Make sure you are aware of all of the resources that exist locally in your community and nationally to support transgender and non-binary youth. National resources for support are listed in the resources section of this guide.

PRE-SCREENING ACTIVITY

Before you screen *Creating Gender Inclusive Schools* for educators and engage them in any discussion or activities related to the film, use this exercise to stimulate discussion and ideas around gender stereotypes.

MY GENDER JOURNEY

TIMING: 20 minutes

MATERIALS: Copies of the My Personal Gender Journey and My Professional Gender Journey Worksheets

PREPARATION: Review the instructions and make worksheet copies for participants. Take some time to reflect on your own experiences with gender by completing the worksheets yourself before leading workshops with participants.

As professionals working with families and their children, there is a unique and influential role to be played in helping create the conditions where children can be safe in authentically expressing and identifying their gender. By embracing the richness of the gender spectrum, teachers, counselors, therapists and other adults working with kids can help to broaden their own as well as children's understandings of gender, and in so doing, help every child feel seen and recognized. An important part of that work is to consider one's own experiences, messages, and beliefs about gender, both growing up as well as in one's professional role.

Ask participants to spend a few minutes answering the questions and suggest that they hang on to them. They may find it interesting to revisit their reflections at some point in the future, after they have had a chance to learn more about gender through training and their own efforts. Let them know that there are no "right" answers; each of us comes by our own understandings of gender in a context. Messages and traditions associated with gender are complex reflections of society, family, culture, community, and other socializing forces. We can use this opportunity to pause, and examine our own gender history.

The exercise is divided into two parts: the first asks participants to think about their own personal experiences with gender, while the second looks at their professional experiences.

Adapted from Gender Spectrum: genderspectrum.org/resources/education

MY PERSONAL GENDER JOURNEY WORKSHEET

Today's Date:

1. Growing up, did you think of yourself as a boy, a girl, both, neither or in some other way? How did you come to that recognition? When?

   _____

   _____

2. What messages did you receive from those around you about gender? Did those messages make sense to you?

   _____

   _____

3. What's your first memory of gender defining or impacting your life?

   _____

   _____

4. How were students who did not fit into expectations about gender treated in school by other students? By the adults around them? By you?

   _____

   _____

5. Have you ever been confused by someone's gender? How did that feel for you? Why do you think you felt the way you did?

   _____

   _____

6. Has anyone ever been confused by your gender, possibly referring to you in a manner not consistent with your own sense of gender? How did that feel for you? Why do you think you felt the way you did?

   _____

   _____

7. Is there anyone in your immediate circle (family, close friends, colleagues) who is transgender or otherwise gender diverse? How would you characterize your comfort level about their gender?

   _____

   _____

8. If you were to describe your gender without talking about how you look or what you do, what would you share?

   _____

   _____

MY PROFESSIONAL GENDER JOURNEY WORKSHEET

Today's Date:

1. How have issues of gender and gender diversity "shown up" in your work with families and youth?

   _____

   _____

2. Is there a child with whom you have worked that was/is transgender or in some other way gender diverse? What was your level of comfort in the situation?

   _____

   _____

3. What training have you received about gender, gender diversity, and/or gender inclusive practices?

   _____

   _____

4. How would you characterize your school or organization's overall level of *acceptance* for children or youth whose gender is seen as different by those around them (if completing as an individual skip to next question)?

   _____

   _____

5. What is your own comfort level with discussing issues of gender diversity with:

   Colleagues? _____

   Parents? _____

   Children/Youth? _____

6. Based on your personal and your professional journeys, how do you believe that your own previous experiences with gender influence the work you do? Are there ways in which those experiences enhance your ability to create greater gender inclusiveness? Are there ways in which those experiences inhibit your ability to do so? How so?

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

7. Do you have any final reflections about documenting your gender journey? Are there any goals you wish to set for yourself, personally? Professionally?

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

TIMING: 15-30 minutes

Regardless of how much time you have in your workshop, please allow participants to discuss and reflect upon what they learned from watching the film. Use the questions below to guide the discussion. Feel free to pick and choose the questions that resonate with you.

1. If someone asked you what this film is about, how would you describe it? What would you say are the main themes?

2. What did you learn from this film? What information was new to you? What is the main message you took away from it?

3. How did you feel as you watched the film? How do you feel differently after watching the film?

4. What do you think influenced your reaction to the film? Your gender? Your experiences in school growing up? Your experiences in your work now?

5. Can you describe a single moment or scene in the film that especially resonated with you? How did this moment make you feel?

6. Did anyone featured in the film stand out to you in particular? Why? Was there any person you wished you had gotten to learn more about?

7. If you could ask anyone in the film a question, who would it be and what would you ask them?

8. What did you think of the two teachers who originally expressed hesitation about doing this work? Could you relate to them? What factors do you think helped them change their minds?

9. Do you agree with the teacher in the film who indicated that 9/10 of bullying would disappear if we dealt with differences in a different way? What have you observed in your school? How about when you were growing up?

10. What did you think when the teacher said that maybe trans is a fad? Have you heard similar sentiments before?

11. In the film, one child says they feel "in the middle." Can you think of all the ways people can feel "in the middle" besides gender?

12. What do you see in your school that is evidence of a gender-inclusive school climate? (Does your school have dress code policies that enforce gender norms? Is there an option for bathroom besides "boys" and "girls"?)

13. Do you have specific policies in place to protect *all* students in your school? If not, what does your school need in order to be more inclusive? What tools/resources are needed to support that? What challenges do you think you might encounter?

14. In what ways do teachers in general stereotype kids based on gender (e.g., dividing into "boy" and "girl" groups, addressing students as "boys and girls," only having boys do physical activities, like move boxes, etc.) What are some ways to challenge these stereotypes moving forward?

15. Do you think the lessons you saw in the film would work in your school? Why or why not? What changes or modifications would you want to make?

GROUP ACTIVITIES

Please select the activity or activities that are most appropriate for your group and timing.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

TIMING: 20-40 minutes

MATERIALS: Copies of the Hypothetical Scenarios sheet

PREPARATION: Review the instructions and make copies of the Hypothetical Scenarios.

Have the participants divide into small groups and review one or two of the hypothetical scenarios below. When groups are done going through each hypothetical discussion, have them share with the larger group.

Some points to keep in mind during discussion:

- People may respond in many different ways, as we all have different experiences with gender and with school policies.

- These questions are specifically about school or district policies that address gender issues. While personal feelings about gender will inevitably come up, the focus here is on identifying policies and procedures (or lack thereof) at your school or in your district.

- Participants may share specific examples from their own experiences which may not have been ideal responses. The point of this exercise is not to judge how others may have acted in similar situations but to think about what policies could help schools be more supportive of transgender and gender expansive youth across the board.

HYPOTHETICAL SCENARIOS

Toby, a boy at your school who is not transgender, comes in one day wearing a dress. How do you address it, if you do address it? What factors influence your decision? Why? Is there a rule or policy in place that addresses it?

Blake is a student who was assigned female at birth but doesn't identify as a boy or a girl. "Blake" is Blake's preferred, chosen name, although it is not Blake's legal name. What do you do? How would Blake be addressed in class? How would Blake appear in official files? Does your school or school district have a policy on name changes? In general, how does your school address students who want to be known by a different name or a nickname?

Jasmine, a transgender girl, wants to use the girls' bathroom at your school. However, a parent has complained that her daughter does not feel safe with Jasmine in the bathroom. What do you do? Is there an official policy? Does your school have any single-stall or all-gender bathrooms?

Trevor comes to you saying that other students bully him for being "too girly." You have not seen any of these incidents first hand. What do you do? Is there an official protocol for you to follow?

Mario is a transgender boy who is nominated for prom king. If he wins, the nominees for prom queen have all stated they will refuse to dance with him. What does your school do?

One student at your school wants to officially change genders in the middle of the school year. Other students' parents have complained to the school administration that this student's transition is upsetting to them and distracting their children from learning. How do you support this student? How do you respond to the parents' concerns?

REFLECTION QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION WITH THE WHOLE GROUP

1. What came up in your small group while discussing these scenarios? Where did members of your group agree? Where did they disagree?

2. What factors might contribute to these differences?

3. What did you learn from completing this exercise?

4. Does your school have policies in place to answer these kinds of hypothetical situations? If not, what can you do to help implement some?

5. What are some assets currently in place that would help you address some of the situations? Are there activities, policies, or other structures at your school that might be used to address some of them?
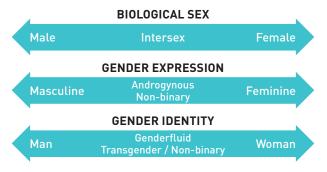
GENDER SPECTRUM

TIMING: 20-30 minutes

MATERIALS: Board or flipchart and markers, copies of the Gender Spectrum Worksheet

PREPARATION: Review the instructions. Make copies of the Gender Spectrum Worksheet.

Explain to the group that in the film, you saw students placing themselves along a spectrum that included their gender assigned at birth, their gender expression (how they express themselves through gender) and their gender identity (how they feel inside). Draw a graphic like this on the board or flipchart:

BIOLOGICAL SEX

| Male | Intersex | Female |

GENDER EXPRESSION

| Masculine | Androgynous Non-binary | Feminine |

GENDER IDENTITY

| Man | Genderfluid Transgender / Non-binary | Woman |

Explain the following terms:

Biological Sex/Birth-Assigned Sex: At birth, people are assigned a biological sex—male, female or intersex—based on physical attributes such as reproductive anatomy.

Gender Expression: The ways in which people express themselves to others through clothing, hairstyle, physical attributes and ways of speaking, moving, and behaving. What is deemed appropriate gender expression for a particular gender is largely dependent on the specific cultural and historical context.

Gender Identity: A person's internal sense of themselves as female, male, some combination of the two, neither, both, or one of the many other ways people identify their gender. While many people's internal gender identity matches their biological sex, plenty of people have a gender identity that is different from the sex they were assigned at birth. And for some people, gender identity is fluid and changes over time.

Explain that, as you saw in the film, people can fall along many different places along this spectrum. As an example, you may want to plot yourself on the chart so that participants can see how someone may fall along the spectrum in the three categories.

Pass out **Gender Spectrum Worksheets**. Ask the group to plot themselves on the three lines. They can fold their paper in half for privacy if they wish.

Now, ask the group to think back to when they were children. Where did they fall on the gender spectrum then? Did they dress like the gender they were assigned at birth? Did they play with games and toys that were associated with their gender? How did they feel inside? If they'd like, they can plot themselves on their worksheet again. Is it the same or different?

Ask if anyone would feel comfortable sharing and placing themselves on the spectrum for the group to see. After everyone who is comfortable doing so shares with the group, have the group spend ten minutes reflecting on the following questions together:

1. What do you notice when doing this exercise? Were there any surprises? Did any memories come up for you?

2. Think about your gender expression and gender identity as a child and now. Are there any similarities? Any differences? What factors contributed to those differences? (For example, did you have restrictions growing up that you do not have now? Do you have restrictions now that you did not have as a child?)

3. What are some of the ways this exercise can help us understand gender better? What are some of limitations of this model?

4. When you were a child, did you ever feel like you weren't "acting like a boy" or "acting like a girl"? What would have made you feel supported? How could you provide that kind of support for students at your school?

Adapted from Gender Spectrum: genderspectrum.org/ resources/education

GENDER SPECTRUM WORKSHEET

THE Youth & Gender MEDIA PROJECT

Use these lines to map your own gender. Then answer the questions that follow.

BIOLOGICAL SEX

Male   Intersex   Female

GENDER EXPRESSION

Masculine   Androgynous   Feminine
              Non-binary

GENDER IDENTITY

Man   Genderfluid   Woman
              Transgender / Non-binary

1. Was mapping your own gender difficult or easy? What made it so?

_____

_____

_____

2. What are some ways that this model helps us to understand gender better?

_____

_____

_____

3. What are some of the ways that this model is still not enough to really understand gender?

_____

_____

_____

4. Has your gender profile changed over time? In what ways?

_____

_____

_____

5. What is your comfort level with your own gender? What about the gender of others?

_____

_____

_____

6. What does the "Gender Spectrum" mean to you?

_____

_____

_____

ASSESS YOUR SCHOOL

TIMING: 20 minutes

MATERIALS: School Assessment Worksheet

PREPARATION: Review the instructions. Photocopy the School Assessment Worksheet.

NOTE: This assessment is designed to be used in a short workshop. For a more thorough assessment, please see Gender Spectrum's Gender Inclusive Assessment Toolkit, available at: genderspectrum.org/resources/education.

Explain to participants that while a growing number of states require policies to protect students of all genders, that doesn't mean that every school necessarily adheres to these policies. In fact, many district policies fail to align with state law.

Explain that this exercise is designed to provide an assessment of your school's culture and policies. Have participants break up into small groups and complete the **School Assessment Worksheet**.

After you discuss the completed assessments in the large group, brainstorm together:

1. As a school, what are the things we do best to create a welcoming environment for students of all gender identities and expressions?
2. What are the top things we need to work on?
3. What are the potential obstacles for making change?
4. What are the next steps we can take and who will take them?
5. What tools and resources do we need to make our school more inclusive?

SCHOOL ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

THE Youth & Gender MEDIA PROJECT

Adapted from Gender Spectrum's Gender Inclusiveness Assessment Worksheet

SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

1. Do you believe your school is a safe place for:
   a. All students, including transgender, non-binary, gender-variant, gender diverse students.

      ☐ **Yes, definitely** ☐ **Somewhat** ☐ **Not at all**

   b. All staff, including transgender or non-binary staff/educators/administrators.

      ☐ **Yes, definitely** ☐ **Somewhat** ☐ **Not at all**

2. Bathroom access is a key issue for transgender, non-binary, gender diverse and androgynous individuals who often feel uncomfortable using traditionally gendered bathrooms. What kinds of bathrooms exist at your school?

   ☐ **Men's room access**   ☐ **Women's room access**
   ☐ **Non-gendered/All genders** ☐ **Single stall**

SCHOOL POLICIES

3. Does your school have a written non-discrimination policy?

   ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐ **Not sure**

   If **Yes**, does your school non-discrimination policy include gender identity and expression?

   ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐ **Not sure**

4. Is your school dress code inclusive of all genders? (e.g., is there one list of items that are appropriate to wear and not appropriate to wear regardless of gender identity and gender expression?)

   ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐ **Not sure** ☐ **Not applicable**

5. Does your school have school-wide forms that reflect inclusive language?

   ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**
   ☐ **Some, but could improve to be more inclusive**

Here are some examples:

6. Have all the teachers and administrators at your school participated in training that addresses gender identity and gender expression?

   ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐ **Not sure**

7. Is there protocol in place for staff to intervene when students engage in bullying or use gender-based slurs or name-calling?

   ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐ **Not sure**

8. Has your school designated a staff member or worked with a consultant who can answer questions/concerns about gender?

   ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐ **Not sure**

PROGRAMMING AND PUBLICITY

9. Do any of your school curricula or programming openly address topics of gender identity and gender expression?

   ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐ **Not sure** ☐ **Not applicable**

10. Does your school use any of the following inclusive language in its outreach publicity materials, mission statement, description of school programming, website, and social media?

    Please check all terms that apply:

    ☐ **"Diverse" or "Diversity"**
    ☐ **"Inclusive"**
    ☐ **"Open"**
    ☐ **"Welcoming"**
    ☐ **"Gender Identity"**
    ☐ **"Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer" / "LGBTQ"**
    ☐ **"Trans*" / "Non-Binary" / "Gender Diverse"**
    ☐ **"All Genders"**

    ☐ **Other(s)** _____

Legal Name: _____

Chosen Name: _____

Legal Gender: _____

Gender Identity: _____

FAMILY INFORMATION

Parent/Guardian 1: _____

Parent/Guardian 2: _____

Parent/Guardian 3: _____

Parent/Guardian 4: _____

GENDER BOXES

TIMING: 15-20 minutes

MATERIALS: Board or flip chart and markers

PREPARATION: Review the instructions.

Draw two boxes on the board or on a flip chart. In one, write "Girl" and in the other, write "Boy."

Ask participants to brainstorm as many words as they can think of that describe what people think is "okay" for girls—characteristics, toys, behaviors, colors, emotions, etc. Explain that the task is not to write what you feel personally, but stereotypes of what most people think is okay for girls.

Repeat the exercise with the "Boy" box.

Ask participants: "What happens when people step outside of these boxes? What might happen to them physically? Socially? Emotionally? At school? At home?"

Outside of the box, write what participants say could happen (students could be called names, bullied, harassed, hurt, they may want to hurt themselves, etc.)

When participants are finished brainstorming, ask the group the following reflection questions:

1. What did you notice about the boxes? How do people think girls are "supposed" to be different from boys? How would the boxes be different if we were talking about "women" and "men" instead of "girls" and "boys"? Where do you think these ideas come from?

2. If you could go back in time to when you were a child, would the boxes contain different items? What do you think your boxes might look like 20 years from now?

3. Why do some people get so angry when people don't fit inside one of these boxes? Who here can relate to the characteristics in both boxes? What are some of the ways that you have lived inside of the "girl" box or the "boy" box throughout your life? What are some of the ways we react when we're told that we don't fit into our boxes—that we are not acting the way a woman or a man "should" act?

TAKE FURTHER ACTION!

There are lots of things you can do to take more action in your school.

- Use the rest of the Youth and Gender Media Project films to reach students and families at your school and in your community.
- Form a committee to re-write your school's nondiscrimination policy for your district. See models here: glsen.org/article/model-laws-policies
- Set up your own training series for educators, administrators and staff. Contact Gender Spectrum for a consultation: genderspectrum.org/we-can-help/
- Integrate gender into curricula through story problems, writing prompts, media analysis, art assignments, and research projects.
- Display posters and signs recognizing gender diversity.
- Add books with topics about gender identity and expression in your school library.
- Identify restroom(s) that are gender-neutral or welcome all genders in your school. If you don't find any, advocate for some!
- Form a Gay Straight Alliance or other group that includes a focus on the needs of transgender and gender expansive students.
- Arrange for transgender or other gender expansive people to present in classrooms.
- Invite guest speakers who work for gender equity to speak to students and staff.
- Explore Gender Spectrum's incredible resources for more ideas! genderspectrum.org/resources

RESOURCES

GENDER SPECTRUM
Gender Spectrum helps create gender sensitive and inclusive environments for all children and teens. They provide consultation, training and events designed to help families, educators, professionals, and organizations understand and address the concepts of gender identity and expression.
www.genderspectrum.org

AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION
The ACLU is a national organization advocating individual rights, by litigating, legislating, and educating the public on a broad array of issues affecting individual freedom in the United States, including the rights of LGBT individuals.
www.aclu.org

FAMILY ACCEPTANCE PROJECT ™
A research, intervention, education and policy initiative that works to prevent health and mental health risks for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) children and youth, including suicide, homelessness and HIV – in the context of their families, cultures and faith communities.
www.familyproject.sfsu.edu

GAY, LESBIAN AND STRAIGHT EDUCATION NETWORK
GLSEN conducts extensive and original research to inform our evidence-based solutions for K-12 education and authors developmentally appropriate resources for educators to use throughout their school community. Every day GLSEN works to ensure that LGBT students are able to learn and grow in a school environment free from bullying and harassment.
www.GLSEN.org

GAY STRAIGHT ALLIANCE NETWORK
The GSA Network is a next-generation LGBTQ racial and gender justice organization that empowers and trains queer, trans and allied youth leaders to advocate, organize, and mobilize an intersectional movement for safer schools and healthier communities.
www.gsanetwork.org

GENDER DIVERSITY
Increases the awareness and understanding of the wide range of gender variations in children, adolescents, and adults by providing family support, building community, increasing societal awareness, and improving the well-being for people of all gender identities and expressions.
www.genderdiversity.org

GLAAD (GAY & LESBIAN ALLIANCE AGAINST DEFAMATION)
GLAAD works with print, broadcast and online news sources to bring people powerful stories from the LGBT community that build support for equality. When the media get it wrong, GLAAD responds and advocates for fairness and accuracy.
www.glaad.org

HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN FOUNDATION: WELCOMING SCHOOLS
Welcoming Schools, a project of the HRC Foundation, is a comprehensive approach to improving school climate in elementary school environments with training, resources and lessons encouraging educators and families to embrace family diversity, develop LGBTQ-inclusive schools, prevent bias-based bullying and gender stereotyping and support transgender and gender-expansive students.
www.welcomingschools.org

INTERSEX SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA
ISNA provides information about Intersex conditions and links to support groups.
www.isna.org

KESHET
Keshet works for a world in which all Jewish organizations and communities are strengthened by LGBT inclusive policy, programming, culture, and leadership. See Keshet's curricula addressing gender and sexual orientation in Jewish settings.
www.keshetonline.org

LAMBDA LEGAL
The oldest and largest national legal organization whose mission is to achieve full recognition of the civil rights of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgender people and those with HIV; through impact litigation, education and public policy work.
www.lambdalegal.org

NATIONAL CENTER FOR LESBIAN RIGHTS
NCLR is dedicated to advancing the civil and human rights of LGBTQ people and their families through litigation, legislation, policy, and public education.
www.nclrights.org

NATIONAL CENTER FOR TRANSGENDER EQUALITY
A national social justice organization devoted to ending discrimination and violence against transgender people through education and advocacy on national issues of importance to transgender people.
www.transequality.org

ORGANIZATION INTERSEX INTERNATIONAL USA (OII-USA)
Advocates equality and human rights for intersex people, particularly the right to bodily integrity and self-determination.
www.oii-usa.org

PFLAG
PFLAG is the first and largest national organization for LGBTQ-plus people, their parents and families, and allies.
www.pflag.org

SAFE SCHOOLS COALITION
A public-private partnership, in support of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender, queer and questioning youth, working to help schools become safe places where every family can belong, where every educator can teach, and where every child can learn, regardless of gender, gender identity or sexual orientation.
www.safeschoolscoalition.org

SYLVIA RIVERA LAW PROJECT
The Sylvia Rivera Law Project works, through legal services and trainings, to guarantee that all people are free to self-determine gender identity and expression, regardless of income or race, and without facing discrimination or violence.
www.srlp.org

TRANS YOUTH EQUALITY FOUNDATION
A nonprofit foundation that advocates for transgender, gender nonconforming, and intersex youth ages 2–18.
www.transyouthequality.org

TRANS YOUTH FAMILY ALLIES
Trans Youth Family Allies empowers children and families by partnering with educators, service providers and communities, to develop supportive environments in which gender may be expressed and respected.
www.imatyfa.org

TRANSGENDER LAW CENTER
Transgender Law Center works to change law, policy, and attitudes so that all people can live safely, authentically, and free from discrimination regardless of their gender identity or expression.
www.transgenderlawcenter.org

THE TREVOR PROJECT
The leading national organization providing crisis intervention and suicide prevention services to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning (LGBTQ) young people ages 13-24.
www.thetrevorproject.org