

Scenarios Packet for Small Group Facilitators

“Excuse Me, Sir”

You’re walking across the library and notice a small black wallet on the ground right next to a patron who is seated at a table facing away from you. You think it might be theirs, so you say “Excuse me, Sir. Is that your wallet?” The individual doesn’t respond immediately, so you walk around to the front of them and repeat yourself. The person looks up at you with an angry look on their face, and you realize that the individual probably doesn’t identify as a man.

What do you do? How do you prevent this from happening in the future?

Talking Points for Small Group Facilitators:

Example of an ideal response: Oh, hi. I’m sorry. I just saw this wallet on the ground and was wondering if it was yours.

Ideal responses will include an apology that is brief, but does not center the staff member.

Staff can prevent this from happening in the future by using gender neutral language when speaking to and referring to patrons.

Report of a woman in the men’s restroom.

A man approaches you and tells you there is a woman in the men’s restroom. He is confused, but not angry. When you ask him further about it, he says the person didn’t say anything to anyone and went into the stall and seemed to be just using the restroom.

What do you say to the man? Would you have staff check on the restroom? Would you approach the person who the report was made about?

Talking Points for Small Group Facilitators:

Example of an ideal response: Thanks for bringing this to my attention. If applicable, continue with: Our library welcomes our patrons to use whatever restroom most closely corresponds with their gender identity.

Unless there is a specific safety concern—for instance, the reporting individual said it seemed like the person was disoriented and having a medical issue or concerning noises are heard coming from the restroom—I would not check the restroom or approach the person the report was made about.

Per the bathroom policy of Seattle Public Library, we do not question our patron’s choice of what restroom aligns with their gender identity or gender expression. We want to show up for our patrons in an affirming vs paternalistic way. How would you feel if someone waited outside the restroom each time you used it?

Addendum: *If the complaining patron is irate or angry about this rule and the other patron’s restroom use, you may warn them for being disruptive, depending on your library’s rules.*

“Hey Ladies”

You are helping someone on the computer and realize that a group of patrons are excitedly chatting about a library program they just attended. Since they are near the computers and having an animated discussion, you decide to ask them to move somewhere that will be less disruptive to other patrons. You approach them by saying “Hey ladies, I’m so excited to hear you so excited about our library programs, but I need to ask you to move over there where your conversation won’t disrupt other patrons.” As soon as you start talking, you notice that the smiles have faded from two individuals faces. One of them won’t stop staring at the ground. Their friend speaks up and says “We can totally move, but just so you know, we’re not all ladies.”

What do you do? How do you prevent this from happening in the future?

Talking Points for Small Group Facilitators:

Example of an ideal response: Oops, I’m really sorry about that. I’m going to work on using more gender inclusive language in the future. I appreciate you all being willing to move over there. Thank you.

Ideal responses will include an apology that is brief, but does not center the staff member.

Staff can prevent this from happening in the future by using gender neutral language when speaking to and referring to patrons.

Approaching a patron using a name from an Integrated Library System (accidental use of deadname)

A person leaves their keys at a computer. You check the ILS and are able to pull up that person’s name from their account—George Smith. A different staff member recognizes a person who just got off that computer and points them out to you. You approach them by asking “Are you George Smith?” The patron is livid and asks “How do you know that name?”

What do you do? How do you prevent this from happening in the future?

Talking Points for Small Group Facilitators:

Example of an ideal response: I’m so sorry. These keys were left at a computer, and in hopes of reuniting them, I looked up the name associated with the library card last logged into that computer. Are these keys yours? Would you like to change the name on your library account? I can help you do that. (Or I can connect you with someone who can help you do that.)

Ideal responses will include an apology that is brief, but does not center the staff member. The staff member will ideally offer resolution to this issue—changing the name on the account.

Staff can prevent this from happening in the future by not assuming that individuals go by the name we have listed for them in the ILS.

Addendum: *If a person's deadname is on their account, SPL employees can always offer to change it to initials instead. And if they have a work/school ID or work badge with the name they go by on it, we can change it to their name that way also.*

Gender non-conforming patron asks to be buzzed into the restroom.

A person approaches you and asks to be buzzed into the restroom. You're unable to determine their gender.

What do you do?

Talking Points for Small Group Facilitators:

Example of ideal action: Buzz both restrooms open. Do not check which restroom the person uses. Do not ask the person which restroom they would like to be buzzed into.

Staff can get into the habit of buzzing both restrooms open anyway. It is best not to assume what restroom aligns most closely with an individual's gender and/or which our patrons feel most comfortable using.

"Ladies and Gentlemen"

Let's go back in time one year to the inclement weather closure for high winds in October of 2016. You have been tasked with letting the patrons in your area of the library know that the library will be closing early at 2:30pm. When making your announcement you say "Ladies and Gentlemen, in anticipation of high winds and severe weather later this afternoon, the Seattle Public Library is closing all of its locations early today for staff and patron safety. We will be closing in one hour at 2:30pm." Shortly after finishing your announcement, a person approaches you and asks if people who aren't ladies or gentlemen get to keep using the library.

What do you do? How do you prevent this from happening in the future?

Talking Points for Small Group Facilitators:

Example of an ideal response: That was pretty exclusionary, huh? I'm sorry about that. I'm going to work on using more gender inclusive language in the future. I appreciate you bringing that up. Thank you.

Ideal responses will include an apology that is brief, but does not center the staff member.

Staff can prevent this from happening in the future by using gender neutral language when speaking to and referring to patrons.

Bonus Scenario: (based on SPL's policies) A Transgender Person Using the Children's Area

You give an adult patron, who happens to be transgender, directions to the Harry Potter and Lemony Snickett books. Moments later, a parent approaches and says there is someone who shouldn't be in the children's area. After conversing with this parent, you discover that the person being referred to is the transgender individual you just helped. The transgender individual is looking at the Harry Potter books and has not spoken to anyone.

What do you do? Do you say anything to the parent? Would you approach the transgender patron?

Talking Points for Small Group Facilitators:

Example of an ideal action: Since the transgender patron is using the children's area in alignment with the Public Use of Children's Area policy, let the parent know that adults who are accessing materials from the children's collection are allowed to use the children's area while they do so and that the individual they are referring to is welcome to continue using the children's area while they look for materials. I would not go out of my way to approach the transgender patron unless they overheard the exchange. If they did overhear the exchange, I would apologize to them and let them know that they are welcome to continue using the children's area while they look for materials.

Addendum: *If the complaining patron is irate or angry about this rule and the other patron's library use, you may warn them for being disruptive, depending on your library's rules.*

Introduction to Reimagining Transgender 'Inclusion' for Libraries

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Pronouns: they/them/their

Learning Objectives

- Participants will gain knowledge about transgender, queer, and gender non-conforming patrons and coworkers and best practices for engaging these patrons.
- Participants will learn skills to help create safer spaces for transgender, queer, and gender non-conforming patrons through language, programming, and de-escalation techniques.

Ground Rules

- Respect each other - we all have different experiences and we all deserve respect
- Speak from your own experience - share your own story and perspective
- One mic - listen when someone else is speaking
- Respect pronouns. If you make a mistake, correct yourself. 😊
- Save questions for the Q&A.

LGBTQQIA: What does it even mean?

- Lesbian
- Gay
- Bisexual
- Transgender
- Queer
- Questioning
- Intersex
- Asexual

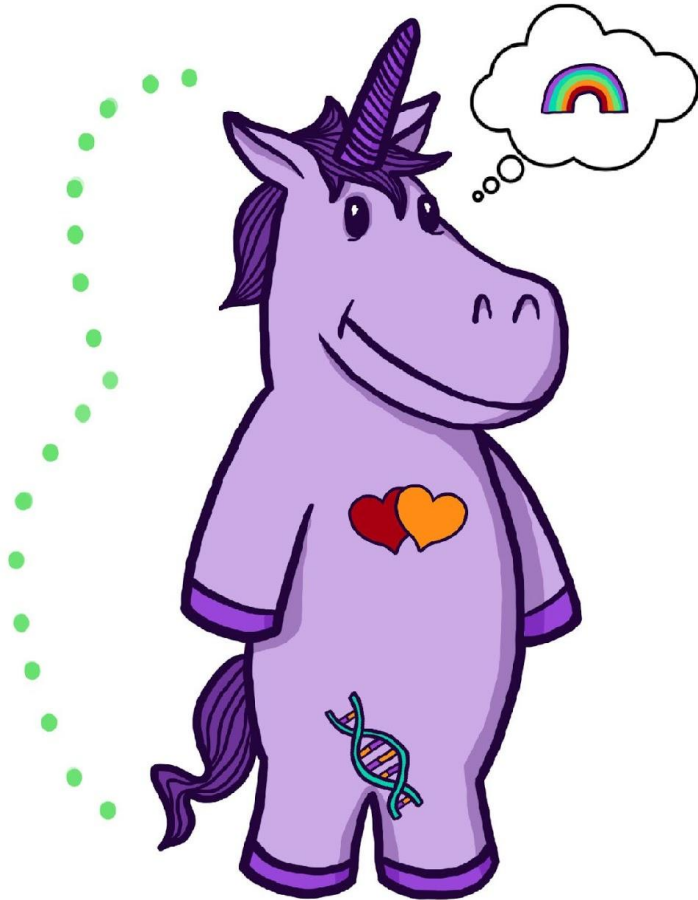


Who you love AND Who you are

There are lesbian transgender women!
There are gay transgender men!
There are bisexual intersex folks and
asexual queer folks!

The Gender Unicorn

Graphic by:
TSER
Trans Student Educational Resources



Gender Identity



Female/Woman/Girl

Male/Man/Boy

Other Gender(s)



Gender Expression



Feminine

Masculine

Other



Sex Assigned at Birth

Female

Male

Other/Intersex



Physically Attracted to



Women

Men

Other Gender(s)



Emotionally Attracted to



Women

Men

Other Gender(s)

To learn more, go to:
www.transstudent.org/gender

Design by Landyn Pan and Anna Moore

Demystifying Transgender and Non-Binary Identities

- **Transgender** people are people who have a gender identity that differs from their assigned sex.
- **Cisgender** people are people who have a gender identity that is the same as their assigned sex.
- A **transgender man** (or a trans man) was assigned female at birth, but his gender identity is that of man. He lives as a man.
- A **transgender woman** (or a trans woman) was assigned male at birth, but her gender identity is that of a woman. She lives as a woman.
- A **genderqueer** person (or a non-binary person) may have been assigned any gender at birth and identify as neither gender, both genders simultaneously, or fluctuate between gender identities.
- There are also cisgender people who are **gender non-conforming**.

Demystifying Transgender and Non-Binary Identities

- Many transgender folks transition socially and/or medically.
 - Name and/or pronoun change
 - Change in presentation
 - Hormone Therapy
 - Gender Confirming Surgeries
- “Born in the wrong body” is a narrative that isn’t true for every transgender person.
- Being transgender isn’t a mental illness.
- Racism, classism, ableism, and other forms of oppression impact access to trans affirming care and using the legal system to change legal documents.

Why is this important for Library staff?

- You all help make libraries safe for all of your patrons.
- If you all know the most effective ways to approach transgender and gender non-conforming patrons, you all can avoid unintentionally escalating situations.
- Trans folks are often regularly misgendered in their everyday life: making a mistake about gender when referring to them is like accidentally stepping on someone's broken toe. It might not have been on purpose, but it doesn't mean it didn't hurt!

Gender Inclusive Language Options

- Addressing groups:
 - Everyone
 - Folks
 - You all
- Addressing individuals:
 - Hello there
 - Excuse Me
- Addressing children:
 - Hi Friend
- Referring to groups:
 - Folks
 - Patrons
 - People
- Referring to individuals:
 - This patron
 - They
 - The patron in the green sweater
- Referring to children:
 - Friend
 - Sibling
 - Library Buddy

Mistakes Happen! How to Apologize:

- Apologize briefly, but genuinely.
- Don't make it about you.
- Move on!
- Don't ask trans folks to correct you-- correct yourself!
- Don't dig yourself deeper by making assumptions about the person.
- Learn from your mistakes!

Other Best Practices

- Don't assume gender! Until someone tells us, we don't know their gender.
- If someone tells you their pronouns, use them! Even if they aren't around to hear them.
- Similarly, if someone tells you their gender, use that gender if you refer to them later!
- **Transgender** or **Trans** are the most inclusive words to use and are always followed by nouns like person, man, woman, people, folks, etc.
 - Transgendered is not a word.
 - Transsexual is a dated word that I do not recommend using. It is a medical word and we are not medical professionals.
- Don't ask trans folks about the particulars of their bodies or surgeries they've had or want to have.
- Don't ask a transgender person about their birth name.

Queer & Trans 'Inclusion' in Library Programming and Spaces

- Be thoughtful about it year round, not just during pride—in your book displays, when selecting uncatalogued books, when conducting reader's advisory, when you book talk, in your storytimes and young adult programs.
 - Ideally, these are books written by transgender folks. #ownvoices
- Library card registrations and name changes,
- Shelf Talkers: Think about facing out books from authors of all walks of life.
- Bathrooms: Don't question a patron's choice of restroom. Do you know where the nearest all gender restroom is to your work location?
- People have more than one identity. Make sure you're inclusive of transgender folks of all walks of life.

Scenarios

- “Hey Ladies”
- “Excuse Me, Sir”
- Approaching a patron using a name from your Integrated Library System
- Report of a woman in the men’s restroom
- Gender non-conforming patron asks for restroom access.
- “Ladies and Gentlemen”



Questions?

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