

DCYF's mission is that all Washington's children and youth grow up safe and healthy—thriving physically, emotionally, and educationally, nurtured by family and community.

DCYF does not discriminate and provides equal access to its programs and services for all persons without regard to race, color, gender, religion, creed, marital status, national origin, sexual orientation, age, veteran's status, or presence of any physical, sensory, or mental disability.



## State and National Resources

- Washington LGBTQ Commission  
<https://lgbtq.wa.gov/>
- Washington RAIN  
<https://ofm.wa.gov/state-human-resources/workforce-diversity-equity-and-inclusion/statewide-business-resource-groups>
- PFLAG Washington State Council  
[www.pflagwsc.org](http://www.pflagwsc.org)
- QLaw Foundation, WA  
[www.qlawfoundation.org](http://www.qlawfoundation.org)
- Human Rights Campaign  
[www.hrc.org](http://www.hrc.org)
- Lambda Legal  
[www.lambdalegal.org](http://www.lambdalegal.org)

## Children and Youth Resources

- The Trevor Project  
[www.thetrevorproject.org](http://www.thetrevorproject.org)
- Center for Children and Youth Justice:  
<https://ccyj.org/our-work/supporting-lgbtq-youth/maps>

For more information about DCYF's Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice, visit [www.dcyf.wa.gov/practice/racial-equity-diversity-inclusion](http://www.dcyf.wa.gov/practice/racial-equity-diversity-inclusion)

*If you would like copies of this document in an alternative format or language, please contact DCYF Constituent Relations (1-800-723-4831 | 360-902-8060, [ConstRelations@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:ConstRelations@dcyf.wa.gov)).*

# Creating Inclusion for LGBTQIA+ People



Washington State Department of  
**CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES**

## Why it Matters

The Department of Children, Youth, and Families exists to protect children and strengthen families so they flourish.

How someone identifies is an innate part of who they are. Our role and responsibility is to support each person for who they are, not who we think they should be.

### Our collective is about lifting each other up.

Without this effort, we can unintentionally contribute to seen and unseen debilitating consequences. We have a professional and legal obligation to provide the very best in supportive care to those we serve. Let's show up in the best ways we can.



## What You Need to Know

We've all been taught and misinformed that there are only two genders: male and female. This is called the gender-binary. This narrative limits our seeing, thinking, and believing that someone may and can identify outside this false norm as transgender or gender non-conforming (T/GNC).

- Recognize the limitation of the gender binary (i.e., male/female) in our assumptions about people.
- Use people's chosen names and pronouns (this is not a preference).
- Be sure to share your pronouns!
- Recognize each person has a SOGIE.\*
- SOGIE exploration and development happens over a lifetime, from littles to elders.
- Pay attention to the use of language. Avoid saying things like:
  - "It's just a phase."
  - "That's for girls/boys."
  - Asking about a "girlfriend/boyfriend."

*Washington state law (RCW 49.60.030) and DCYF policy prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.*

*DCYF Administrative Policy 6.04 Supporting LGBTQIA+ Individuals*

*LGBTQIA+: lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning, intersex, or asexual; the "+" respectively identifies those not specifically named*

*\*SOGIE: sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender and gender expression*

## What You Can Do

You can do several things as a DCYF staff, foster parent, or kinship caregiver to create an inclusive environment for LGBTQIA+ children, youth, young adults, and staff. Things that take minimal effort for maximum impact:

- Create an unspoken welcoming space by displaying Pride flags.
  - Stickers on your work phone or laptop.
  - Flag/poster in your real and virtual workspace.
- Include your pronouns when you introduce yourself, and invite others to share theirs.
- When you misgender someone, a quick, sincere apology and correction is all that is needed.
- Attend LGBTQIA+ training, and put what you learn into practice.



We all contribute  
to creating an inclusive  
environment.