

JULY 14TH

*international*

**NON BINARY**

*people's day*



LE CENTRE CANADIEN DE LA  
**DIVERSITÉ DES GENRES**  
+ DE LA **SEXUALITÉ**



THE CANADIAN CENTRE FOR  
**GENDER+SEXUAL**  
**DIVERSITY**

Non binary is a gender identity, as well as an umbrella term, for folks who do not identify within the *gender binary*. This means that typically, they do not identify as male or female. Many non-binary folks were assigned a gender at birth that they do not identify at all with, and often use the *transgender* label as well. Some non-binary folks identify in part with the gender they were assigned at birth, but not entirely. Some lean towards feeling feminine or masculine, some feel compelled to neither! There are a variety of non-binary gender identities, all of which are unique and valid.

## what does it mean to be "non-binary"?

## what is "gender non-conforming"?

Gender non-conforming is an umbrella term for those who do not conform to traditional standards of gender as dictated by a cisnormative society. Gender non-conforming can be a gender identity, as well as a gender expression. Some gender non-conforming folks adhere to some, but not necessarily all gender markers (ie; pronouns, clothing, etc). Some identify with the gender they were assigned at birth, but may express themselves in a way that is non-conforming. Some do not identify with the gender they were assigned at birth, and use the term "gender non-conforming" as a gender identity as well.

Cisnormativity is a societal structure whereby gender is dictated by the sex assigned at birth, and subsequently dictates roles and lifestyles in society. Specifically, cisnormativity follows the idea that there are only two genders (male and female). and thus two forms of expression, two types of lifestyles, careers, etc. With this idea, any other forms of gender identity or expression are considered abnormal. Cisnormativity works hand in hand with heteronormativity, which dictates that heterosexuality is the norm, and any other sexuality is considered deviant or abnormal.

## what is "cisnormativity"?

## How do I know if I'm gender non-conforming or non-binary?

In a world where folks, specifically children and youth, are pressured to conform to gender norms, gender non-conforming and non-binary youth will often feel uncomfortable when encouraged or forced to perform under these norms. If given no restrictions, these folks would choose to exist outside the *binary*. For example, a youth who is gender non-conforming or non-binary may feel restricted or discomforted by the expectations set by gendered clothing. A gender non-conforming person may feel uncomfortable when pressured to accentuate physical characteristics that are associated with their gender assigned at birth. However, one can be gender non-conforming or non-binary without possessing all of these qualities or patterns of behaviour/thought. Remember that a label can mean a lot to someone if they want it to, but it doesn't need to.

**Genderqueer:** Often interchangeable with non-binary identity; a person who does not identify with traditional gender distinctions but identifies with neither, both, or something outside the male and female genders. One may describe it as the "queer umbrella" for gender instead of sexuality.

**Genderfluid:** Term used to describe a person whose gender identity flows between the masculine, feminine, and often outside these two genders. This person's gender identity may change or flow day by day, week by week, month by month. A genderfluid person may use any pronouns, or may change which pronouns they identify with more.

**Agender:** Term used to describe a person who does not identify with any form of gender, whether it be male, female, or something else. They may not identify with gender as a concept, or simply do not identify with any gender labels that are available to them. An agender person will often use gender neutral pronouns, or have no preference for pronouns, but could use any others.

**Bi/Pangender:** A bigender person is someone who identifies with two different genders; this could be male/female, female/non-binary, male/genderqueer, etc, and may use two sets of pronouns (he/they, she/they, he/she) or may just use one! A pangender person is someone who identifies with many/all genders. These folks may use all/many pronouns, or may have no preference for pronouns; some may just use one or two.

## gender non-conforming and non-binary umbrella terms

**Androgyny:** A non-binary gender identity associated with androgyny, meaning that it may be simultaneously masculine and feminine, but not necessarily in equal amounts.

**Transmasculine (or Transmasc):** A person who is transmasculine may choose to also identify as non-binary; it is a term used for those who were assigned female at birth, but identify more with masculinity than femininity. A transmasc person may use he/him, they/them, he/they, or other pronouns.

**Transfeminine (or Transfemme):** A person who is transfeminine may also choose to identify as non-binary; it is a term for those who were assigned male at birth, but identify more with femininity than masculinity. A transfemme person may use she/her, they/them, she/they, or other pronouns.

**Third Gender:** A person who identifies with a third gender do not identify with male or female, it they may identify with both genders, or neither, or something else; the concept of a third gender has existed in a number of pre-colonial societies and communities.

