

June is Pride Month in Canada!

Pride Month is devoted to uplifting and celebrating LGBTQ2S voices, culture, and rights. The [Gay Liberation Movement](#), sparked by the [Stonewall Uprising](#), occurred in June 1969. These pivotal moments in the LGBTQ2S movement for rights explain why we continue to celebrate Pride in the month of June.

Traditionally, throughout the month there are events that merge celebration and activism, including parades, protests, drag performances, live theatre, and memorials and celebrations of life for those who have lost their lives to HIV/AIDS. Amid the ongoing pandemic, Pride events will be held virtually this year. Visit the Pride Toronto website for a list of virtual Pride Month events - <https://www.pridetoronto.com>.

You may also be interested in learning more about Alternative Pride which has developed in recent years in order to increase representation and inclusivity of the queer community at Pride events - <https://www.blogto.com/city/2019/05/toronto-getting-alternative-pride-festival/>.

Throughout June the EDI Committee will spotlight the history of Pride and amazing individuals in the gay rights movement. We also suggest ways you can show solidarity. We wish everyone at Mind Forward a Happy Pride Month!

The Meaning Behind the Rainbow Flag

The easily recognized rainbow flag is a symbol of LGBTQ2S pride.



Traditional Rainbow Flag



Addition of Black and Brown Stripes



Addition of Light Pink, Blue, and White Stripes

Each colour represents something different. In the traditional rainbow flag, red = life; orange = spirit; yellow = sunshine; green = nature; blue = harmony; and purple = spirit.

Several variations of the rainbow flag also exist.

In recent years, black (diversity) and brown (inclusivity) stripes were added in an effort to show solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement, and light pink, blue, and white stripes have been added to show solidarity with folks who identify as transgender.

This recognition shows just how intersectional LGBTQ2S issues are. Even within a historically marginalized group, there are some folks who are especially vulnerable. Adding these stripes is a step toward (1) recognizing the varied and multi-layered struggles that people face, (2) showing solidarity with these struggles, and (3) actively working to dismantle oppression in all its forms.

Check out the following resources for more information:

Andrea Wurzbarger (10 Jun 2020): Everything You Need to Know About Pride. *People*.
<https://people.com/human-interest/pride-month-explained-pride-month-facts/>

Texas A&M University (22 June 2020): Intersectionality in Pride Month: Some Resources for Novices and Veterans Alike. <https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/blog/2020/06/22/intersectionality-in-pride-month-some-resources-for-novices-and-veterans-alike/>

A SHORT GLOSSARY OF INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE AND TERMINOLOGY:

Below is a list of common and accepted language in the LGBTQ2S community to facilitate shared understandings around equity, diversity, inclusion, and awareness. These definitions were borrowed from [The 519's](https://www.the519.org/education-training/glossary) online glossary. This list is not exhaustive. For more terms and further learning, visit the glossary: <https://www.the519.org/education-training/glossary>.

ALLY: A person who works to end a form of oppression that gives them privilege(s). Allies listen to, and are guided by, communities and individuals affected by oppression. Forms of oppression include: ableism, ageism, audism, classism, biphobia, homophobia, transphobia, racism, sexism, and others.

ASEXUAL: A person who experiences little or no sexual attraction to people of any gender.

BISEXUAL (B): A person who is attracted to people of more than one gender.

BIPHOBIA: Negative attitudes, feelings, or irrational aversion to, fear or hatred of bisexual people and their communities, or of behaviours stereotyped as bisexual, leading to discrimination, harassment or violence against bisexual people.

CIS/CISGENDER: A person whose gender identity is in alignment with the sex they were assigned at birth.

CISNORMATIVITY: Cisnormativity refers to the commonplace assumption that all people are cisgender and that everyone accepts this as “the norm.” The term cisnormativity is used to describe systemic prejudice against trans people. This form of systemic prejudice may go unrecognized by the people or organizations responsible.



DRAG KING/DRAG QUEEN: Someone who uses extreme gender presentation and plays on stereotypes as a basis for performance pieces. Drag performers can be of any gender identity or sexual orientation.

DUTY TO ACCOMMODATE: The legal obligation that employers, organizations, service providers and public institutions have under human rights legislation to ensure fair and equal access to services in a way that respects the dignity of every person, if to do so does not create undue hardship. The principle of dignity strives to maximize integration and promote full participation in society, in consideration of the importance of privacy, confidentiality, comfort, autonomy, individuality and self-esteem.

GAY (G): A person who is attracted to people of the same gender.

GENDER: Gender can refer to the individual and/or social experience of being a man, a woman, or neither. Social norms, expectations and roles related to gender vary across time, space, culture, and individuals.

GENDER EXPRESSION: How a person publicly expresses or presents their gender. This can include behaviour and outward appearance such as dress, hair, make-up, body language, and voice. A person's chosen name and pronoun are also common ways of expressing gender. All people, regardless of their gender identity, have a gender expression and they may express it in any number of ways.

HETERONORMATIVITY: Refers to the commonplace assumption that all people are heterosexual and that everyone accepts this as "the norm." The term heteronormativity is used to describe prejudice against people that are not heterosexual, and is less overt or direct and more widespread or systemic in society, organizations, and institutions. This form of systemic prejudice may even be unintentional and unrecognized by the people or organizations responsible.

HETEROSEXISM: The assumption that everyone is heterosexual and that heterosexuality is superior and preferable. The result is discrimination against bisexual, lesbian and gay people that is less overt, and which may be unintentional and unrecognized by the person or organization responsible.

HOMOPHOBIA: Negative attitudes, feelings, or irrational aversion to, fear or hatred of gay, lesbian, or bisexual people and communities, or of behaviours stereotyped as "homosexual." It is used to signify a hostile psychological state leading to discrimination, harassment or violence against gay, lesbian, or people.

INTERSEX: A person born with sex characteristics (chromosomes, gonads, sex hormones, or genitals) that do not fit the typical medical definitions of male or female bodies.

LESBIAN (L): A woman who is attracted to women.

NON-BINARY: An umbrella term for gender identities that fall outside of the man-woman binary.

PANSEXUAL: A person who is attracted to other people regardless of gender.

QUEER (Q): An umbrella term used and reclaimed by some whose sexual orientations and/or gender identities fall outside of cisgender/straight norms.

SEX: The classification of people as either male, female, or intersex. Sex is usually assigned at birth and is based on an assessment of a person's reproductive systems, hormones, chromosomes, and other physical characteristics.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION: The direction of one's attraction. Some people use the terms gay, straight, bi, pan, or lesbian to describe their experience.

TRANS (T): An umbrella term referring to people whose gender identities differ from the sex they were assigned at birth. "Trans" can mean transcending beyond, existing between, or crossing over the gender spectrum. It includes but is not limited to people who identify as transgender, transsexual, non-binary or gender non-conforming (gender variant or genderqueer).

TRANSPHOBIA: Negative attitudes and feelings and the aversion to, fear or hatred or intolerance of trans people and communities. Like other prejudices, it is based on stereotypes and misconceptions that are used to justify discrimination, harassment and violence toward trans people, or those perceived to be trans.

TWO-SPIRIT (2S): An umbrella term encompassing gender and sexual diversity in Indigenous communities. Two Spirit people often serve integral and important roles in their communities, such as leaders and healers. There are many understandings the term Two Spirit – and this English term does not resonate for everyone. Two Spirit is a cultural term reserved for those who identify as Indigenous.