The language of the LGBT community has evolved over time to be as colorful as the community. This language guide covers the basics.

MY PRONOUNS ARE

she/her

What are pronouns?

Pronouns (Example: He, She, They, etc.) are the verbal gender makers of the English language.

Merriam-Webster defines pronouns as: "plural pronouns : any of a small set of words (such as I, she, he, you, it, we, or they) in a language that are used as substitutes for nouns or noun phrases and whose referents are named or understood in the context."

Everyone has pronouns!

People use varying pronouns for a variety of reasons, usually to signal their gender identity or simply because someone feels that a certain pronouns fits best. When introducing yourself to someone, asking another person's personal pronouns is a sign of respect.

People may use a variety of pronouns such as she/her/hers, he/him/his, or they, them, theirs. There are also neopronouns such as Ze/Zie and Hir.

Pronouns are a way to make people feel seen and heard. At the end of the day, everyone deserves respect.

- People may also choose to use multiple sets of pronouns. For example, someone who indicates they/she pronouns likely prefers they/them pronouns, but are also okay with being referred to as she/her. Some people may use any or all pronouns.

- Respecting someone's honorifics is also important (Example: Mr, Mrs. Dr., Mx, etc.).

EQUALITY OHIO

LGBTQ+ | An acronym for "lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer."

Gender identity | One's innermost concept of self as male, female, a blend of both or neither – how individuals perceive themselves and what they call themselves. One's gender identity can be the same or different from their sex assigned at birth.

Sexual orientation | An inherent or immutable enduring emotional, romantic or sexual attraction to other people. Note: an individual's sexual orientation is independent of their gender identity.

Sex assigned at birth | The sex, male, female or intersex, that a doctor or midwife uses to describe a child at birth based on their external anatomy.

Transgender | An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or expression is different from cultural expectations based on the sex they were assigned at birth. Being transgender does not imply any specific sexual orientation.

Non-binary | An adjective describing a person who does not identify exclusively as a man or a woman. Non-binary people may identify as being both a man and a woman, somewhere in between, or as falling completely outside these categories.

Transgender boy/man | Someone who's sex assigned at birth is female, but transitioned/is transitioning to male and who's gender identity is a man/boy.

Transgender woman/girl | Someone who's sex assigned at birth is male, but transitioned/ is transitioning to female and who's gender identity is a woman/girl.

Queer | A term people often use to express a spectrum of identities and orientations that are counter to the mainstream. Queer is often used as a catch-all to include many people, including those who do not identify as exclusively straight and/or folks who have non-binary or gender-expansive identities. This term was previously used as a slur, but has been reclaimed by many parts of the LGBTQ movement.

Q: *Why does language matter?*

A: According to the Trevor Project, LGBTQ youth who report having at least one accepting adult were 40% less likely to report a suicide attempt in the past year.

Affirming LGBT people, especially youth, leads to better mental health outcomes and a more equal, inclusive state.