

SEX

AN
INCLUSIVE
TEENAGE GUIDE
TO SEX AND
RELATIONSHIPS

ED

First published 2021 by Walker Books Ltd
87 Vauxhall Walk, London SE11 5HJ

2 4 6 8 10 9 7 5 3 1

Text and illustrations © 2021 School of Sexuality Education Ltd.

The right of School of Sexuality Education Ltd. to be
identified as author and illustrator of this work has been
asserted by them in accordance with the Copyright,
Designs and Patents Act 1988

Interior illustrations by Evie Karkera.
Cover design by Jamie Hammond.

This book has been typeset in Century Old Style,
URW DIN and Futura

Printed and bound by CPI Group (UK) Ltd, Croydon CR0 4YY

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, transmitted
or stored in an information retrieval system in any form or by any means,
graphic, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, taping and
recording, without prior written permission from the publisher.

While Walker Books uses reasonable efforts to include up-to-date
information about resources available (including the website addresses
(URLs) included in this book), we cannot guarantee accuracy and all
such resources are provided for informational purposes only.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data: a catalogue record for
this book is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-1-4063-9908-0

www.walker.co.uk





INTRO



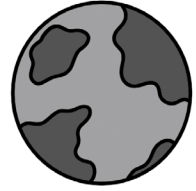


Hello and welcome! We – the writers of this book – are a team of doctors, teachers, activists and artists, who work together at a charity called School of Sexuality Education. There’s a bit of information about each one of us on page 216; our job is to go into schools all over the UK, to chat with teenagers about sex, bodies, relationships, identity and everything in-between.

We wrote this book to make sure everyone – no matter who they are, or where they are – can have their questions answered; whether we’re talking in a classroom or writing in these pages, our aim is to give people all of the sex and relationships information they need. Some people find questions around these topics a bit awkward and giggle-inducing, but not us... It’s our job: we care about it and we all pride ourselves on being one hundred per cent unembarrassable.

We feel that sex education in the UK doesn’t have the best track record. In some cases, not everyone’s experience has

been included or even thought about, and in others the lessons can feel rushed and brief, or not happen at all. In fact, all over the world, most people still don't have access to high-quality sex and relationships education.



We want to change that: we know that having access to the right information can help people to make more considered decisions about their health, happiness and well-being. It's also important to us that the sex education we offer covers a whole host of different experiences and, whoever you may be, we hope there's something here which helps you to understand your own experiences, and those of the people around you.

With that in mind, you'll see that in each chapter we've tried to consider all kinds of identities and perspectives – because we think it's important to remember that people are always made up of a unique combination of things like their gender, their interests, their race and where they come from, just to name a few. We're complicated creatures!

But understanding that differences exist (and thinking about how they might affect you or others) can help you to better understand the world, yourself and the people you care about. We want you to feel empowered and informed, while also showing you that we live in a wonderfully diverse world – and that this is something we should celebrate.

Each chapter aims to answer some of the questions you might not feel confident enough to ask elsewhere. Everything from...

"I masturbate several times a day - is that OK?"

(Spoiler: yes)

"I have a boyfriend but I can't stop thinking about my friend and the way she makes me feel. Am I weird?"

(Spoiler: no)

"I just don't want to have romantic relationships: not ever. Is there something wrong with me?"

(Spoiler: no)

"My genitals don't look like the ones I've seen in films. Is that normal?"

(Spoiler: yes)

Some information in this book might not be relevant to you right now, and that's perfectly fine. Maybe some of it will become relevant to you at some point in the future, or help you to understand someone else's experiences... One way or another, we hope it will all be valuable. So, let's get started!

HOW THIS BOOK WORKS

USEFUL TERM

- **Useful terms**
- Some terms are explained in boxes like this. Others **are in bold** with a definition the first time they appear in the main text. You can also look up key words or terms in the glossary on page 235.

Myth versus Reality There are some things to do with sex and relationships which a lot of people believe, but that actually aren't quite true. We want to bust some of those myths and provide you with accurate information instead, which is what these sections aim to do.

DID YOU KNOW?

These are extra fun or interesting facts, which connect to the subject you're reading about. The sources for any statistics or figures are at the end of each chapter.



From:
School of
Sexuality
Education

Consider: In these sections we've added a few extra bits of information to think about, which might be helpful for thinking about the "bigger picture".

Tips and tricks

These are small activities or ideas that you can try in real life.

Unembarrassable moment: *We've shared some real-life anecdotes from different members of the School of Sexuality Education team, to bring the information to life ... and prove we really are "unembarrassable"!*



2

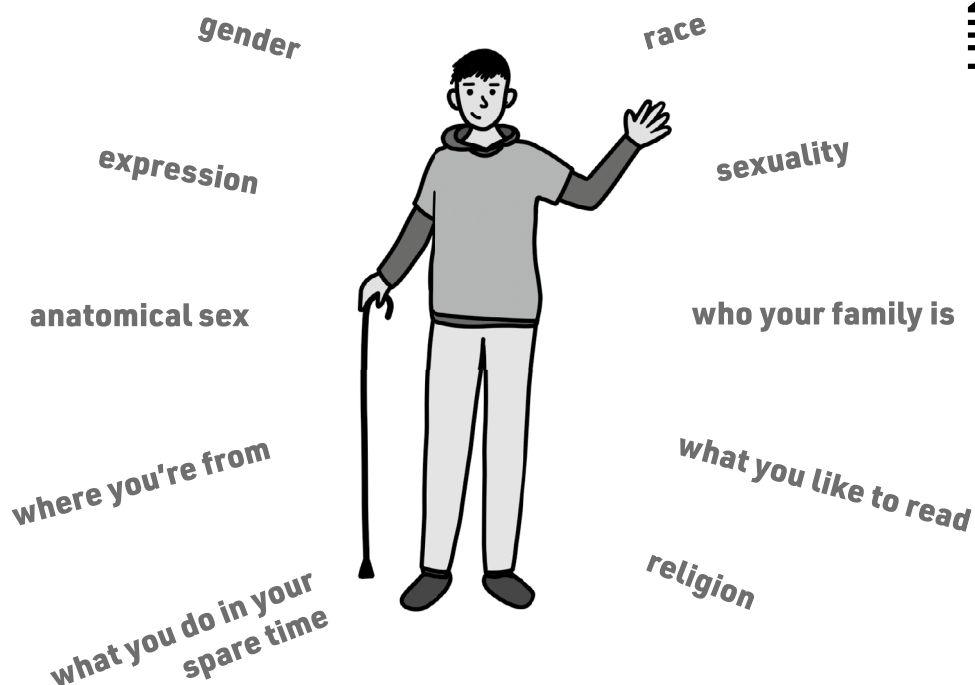
**GENDER,
SEXUALITY
AND
IDENTITY**



YOU

Your identity is all the things that make up who you are – and your gender and sexuality are part of that. Everyone’s identity is unique to them.

DIFFERENT PARTS OF YOUR IDENTITY:



The key thing to remember is that *there's really no such thing as "normal"*: being different from each other is normal, and it's what makes us human. You should never feel like you have to change who you are.



WHAT IS GENDER?

When a baby is born, their gender is assumed based on the sex they're assigned ("given") at birth, which is "male" or "female" in most countries. Sex is to do with anatomy and biology (e.g. body parts, hormones and chromosomes – we'll discuss this more in Chapter 4), whereas gender identity is about who you know yourself to be. It's often expressed in terms of masculinity and femininity, and it's usually influenced by the culture you live in.

The idea that gender is just "boy" or "girl" is called the **gender binary**; "binary" describes anything which is made up of two parts. However, many people see gender as much more varied than that: for example, some identify as **non-binary** because they don't feel that their gender fits with either "boy" or "girl". There are many other ways in which people think and feel about their gender too (as many as there are people in the world), because, again, we're all a little bit different.

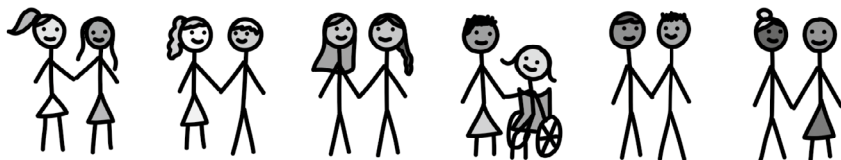
genitals ≠ gender

**USEFUL
TERM**

- **Cisgender**
- Cisgender and “cis” are terms used to describe someone who identifies with the gender that they were assigned at birth. For example, if a baby is born with a penis and assigned “male”, and then grows up to feel and know he is a boy in his mind, then he could be described as cisgender.

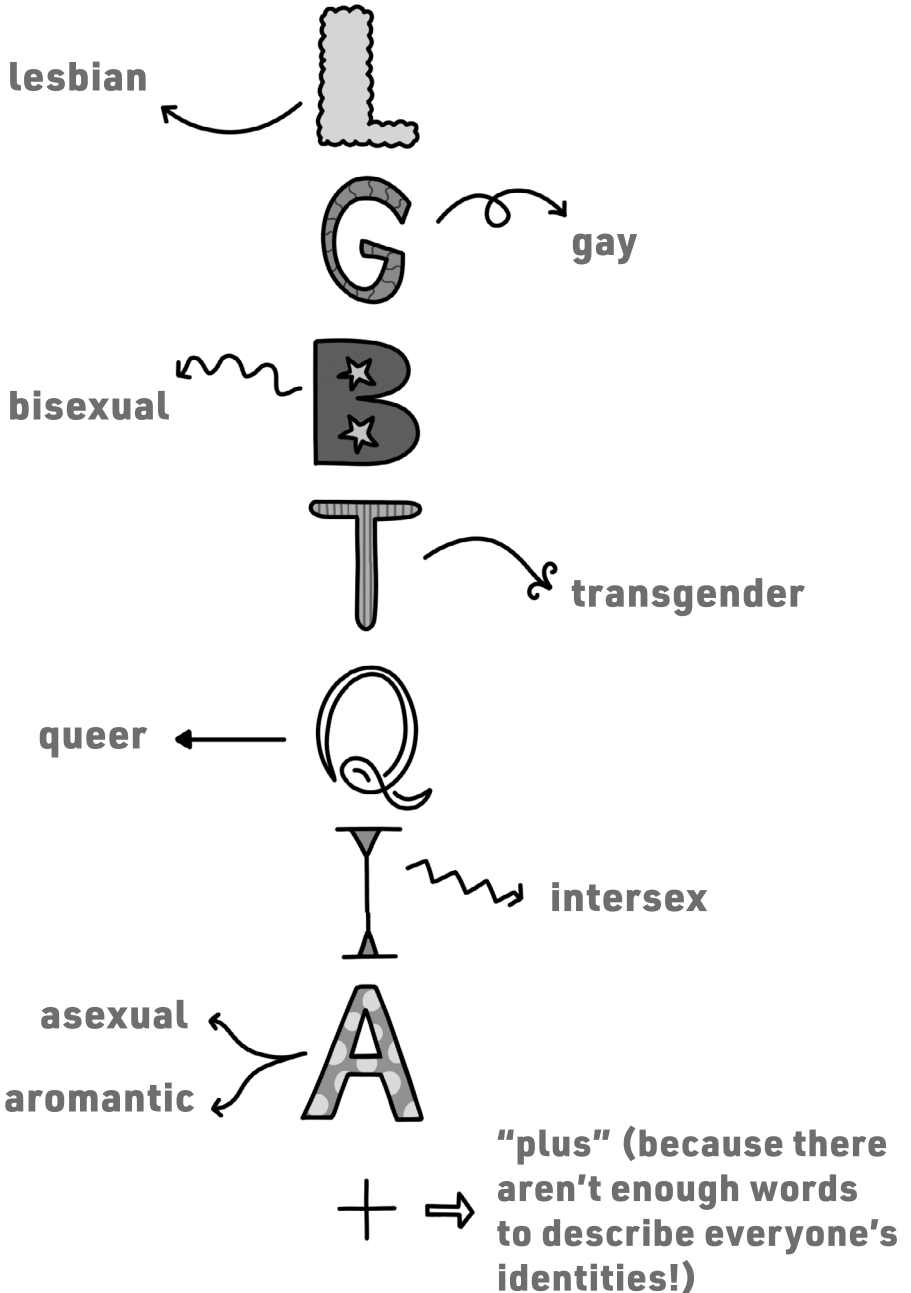
WHAT IS SEXUALITY?

Your sexuality is about who you are sexually or romantically attracted towards, and it’s often spoken about in terms of genders. For example, a gay man is usually attracted to other men, whereas a **heterosexual** man is usually attracted to women (and vice versa).

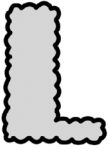


There are lots of words used to describe sexualities and attraction, but if you’re not sure about how you want to identify, you definitely don’t have to worry. You might need a bit more time to think about things, and explore who you are – or you might not want to use a particular label at all.

WHAT DOES LGBTQIA+ MEAN?



We're sure you will have seen the letters **LGBTQIA+** before. Here's an explanation of what each of the letters stands for.



A **lesbian** is a woman who is attracted to other women.



A **gay** person is someone who is attracted to the same gender as their own.

DID YOU KNOW?

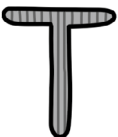
In the United Kingdom, it was technically illegal to be gay until 1967. Up until that point, the word “queer” was used a lot as an insult. Nowadays, some LGBTQIA+ people use the word in a positive way to describe themselves and to celebrate their community, but it's still best to only use it in relation to someone if they have first used it to describe themselves, because of the word's difficult and sometimes painful history.



From:
School of
Sexuality
Education



A **bisexual** person is someone who is attracted to several different genders.



A **transgender** or “trans” person is someone whose gender is different from the one they were

assigned at birth (which, as discussed, is usually either “male” or “female”). Someone who’s born with a vulva and vagina would have been labelled as female at birth: later on, if that child grows up and knows that they’re a boy, they may use the term “transgender”. Equally, someone born with a penis and labelled as male might grow up to know that they’re a girl, and they might also use the term “transgender”.

Some transgender people might experience **gender dysphoria**, which is a term used to describe the distress someone can feel when they aren’t comfortable with the gender they were assigned as when they were born.



A **queer** person may be someone who **identifies** as being part of the LGBTQIA+ community (maybe because they’re not heterosexual or cisgender) but doesn’t want to put a specific label on themselves. (The Q can also stand for **questioning** which is a term people use when they’re figuring out what their gender and/or sexuality might be.)

DID YOU KNOW?

“Gender recognition” rights are the rights someone has to correct their gender legally. For example, a transgender woman who was assigned “male” at birth might want to change that on their legal documents, like their birth certificate or passport.



From:
School of
Sexuality
Education

I An **intersex** person is someone whose body isn't categorized by a doctor or nurse as typically "male" or "female". (See Chapter 4 for more information on the term "intersex").

A An **asexual** person is someone who rarely or never experiences sexual attraction; they might enjoy spending time with someone romantically but not really be interested in having sex. **A** can also stand for **aromantic**; an aromantic person is someone who rarely or never experiences romantic attraction.

You might think of romantic and sexual attraction as part of the same thing, and for some people, they are, but there can be key differences. Sexual attraction is mostly about a desire for physical or sexual contact, whereas romantic attraction is more to do with who you want to date and spend time with.

+ **And the "+"?** The reason there's a "+" is because the "L", "G", "B", "T", "Q", "I" and the "A" aren't enough to describe everyone's identity. The "+" shows that there are lots of other ways of being, too. To give just one example, a **pansexual** person is someone who is attracted to people of all genders, and also to people who don't have a gender. They are attracted to somebody, and feel a connection to them, regardless of gender.

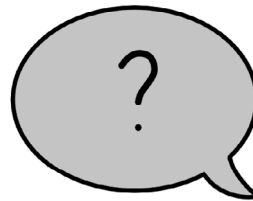
So, sexuality is about who you are sexually and/or romantically drawn to. You might be attracted to one gender, people of all genders, people without a gender, or not really be attracted to anyone – and that’s all OK. You might not have thought about who you’re attracted to before, or maybe you’re not interested in romantic or sexual relationships for now... That’s fine, too!



Sometimes people can feel uncertain or unhappy about their gender identity or sexuality. They might experience negative feelings about their identity because they’re not cisgender or heterosexual – the identities which our society often treats as “the norm”.



If you feel this way, it’s important to remember that it’s really not your fault. Asking questions and unpicking your own thoughts and feelings can be a big step on the way to self-acceptance. It’s a journey, and it’s all right to go at your own pace and figure things out, whenever you need to. Basically: you do you.



DID YOU KNOW?

A 2019 survey in the UK found that sixteen per cent of 18–24 year olds in Britain identified as bisexual – that’s fourteen points higher than in 2015.



From:
School of Sexuality
Education

WHAT IS PRIDE?

“Pride” refers to lots of events around the world which celebrate LGBTQIA+ rights, achievements and lives. While this sounds like a positive thing – and Pride events are often full of joy! – another big reason Pride events take place is to protest ongoing **discrimination** against the LGBTQIA+ community.

Pride actually started off in 1969 in New York, as a protest about the discrimination LGBTQIA+ people were facing (which is now remembered as “Stonewall”, named after the place where it began). Pride still has that spirit of protest, because society still has some way to go.



WHAT ARE PRONOUNS?

You won't know what someone's gender is before they tell you, just like you don't automatically know people's names. That's where introducing yourself with pronouns comes in – **pronouns** are the gender words you associate with, which may include “he”, “she”, “they”, or something else entirely.

It depends on what you feel fits you best, but it's basically how you want other people to refer to you. A person may identify with one or more gender pronoun(s), and the pronouns they use might change over time.

Here's what a conversation introducing pronouns might sound like:

“Hiya, my name is Rajan. My pronouns are he/him. How're you doing?”

“Cool: my name is Jay and my pronouns are they/them. And I'm good, thanks!”

You probably use “they”, “them” and “their” in your everyday language already; lots of us will regularly say things like:

“Someone left their pencil case in the classroom.”

“Who handed out the books? They can collect them in, too.”

“Oh, someone dropped their phone. We should find the owner and give it back to them. They must be looking for it.”

So, when someone’s pronouns are they/them, you would just use “they” in the same way. For example:

“Ah, Jay dropped their phone. I’ll go give it to them. They must be looking for it.”

EXPRESSION

Expression is how we are outwardly. It could include the way someone dresses, talks or behaves. Sometimes certain clothes, or accessories like make-up, are seen as “feminine”/womanly or “masculine”/manly... But in fact, society’s beliefs about which clothes are “feminine” and “masculine” change over time.



Just as one example: in the US, until the middle of the twentieth century, it was only acceptable for women to wear skirts and dresses. But by the 1960s, some women were starting to break social rules and wear trousers. At first, this was seen as very shocking

and “unladylike”. But fast forward to today and, in many countries, trousers are a regular form of clothing for everyone.

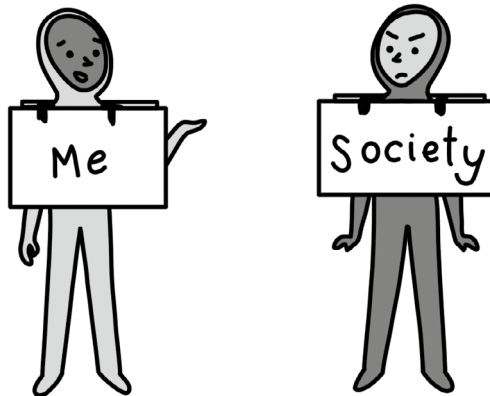
👖 clothing has no gender 🧢

Expression can sometimes be linked to someone’s gender, but it’s not always. For instance, a girl might sometimes dress in a typically “feminine” way, and other times in a typically “masculine” way. Equally, a boy might dress “masculinely” on some days, and “femininely” on others; or express themselves in a mixture of “masculine” and “feminine”, or in a way that can’t be placed in either category.

As with gender, the way someone expresses themselves won’t tell you about their sexuality. And no matter who you are, there’s no “correct” way to express yourself. If you do what feels right for you, you’ll be off to a good start.

YOU
DO YOU

“It’s not me,
it’s you.”



"COMING OUT"

When you hear people talking about “coming out”, they’re usually talking about when a person tells their friends and family about their gender identity or sexuality.

There’s no “right way” to do this, and everyone will communicate differently when “coming out” – it depends on what works for you and what feels comfortable. It’s also worth bearing in mind that, for lots of people, “coming out” won’t be a singular event. It’s more likely to be a series of conversations with close friends or family members, or other people along the way.

Sometimes these can be daunting conversations to have, so here are a few tips which might help.

- You don’t need to tell certain people immediately (or ever) if you don’t feel like it.
- You also don’t need to tell everyone in your life – it might be easier for you to tell one or two people and take it from there. Start off with someone you trust.
- For some people, society’s prejudices against LGBTQIA+ people can make it difficult to “come out”. Your safety is the most important thing: if you feel like it’s not safe for you to tell certain people who you are, that’s OK. Do what works for you, when it works for you. Know that you are valid and important, regardless.



Hopefully you will have someone you feel comfortable to talk to, whether a friend, a family member or an adult you trust (maybe at school or in your local community). If you're unsure who to speak to, there might be LGBTQIA+ youth groups you can join confidentially in your area or online. We've added a list of support services on page 254, which may be useful – and if you're the person someone is coming out to, there are ideas for supportive responses in the speech bubbles above.

GENDER AND EQUALITY

There still isn't **equality** in the world when it comes to LGBTQIA+ rights – and this is just one example of how inequality persists in society.

A related word, which you've probably heard before, is **sexism**. This is when ideas associated with men or manliness are seen as better than ideas of women and womanliness, and it leads to a society where men have more control and power than other people – for example, in many places around the world, men have more decision-making power, more money and better jobs than people of other genders. The term “misogyny” is at the extreme end of sexism, and it describes hatred of, or contempt towards, women and girls.

As well as gender and sexuality, as you'll know, there are also inequalities and injustices when it comes to race, religion, disability and class (and more). Of course, many people will experience lots of these inequalities at once.

These issues are at the heart of lots of the ideas you'll be reading about in the coming chapters – you'll see this when we look at relationships (in the next chapter), **reproductive rights** (Chapter 6), body image and advertising (Chapter 8), and more.

Sources

- “One in five young people identify as gay, lesbian or bisexual.” – YouGov (2019).
- “The experiences of lesbian, gay, bi and trans young people in Britain’s schools.” – Stonewall School Report (2017).
- “Key Dates for lesbian, gay, bi and trans equality.” – Stonewall (2016).
- “Advocates for Intersex Youth, FAQ: What is intersex?” – interACT (2021).

**FIND
OUT
ABOUT:**
CONSENT
THE BODY
**WHAT IS
SEX?**
**SEXUAL
HEALTH**
ONLINE
LIFE ♥
RELATIONSHIPS
REPRODUCTIVE
HEALTH
**GENDER &
SEXUALITY**
**BODY
IMAGE** ♥

**EVERYTHING YOU
NEED TO KNOW
ABOUT SEX AND
RELATIONSHIPS IN
THE 21ST CENTURY,
WITH WORDS
FROM AN AWARD-
WINNING TEAM.**

www.schoolofsexed.org



School of
Sexuality
Education

£9.99 UK ONLY

www.walker.co.uk