

# 2SLGBTQI+ Inclusion in Sport: Key Terms to Understand

Self-identification is the key

**Human Rights legislation across Canada protects us from discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression. Read on to learn what each of these terms mean and how they are unique and independent.**

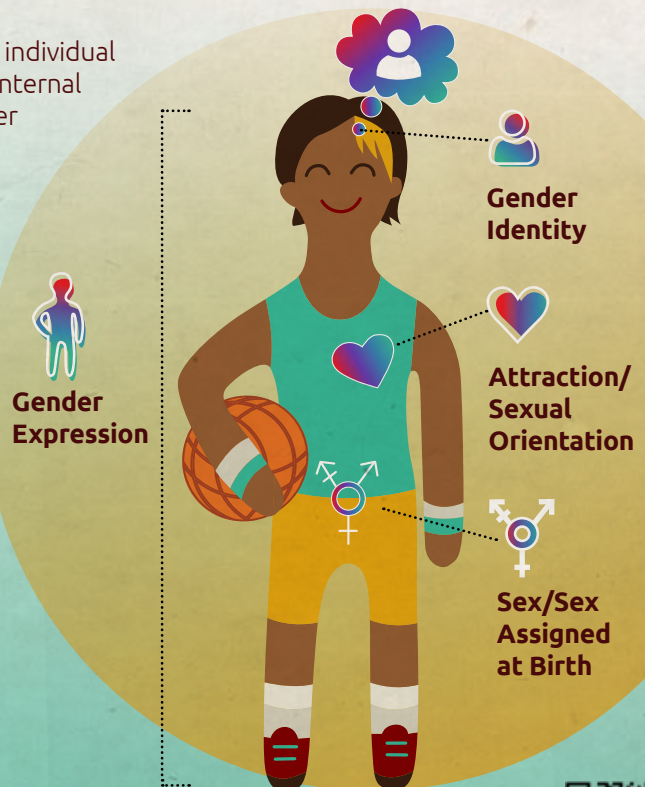
**2SLGBTQI+** stands for Two Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, Questioning, Intersex and more. The plus (+) ensures that further identities related to sexual and gender diversity are included beyond those listed. There are also other variations of the acronym like LGBTQ or LGBT2+. The key here is to be open, learn and allow people to self-identify.

**Attraction / Sexual Orientation** refers to which gender(s) someone is attracted to. People use different terms to describe their attraction to someone else. They may call it: asexual, bisexual, gay, heterosexual or straight, lesbian, pansexual, queer, questioning, Two Spirit or another term.

**Gender Expression** is the way a person presents their gender. Some of the ways people do this are through clothing, speech, body language, hairstyle, voice, mannerisms, emphasis or de-emphasis of bodily characteristics or behaviours, name and pronoun. People may describe their gender expression as androgynous, feminine, gender fluid, gender non-conforming, masculine or using other terms. What is considered masculine, feminine and androgynous changes over time and varies among different cultures too.

**Gender Identity** is a person's internal and individual experience of gender. This can include an internal sense of being a man, woman, both, neither or another gender entirely. Everyone has a gender identity. For people who are transgender, their sex assigned at birth and their own internal sense of gender identity are not the same. For people who are cisgender, their sex assigned at birth and their own internal sense of gender identity are the same.

**Sex** is the classification of people as female, intersex or male. The combination of the following biological markers indicates our sex: chromosomes, genitalia, hormones, internal reproductive organs and secondary sexual characteristics.



Be open and learn





2SLGBTQI+

**Allyship** refers to the practice of someone who actively and intentionally promotes diversity and inclusion and challenges systems of oppression (e.g. homo/bi/transphobia, racism, sexism, classism, ableism, etc.) Allyship means modelling inclusive language and inclusive behaviour. It involves committing to educating ourselves and committing to doing better and helping others to do better. Allyship is an ongoing process of being aware of being inclusive, and creating inclusive environments, systems and policies and addressing discrimination whenever and wherever it appears.

**Intersectionality** refers to the combination of multiple forms of discrimination, which compound to form something unique from any one form of discrimination alone. For example, in Canada in 2015, women earned 87 cents to every dollar earned by men (the impact of sexism), while women of colour in Ontario earned only 58 cents to every dollar that a White man earned (intersectional impact of sexism and racism). The term intersectionality was coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989. Because our identities are multi-faceted, our work to create inclusive environments must take an intersectional approach addressing all forms of discrimination.

**Intersex** is a term used to describe a person who is born with biological markers that do not fit the typical definition of male or female. In Canada, people who are intersex are typically assigned male or female at birth. Some intersex people identify with their assigned sex, while others do not. Some choose to identify as intersex. Estimates suggest that 1-2% of the population is intersex. Intersexuality is a reminder that even from a biological perspective, sex is actually not a binary system.

**Pronouns:** Ey, He, She, They, Zi or others!

There are a number of gender pronouns that people can use including ey, he, she, they, zi and others. It's important to create opportunities for everyone to share their pronouns and chosen names. Possible ways include through pronouns as part of introductions, registration forms, name tags, and email signatures. And yes, it's considered grammatically correct to use "they" in the singular!

**Trans** is an umbrella term for a variety of other terms, including transgender, genderqueer, agender, bigender, Two Spirit, etc. Some people may identify with these or other specific terms, but not with the term trans. Similarly, some people may identify as trans, but not with other terms under the trans umbrella.

**Transitioning** is the process that an individual who is trans may choose in order to achieve consistency between their gender identity and their gender expression or body. It is important to recognize that the transition to living in a way that is consistent with one's gender identity can look different for each person. For those who choose to transition, the process can involve different steps. It may include social transition, such as changing one's name, pronoun and accessing different gendered space. It may involve medical transition, such as hormonal treatments or surgical procedures and/or legal transition such as changing documentation.

**Two Spirit** is the English umbrella term to reflect the many words used in different Indigenous languages describing the fluid and diverse nature of gender and attraction and its interconnectedness to community and spirituality. The term seeks to restore traditional identities and roles forcefully suppressed or stamped out by colonization. Some Indigenous people identify as Two Spirit rather than, or in addition to, identifying as 2SLGBTQI+.

*These definitions have been gathered and adapted from multiple sources with the largest single source being Egale Human Rights Trust's Glossary of Terms.*

*For more information contact [info@specialolympics.ca](mailto:info@specialolympics.ca)*

