Pronouns explained

SAYiT

Pronouns are words that we use to refer to ourselves or others in conversation.

Examples of pronouns

he/him/his	traditionally masculine pronouns
she/her/hers	traditionally feminine pronouns
they/them/theirs	plural or gender neutral pronouns
ze/zir/zis	neopronouns
xe/xem/xyr	neopronouns

Pronouns are a part of someone's gender expression, and some may use different sets to refer to themselves. For example, a non-binary person may feel comfortable using she/her pronouns as well as they/them pronouns. If someone uses multiple pronouns, ask them what they would prefer you to use. People's preference may change considering what context they are in and who they are speaking to.

Some people may use neopronouns or nouns to refer to themselves. Neopronouns are newer pronouns, that intentionally go beyond the traditional gender binary (of masculine and feminine).

You cannot assume someone's pronouns just by looking at them. This is why it is important to ask people what their pronouns are and normalise stating your pronouns, even if you are not transgender or gender non-conforming yourself. If you make a mistake, just apologise, correct yourself and move forward with the conversation.

By using someone's pronouns correctly you are respecting their gender identity and who they are, whereas refusing to do so is inconsiderate and not valuing people's identities.

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The idea of gender being strictly binary — restricted to just men and women as very separate categories — seems to be a peculiar exception that grew up in Western Christian culture in the last two thousand years, rather than the universal truth it is commonly supposed to be. (Christine Burns, Trans Britain published 2021)

Young people who are called by their correct names and pronouns experience 71% fewer symptoms of severe depression, experience a 34% decrease in suicide ideation, and a 65% decrease in suicide attempts. (Trevor Project)