

Transgender Awareness

Brought to you by Delta Kappa, Zeta Chapter
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

What Does it Mean to be “Transgender”?

- A term used broadly to describe behavior that does not conform to one’s assigned gender
- The experience where one’s assigned gender / sex does not match up with how they identify their gender / sex
- While the term may be relatively new (last few centuries or so), people who do not conform to the “gender binary” (i.e., identifying as either male or female) have existed across different cultures and contexts for many years.

Healthcare Issues Faced by Transgender Individuals

- Discrimination in receiving healthcare; misgendering by healthcare professionals
- Lack of medical/mental health coverage by insurance companies
- Risk of self-medication (alcohol and drug abuse)
- For transgender individuals interested in sex reassignment surgery, receiving medical approval can be a challenge
- Identifying outside the binary of “male” or “female”

Risk Management Issues Faced by Transgender Individuals

- At risk for violence/hate crimes
- Lack of safety in using restrooms or locker room facilities
- Increased risk for suicide; 41% have attempted
- Transwomen of color at greatest risk

Common Relational Issues

- Psychological stress (both for the individual who identifies as transgender as well as their family)
- Loss of friends and family members
- Ostracized by family and/or peers
- Potential for being ostracized within the LBGT community

Housing, Employment, and Legal Issues Faced by Transgender Individuals

- Employment concerns
- “Real ID” law
 - Prevents one from changing their name without a court order
- Harassment and discrimination in the workplace
- Higher rates of poverty
- Higher rates of housing instability
 - Discrimination in shelters

How You Can Help

- Destigmatize through increasing visibility/education
- Utilize trans-affirmative symbols/language in your practice
- Reflect on the influence of cisgenderism in your practice
(Blumer, Ansara, and Watson, In Press)
- Offer sliding scale or free treatment
- Develop support groups and networks for youth who identify as transgender
- Get connected with larger organizations (such as National Center for Transgender Equality (NCTE), Trans*awareness Project, etc)
- Support local/national advocacy efforts (Transgender Day of Remembrance, Nov 20, 2013)

Resources

- GLAAD
 - <http://www.glaad.org/transgender>
- Injustice at Every Turn: A Report of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey
 - http://www.thetaskforce.org/reports_and_research/ntds
- Human Rights Campaign
 - <http://www.hrc.org/resources/entry/resources-for-people-with-transgender-family-members>
- National Center for Transgender Equality
 - <http://transequality.org/>
- Gender Justice Nevada
 - <http://www.gjnv.org>

References

- Beyond Transition: Issues Faced by Transgender Individuals and the Need for Equal Workplaces
 - http://www.outandequal.org/documents/S6_Beyond_Transition.pdf
- Blumer, M. L. C., Ansara, Y. G., & Watson, C. M. (in press). Cisgenderism in Family Therapy: How everyday clinical practices can delegitimize people's gender self-designations. [Special Section: Essays in Family Therapy]. *Journal of Family Psychotherapy*.