Queer Inclusive Sex Ed
201

Aspen Ruhlin
they/them/theirs
Client/Community Advocate
Community Agreements

★ Take space, make space
★ Come with good intentions, acknowledge/address impact
  ○ impact=/=intent! It is possible to accidentally cause harm
★ Honor identity
Learning objectives

★ Gain an in-depth understanding of why LGBTQ+ students need comprehensive sex education
★ Learn more about specifically being inclusive of intersex individuals
★ Leave the workshop with a deeper-understanding of how queer-inclusive sex education benefits everyone, including those who aren’t a part of the LGBTQ+ community
Who’s prioritized? Who’s getting left out?

★ Cisgender, heterosexual people are centered
  ○ Within this, cishet men have sex framed more positively

★ Pregnancy and STIs are the primary focus
  ○ How are these framed?

★ Who and what get ignored?
  ○ LGBTQIA+ people
  ○ Pleasure
  ○ Masturbation
  ○ Butts
Shifting language

“boys and girls” → “students”

“Female anatomy” “male anatomy” → “anatomy of [body part/s]”

“women” “men” → “people with [relevant body part]”
A note on language

★ Is it possible to use gendered language and be inclusive?
  ○ Not just possible, but necessary! You need to be mindful with your language.
    ■ Ex: “Women can take birth control” is unnecessarily gendered, but “Our society frames men as always having high sex drives, which isn’t true” is necessarily gendered

★ Trans people sometimes use non-medical terms for their body parts. Cis people also do this. Why is it only seen as weird when trans people do it?
  ○ It’s important to know the medical terms for body parts, and it’s also important to honor the language an individual uses for themselves

★ The importance of inclusive language is often focused on trans people, but it’s also important for intersex people.
Intersex—what’s that?

Poll time! Go to menti.com and enter code 9305 6042
WHAT IS INTERSEX?

Intersex people are born with any combination of sex characteristics that do not fit the “typical” idea of a male or female body. This could include variations in hormones, internal anatomy, genitals, and chromosomes.

0.05% TO 1.70% of the population is born with an Intersex trait. The upper number makes being born intersex as common as being born a redhead!

Intersex = hermaphrodite?

The word hermaphrodite is outdated and is usually considered offensive. (Though some intersex groups have reclaimed it.)

Hermaphrodite usually means having complete reproductive organs of two sexes, and even if some intersex people are born with ambiguous genitalia, very few have both ovarian and testicular tissue.

True hermaphroditism is only common in invertebrates. There are 65,000 species in the animal kingdom that function as true hermaphrodites!!
Inter... sex or gender?*
* Two very different things!

Sex centers around a person’s anatomy.
Gender is a social role and identity.

Sexuality is who you are attracted to.

But society tends to tie the two together!

The words sex and gender are often (incorrectly) used interchangeably. Being intersex affects the sex characteristics a person is born with. Intersex people can identify with any gender and sexual orientation.
What can intersex look like?

My intersex variation is **congenital adrenal hyperplasia (CAH)**. I found out at birth. CAH is one of few intersex variations with additional medical considerations, because it affects the body’s ability to produce stress hormones. I have XY chromosomes. I take testosterone and I identify as transgender.

My intersex variation is **complete androgen insensitivity syndrome (CAIS)**. That means my body developed in a way that is "typically" female, but I was born with XY chromosomes and internal testes instead of ovaries. My body is insensitive to testosterone, so it converts it to estrogen instead.

My intersex variation is **partial androgen insensitivity syndrome (PAIS)**. That means I only partially responded to testosterone in the womb. Because of this, people with PAIS may have an ambiguous sex at birth. My parents found out I had PAIS when I was born. I have XY chromosomes and I identify as transgender.

Doctors often encourage surgical removal for female-identified intersex people who have internal testes. However, this is NOT medically necessary and has more to do with society’s views on sex and gender. Removing hormone producing organs makes a person reliant on the medical industry for external hormones! Similar to other LGBT groups, intersex people struggle for bodily autonomy. We may have to fight against surgeries we don't want.
Why intersex awareness?

Intersex Awareness Day is **October 26th**! It honors the anniversary of the first public intersex protest outside of a Boston conference held by the American Academy of Pediatrics in 1996.³

We celebrate this day so that every intersex child can be free to make their own choices.

“Intersex rights are human rights.”
Kimberly Zieselman, Executive Director, InterAct

Still today, in America and abroad, intersex children are subject to nonconsensual and medically unnecessary genital surgeries. The United Nations has condemned these harmful procedures, but we still have a long way to go.⁴

We’re fighting for bodily autonomy, recognition, and demedicalization. For many, intersex is an identity. We’re the“i” in LGBTQIA: intersex, not invisible.

![Intersex flags](image1)

There are two intersex flags to choose from: (left) created in 2009 by Natalie Phox, and (right) created in 2013 by Oil Australia.³

Resources

You’re not alone! There are lots of us out there.

- AISDSD Support Group: aisdsd.org
- InterAct Youth: interactyouth.org
- The Interface Project: interfaceproject.org
- Pidgeon on Everyday Feminism: everydayfeminism.com/?s=pidgeon
- Intersexperiences YouTube: youtube.com/user/Emilord
- Oil Intersex Network: oilinternational.com

This infographic was created by InterAct Youth

Art by member Hann Lindahl - hannlindahl.tumblr.com

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3. The 14 Days of Intersex, Oil Australia, Gina Wilson: http://oilaustralia.com/2012/10/05/intersex-day-14-
4. The United Nations has condemned these harmful procedures, but we still have a long way to go.
Trans people

people who are both oppression that targets both communities

Intersex people
Butts—we all have one!

★ If you’re talking about penetrative vaginal sex, you need to be talking about penetrative anal sex.
  ○ If you’re not talking about penetrative vaginal sex...we have some issues to address

★ Many people think that teaching about anal sex in sex education is particularly graphic. It’s not.

★ How do I talk about it?
  ○ Find good diagrams that show the relevant body parts
  ○ Talk about how, like all types of sex, it’s something that some people are into, and people should only do things they’re into
  ○ Discuss the importance of lube, going slow, and understanding your body
    ■ Also true for vaginal sex!
  ○ The rectum doesn’t have an “end” like the vaginal canal—only ever insert something with a flared base!
  ○ Anal sex and STI testing—swab where you swoon
Masturbation

★ Healthy, normal, and should be discussed
★ While minors can’t legally obtain sex toys, that doesn’t mean they don’t get creative. Discuss the importance of being safe about what goes inside the body/around mucous membranes regarding material, flared base, etc.
★ Don’t make it gendered and weird
★ Pleasure is important in solo sex and partnered sex
Birth control

- Yes, many queer people have pregnancy prevention as a concern
- There are hormonal birth control options that can work for trans folks, including those using gender-affirming hormone therapy
- Gender-affirming hormone therapy is NOT a contraceptive method!
- Talk about abortion as normal healthcare
Anatomy Diagrams

★ Be honest about what’s missing
★ Acknowledge when things are labeled in a gendered way
★ Use a variety of imagery that showcases differences in color/shape/size
★ Talk about how this is one example, and bodies are built so many different ways
  ○ This is often ignored when talking about/showing the vulva especially
Examples of Intersex Genital Area

- Phallolclitoris (large clitoris/small penis)
- Labia/Scrotum
ANATOMY OF A PROSTATE OWNER

- BLADDER
- VAS DEFERENS
- PENIS
- TESTES
- SCROTUM
- PROSTATE
- EPIDIDYMIS
- SEMINAL VESICLES
- RECTUM
- ANUS
Same Jell-O, Different Molds #2

CREDIT IMAGE AND WORDS: BARBARA CARRELLAS
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Questions!