

# Is Your Physical & Health Education Class Inclusive and Supportive for Transgender, Non-Binary & Two-Spirit Students?

Many gender-diverse students have negative experiences engaging in physical and health education, which impacts their lifelong health and well-being.

**Consider these strategies to embed inclusive practices in your programming and better support gender-marginalized students in your classroom.**

## Instead of:

## Try this:

**Waiting for a trans, non-binary, or two-spirit student in your class to be visible or “come out”**

### Be proactive

Recognize that most transgender, non-binary, and two-spirit students are not visible. Ensure ample representation of sexual and gender diverse bodies and relationships, as well as racial diversity, in your classroom (e.g. posters on walls, content, discussions, etc.). Always assume you have transgender, non-binary and/or two-spirit students in your class and ensure your programming is inclusive.

**Being afraid to say the wrong thing**

### Be vocal about your learning journey

Show you care by expressing to students that you are learning, and welcome their feedback. Consider how physical and health education might feel exclusionary or unsafe to transgender, non-binary and two-spirit students. Access resources to learn how to be an effective ally for gender-diverse students. Model respectful language and attitudes and require all students to do the same.

**Making students choose a changeroom**

### Create neutral spaces

Plan activities that can be done in street clothes, until all-gender changerooms are the norm for everybody. While well-intentioned, encouraging students to change in a universal bathroom or changeroom singles them out in front of their peers.

**Expecting students to choose the “girls’ side” or the “boys’ team”**

### Plan all-gender activities

Gender-segregated activities are uncomfortable and unwelcoming for many transgender, non-binary and two-spirit students. Avoid dividing students by gender. Plan lessons and activities that are meaningful for all genders, or create skill-based rather than sex-based teams.

**Making decisions for the student**

### Let student interests guide activities

Certain activities can be uncomfortable for transgender, non-binary and two-spirit students. Encourage students to brainstorm and decide which activities they would enjoy participating in.

**Creating gender-segregated facilities**

### Advocate for universal facilities for all

Use universal design principles to create all-gender, accessible facilities in all new buildings and renovations to existing buildings.

**Trying to do it alone**

### Create a team!

Ask students what would make them feel heard and seen. Get supportive parents, students, local organizations, educators and administrators working together to transform physical and health education into a supportive space.



## Want to learn more?

Check out the Gender Equity resources on PHE Canada’s website, including a literature review on Transgender, Non-Binary and Two-Spirit Youth & Physical and Health Education.  
[phecanada.ca](http://phecanada.ca)