



Into the Rainbow

A WELCOME GUIDE FOR LOVED ONES

CURATED BY: ELISA HOLLINGSWORTH



Hiya!

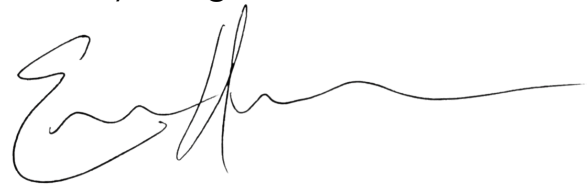
Thank you for picking this up.

This project is a love letter to myself at 16. When I came out, I was terrified. I didn't know any 2SLGBTQIA+ adults, at least none that were "out", and 2SLGBTQIA+ people weren't talked about in my family. While I was sure my parents loved me, I had no clue what to expect and the uncertainty was the scariest thing I'd ever experienced. When my parent's reaction fell short of celebratory, I internalized that as a personal deficiency. I thought that they resented me for my queerness and that I was wrong or bad. It took me years to figure out that none of this was true, they just didn't have the education and didn't know where to start. At 16, I had already had years of knowing who I was and learning the beauty of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community and how or where I fit in that. For my loved ones, this was brand new information.


I had changed the game and they had, without knowing, raised a queer child. While I was exploring pride and learning to express myself, my loved ones were bombarded by terrifying statistics about problematic substance use, mental illness, and violence. While all those things need to be talked about and systematic change must come, queerness is so much more than that. This project is a way for loved ones of those who have recently "come out" to have an opportunity to learn the basics, get some questions answered, enjoy local 2SLGBTQIA+ art, find resources, and so much more.

Our community is accepting, loving, growing, and excited to have you here.

Thank you again,




Elisa Hollingsworth, She/Her
Project Curator, Queer, Happy





Contents

- 3. Definitions - What does it all mean?
 - 4. Gender and Sex
 - 5. Pronouns
 - 6. Puberty Blockers
 - 7. Two Spirit
 - 8. Canadian History
 - 10. Dear Leonard Vine Poem
 - 12. Words of Advice
 - 14. Being An Ally
 - 15. Local Art Gallery
 - 17. Resources
 - 18. Thank You
- 

What does it mean?

Long Story Short:

2SLGBTQIA+ (2 Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, Intersex, Asexual) Abbreviation used throughout this booklet to refer to the gender and sexual minority community

Other commonly used abbreviations are:

QUILT BAG (Queer, Undecided, Intersex, Lesbian, Trans, Bisexual, Asexual, Gay)

MGSRI (Marginalized Gender, Sexual and Romantic Identities)

MOGII (Marginalized Orientations, Gender Identities, Intersex)

The Nitty Gritty:

Two-Spirit: A non-binary umbrella term for a variety of gender identities in different indigenous cultures and traditions.

Lesbian: A woman or trans-feminine person who is attracted to other women and trans-feminine people.

Gay/Homosexual/Homoromantic: The attraction to someone of the same gender

Bisexual/Biromantic: The attraction to two or more genders.

Transgender (Trans): An adjective meaning that someone's gender does not match the biological sex they were assigned at birth.

Queer: An umbrella term for a variety of different 2SLGBTQ+ identities.

Intersex: A sex designation and umbrella term for a number of conditions that cause reproductive or sexual anatomy that does not fit into the binary of male and female.

Agender: An identity meaning without gender or neutrality around gender.

+: the recognition of other identities that are not included in the abbreviation, or are included through umbrella terms

Pansexual/Panromantic: The attraction to people, regardless of their gender

Agender: An identity meaning without gender or neutrality around gender.

Bigender: An identity that is a combination of the gender binary.

Cisgender (Cis): An adjective meaning that someone's gender does match the biological sex they were assigned at birth.

Gender Fluid: A gender identity and form of gender expression that is not fixed and varies over time.

Gender Queer/Gender Variant: A gender identity (and umbrella term) for gender(s) that consist of either, neither, or a combination of the gender binary.

Non-Binary: An identity (often used as an umbrella term) to mean a gender outside of or in-between the gender binary of man and woman.

And so much more! The 2SLGBTQIA+ community is ever growing and evolving, for more information check out the resources available on page 18



Sex and Gender

Sex is assigned to us the day we are born, if not earlier. Sex is based on medical factors like chromosomes, genitals, hormones. These medical factors begin as early as fertilization!

Each sperm has either an X or a Y chromosome, all eggs have an X. When fertilization happens, its X or Y chromosome combines with the X chromosome of the egg. A person with XX chromosomes is usually assigned female, and XY male.

“Other arrangements of chromosomes, hormones, and body parts can happen, which results in someone being intersex”.

Planned Parenthood states that “Gender is much more complex: It’s a social and legal status, and set of expectations from society, about behaviors, characteristics, and thoughts. Each culture has standards about the way that people should behave based on their gender. This is also generally male or female. But instead of being about body parts, it’s more about how you’re expected to act, because of your sex.”

The same as many other aspects of human life, gender is a spectrum. Imagining “female” all the way on the left, and “male” all the way on the right, the middle remains as a large area for exploration, joy, and life.



Pronouns

“Is **she** coming tonight? I’d really like to see **her**!”


“Have you talked to Jewel? **They** said **their** dog had puppies!”

“Have you seen Roy’s sweater? **His** grandma made it for **him** and **he’s** afraid **he** lost it!”

Pronouns are a part of everyday life, and you use them much more than you’d realize. Pronouns are words like I, they, who, and each other. They’re also words like she, her, and they.

When someone in your life changes their pronouns, it may be a difficult adjustment. You might not understand why someone would change their pronouns, why it’s so important that you use them, or how to use them. Take a deep breath, and be open minded. No one is expecting you to be perfect or to get it right away, but truly putting the effort in to be accepting and safe to your loved ones means the world.

“LGBT young adults who reported high levels of family rejection during adolescence were: 8.4 times more likely to report having attempted suicide, 5.9 times more likely to report high levels of depression, 3.4 times more likely to use illegal drugs, and 3.4 times more likely to report having engaged in unprotected sexual intercourse – compared with peers from families that reported no or low levels of family rejection”



Remember: We all make mistakes! If you get someone’s pronouns wrong, apologize, adjust your language, and move on! **“Thank you for correcting me, I’ll be sure to use that going forward”** is all you need!

While he, she, and they may be more common pronouns, there are more! Neopronouns like ze/zir/zirs, xe/xer/xers, and fae/faer, faers are a few examples!



Puberty Blockers

What are puberty blockers?

Puberty blockers are gonadotropin-releasing hormone (GnRH) agonists that a primary care provider can prescribe to suppress puberty-related physical and emotional changes¹. Puberty blockers act as a hormonal intervention that blocks testosterone and estrogen, the hormones that create puberty-related changes².

Who would take puberty blockers?

Transgender, intersex, nonbinary, and gender non-conforming adolescents under the age of 19 who begin exhibiting physical signs of puberty³.

Why would people take puberty blockers?

Puberty blockers can be beneficial for transgender, intersex, nonbinary, and gender non-conforming adolescents who wish to reduce psychological distress related to the onset of puberty and have more time to explore their gender identity or make decisions about gender-affirming treatment¹.



For more information, please talk to your family doctor or nurse practitioner.

1. Vrouenraets, L., De Vries, M., Hein, I., Arnoldussen, M., Hannema, S., & De Vries, A. (2021).

2. Planned Parenthood. (n.d.) What are puberty blockers? <https://www.plannedparenthood.org/learn/teens/puberty/what-are-puberty-blockers>

3. Trans Care BC. (n.d.) Puberty blockers for youth. Provincial Health Services Authority. <http://www.phsa.ca/transcarebc/child-youth/affirmation-transition/medical-affirmation-transition/puberty-blockers-for-youth>



Two Spirit

The term “Two Spirit” was coined in July of 1990 at the third annual Native American/First Nations Gay and Lesbian Conference in Winnipeg. “Two-Spirit” is a term used within some Indigenous communities, encompassing cultural, spiritual, sexual and gender identity. The term reflects complex Indigenous understandings of gender roles, spirituality, and the long history of sexual and gender diversity in Indigenous cultures. Individual terms and roles for Two-Spirit people are specific to each nation¹: Two Spirit is not an interchangeable term with “LGBT”, not all Indigenous people who identify themselves as 2SLGBTQIA+ are two spirit, and instead fall elsewhere on the spectrum of gender and sexual orientation.

In the time before colonization, two spirit people were respected and often held high positions in communities. Colonization attempted to erase two spirit identities, as values and religion of western new-comers did not accept sexual and gender diversity. Through healing and ongoing reconciliation efforts there is a resurgence of people reclaiming their roots and openly identifying as Two Spirit.

Two spirit specific local supports:

First Peoples House of Learning @ Trent

Gender Diverse Indigenous Mentoring - Nogojiwanong Friendship Centre

1. History of Canadian Pride. Queer Events. (n.d.). Retrieved February 26, 2023, from <https://www.queerevents.ca/canada/pride/history>



Canadian History

- May 14th, 1969 Homosexuality was decriminalized between consenting adults with the passing of the Criminal Law Amendment Act
- August 28th, 1971 approx 100 people from all over Ontario gathered at Parliament Hill for Canada's first **Gay Liberation Protest and March**. On the same day a group of around 20 2SLGBTQIA+ activists gathered at Robson Square in Vancouver.
- August 1st 1973 **Pride Week '73** was a national LGBT rights event held in many Canadian cities. These events had art, dance, picnics, documentary screenings, and a rally. These events represent a shift to gay liberation, and brought the concept of "gay pride" to the forefront.
- December 15th, 1973 homosexuality was removed as a "disorder" from the Diagnostics and Statistics Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM)
- January 5th, 1974 **The Brunswick 4** are arrested and thrown out of a Toronto bar. This led to public outcry over their treatment by police and bar staff, further fueling the growing 2SLGBTQIA+ rights movement. This is also one of their first times 2SLGBTQIA+ topics garnered large media attention in Canada.
- February-June 1976 many gay and lesbian bars in Montreal are raided, this is seen as a measure by the then mayor to "clean up" the city in advance of the Olympics.
- July 1st, 1977 First Society for 2SLGBTQIA+ Deaf people formed. The "**York Rainbow Society For The Deaf**" was formed by **Raymond Barton, Bonnie Perry, and Randy Vivian**.
- December 16th, 1977 Quebec adds sexual orientation to the Human Rights Code making it illegal to discriminate in housing, public accommodation, and employment.
- September 1st, 1978 Immigration Act no longer prohibits 2SLGBTQIA+ people
- February 5th, 1981 Toronto police raid 4 bathhouses in the city as part of "**Operation Soap**". Around 300 people were arrested, with most charges being later dropped or dismissed. Rallies were held as a reaction to this operation, with this later being referred to as "Canada's Stonewall". In 2016, Toronto's police chief formally apologized for the raid, 35 years after it happened.
- May 16th, 1981 First Lesbian Pride march in Canada took place in Vancouver
- August 1st, 1981 Vancouver's first official pride
- September 1st, 1985 - First programming created to combat anti-gay discrimination is implemented in TDSB after a hate crime in which an employee, **Kenneth Zeller**, was killed.



More History

- February 29th, 1988 - British Columbia MP **Svend Robinson** came out as Canada's first openly gay member of parliament.
- July 27th, 1990 - The term Two-Spirit (biz manidoowag) is coined at the 3rd annual **Native Americans/First Nations Gay and Lesbian Conference** in Winnipeg.
- October 27th, 1992 - Federal courts lift ban against gay and lesbian people in the military
- June 30th, 1993 Supreme Court rules refugees can apply for status based on sexual orientation.
- May 24th, 1995 - Same sex couples gain legal adoption rights in Canada
- June 20th, 1996 - **Bill C-33** passes and includes Sexual Orientation in the Canadian Human Rights Act.
- January 1st, 1997 - **Counting Past 2** is the first Trans Art Festival which is held in Toronto, founded by artist/activist **Mira-Soliel Ross**.
- June 1st, 1999 - **Blockorama** is created, the first black queer space in Toronto Pride.
- January 31th, 2002 - NWT includes Gender Identity in Human Rights Act
- July 20th, 2005 - **Bill C-38** became federal law which gave same-sex couples the right to marriage. Canada became the 4th country in the world to allow same-sex marriage
- June 27th, 2009 - Toronto's first trans march, started by **Karan Mathison**.
- July 3rd, 2016 - Black Lives Matter Toronto halted the annual pride parade to address anti-blackness within the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.
- June 19th, 2017 - **Bill C-16** is amended to include Gender Identity and Expression
- December 12th, 2017 - November 20th officially becomes Trans Day of Remembrance and requires the legislative assembly to hold a moment of silence at 10:29 each year in honour of trans people who have died as a result of anti-trans violence.
- December 8th, 2021 - **Bill C-4** is amended to ban conversion therapy nationwide.

As with much other Canadian history, 2SLGBTQIA+ history is often written from the experiences and perspectives of settlers and those with privilege. 2SLGBTQIA+ Canadians still have work to do to unlearn systemic racism, anti-blackness, and colonization. This list was condensed for space, but there is so much rich 2SLGBTQIA+ Canadian history we want to encourage you to look at. Names, events, and bills have been highlighted as a place for you to start!



Dear Leonard Vine,

Your Letter to the Editor asks
why the private act of homosexuality
needs to be paraded down the street of our fine
municipality.
why you would be asked to join the festivities.
and what it all has to do with the definition of
pride
you found in your dictionary.

I hope I can offer some clarity

We need Pride
because there is a big gap
between the fantasy of equality
and our reality.

We need Pride
because my kid is 2 and he's already been told
he can't wear
pink shoes.

We need Pride
because some kids grow up believing
their differences are deficiencies,
grow up believing that they themselves
are deficiencies,
inefficiencies,
and maybe too disgusting
to belong
among the living.

I need Pride
because I was one of those kids.

When I came out, my mom cried for days,
told me I'd burned a hole in her heart

that would stay empty forever.
We need Pride
because I was one of the lucky ones.

Because I still find myself coming out daily.
Every time someone thinks my partner is my mom
or my kid gets asked about his Daddy.
And each time,
my heart still beats more quickly.
Despite my mostly privileged life,
disclosing my identity
is still prickly.

Since queer isn't passed down
genetically through ancestry
we need Pride
to remember our history.

We have been sought out and killed in witch
hunts.

Targeted for genocide in the Nazi Holocaust.

The first Americans with AIDS were fed only blame
felt no shame in letting gay death go viral.

We need Pride
to commemorate survival.

At Stonewall our trans predecessors stood up to
the hysteria
over the fact that their clothes were not deemed
to match
their genitalia.

People still march courageously in counties and
countries
where the price of their identity could be a public
last breath.

What could make someone risk death, Leonard?
You guessed it: pride.

In a world where people devote their lives
to ensuring we don't exist
what but pride
could describe
the way we resist?

We have pride
because we achieve miracles daily.

...





...

Despite attempts to hide us
we still find one another.

Despite our shame
we still find ways to love.

I will brim with pride the day
my mom holds my hand in this parade.

Because it is an achievement to re-appear
on the other side of trauma, to transcend fear.

Have you been to a Pride parade, Leonard?
The suffering and joy are so intertwined you can
taste them.

For just one day out of 365
the street is somewhere my families belong.

Amidst sparkle bombs,
stifles, spandex,
and hairy men in sarongs.



We are SO gay.

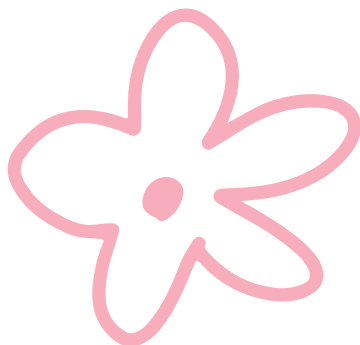
But we are so much more than gay.

We are Kinky Lezzie Ace Pan
Leather Poly 2-spirit Trans
Intersex Polysexual
Butch Dyke Fag Bisexual
High Femme Agender
Sadomasochist Bigender
There's always room for one more letter.



Leonard!

A private act between consenting homosexuals'
does not even begin to describe the possibilities of
queer.



This year, the parade ground to a halt for a full sixty
seconds
We lay on our backs in the middle of George Street.
toddlers lying still in the crooks of our arms.
The whole downtown hushed to a standstill
as the ghosts of the less-than-free flooded our hearts.



Did your dictionary tell you what exists in the
shadows of pride, Leonard?

Last Saturday, I saw that it is... Silence.



Queer is no longer confined to the bedrooms of the
nation.

So consider this your personal invitation
to join your community's celebration
of the diversity of experience,
the resilience of the human spirit,
the need to embrace love in all its forms,
and the worthiness of taking risks to honor our desires.
May you strive for authenticity
regardless of how you're told you should be.
Queer theory threatens to set us all free.

Yes, Leonard. Even you.

I hope you will join us next year.



But even if you are not marching
you can rest assured
that your letter
helped us remember
why we are.

Ziysah von Beiberstein
2023-2024 Peterborough Poet Laureate



Words of Advice



What is something you wish was better known about your identity?

"Gender and sexual identities are a spectrum! You don't have to exist in all or nothings" -Ali

"Being undecided is not bad- lots of things change as you learn about yourself" -Vic

"Just because someone is non-binary doesn't mean they have to present androgenously. Sometimes I dress very feminine and people assume I'm okay with she/her pronouns, but I'm just as non-binary in a dress as I am with short hair and baggy shorts" -Everett

What Do you wish your loved ones knew about your identity or being 2SLGBTQIA+?



"That I'm happier now" -Incubus

"Having the space to express myself however I feel right now, even if it changes, is one of the most helpful things" -Leighla

"Our future may not look like what you pictured, however we are still who you thought we were. Who we love does not change that." -Anonymous

"I've always been like this, I'm still the same person" -Midas

Words of Advice

What Do you wish your loved ones knew about your identity or being 2SLGBTQIA+?



"It doesn't change who I was, just an answer to questions I had about myself" -Clare

"That my identity doesn't change a thing about who I am or "how" they know me. It's simply a way for me to help them better understand and connect with me." -Abby

"Its not scary. The scariest part is feeling unsupported" -Jo

Do you have any words of advice for someone who is struggling with a loved one coming out as 2SLGBTQIA+?



"Try to let go of your own ideas of gender and sexuality, and just listen to them." - Anonymous

"The only thing to fear are the people around your loved one who may be ignorant- be brave and revisit your emotions regularly and you will find peace." -Mama

"They're happier this way, be happy with them" -Terry

"Listen. Listen. Listen. It's not about you." -Michelle

"The answer is always to lead with love. ALWAYS LEAD WITH LOVE!" -Alana

"Love unconditionally the rest will work out." -Christina

Being an Ally

Be Open Minded!

Don't assume people's gender or sexual orientation! The way people present isn't necessarily indicative of their identity!

Believe us! When someone tells you their gender or sexual identity, believe them. We aren't lying or making things up, even if we had come out as something else previously. We're all growing and learning more about ourselves, our identities were as real then as they are now.

Attend an event!

Peterborough pride happens annually in September, but there are 2SLGBTQIA+ events all year round that are open for allies to join!

Defend your 2SLGBTQIA+ loved ones when they're not around! Not everyone may support them like you do, be a champion for them in those situations.

Put your money where your mouth is! Support 2SLGBTQIA+ businesses and artists, see movies about us, read books written by us, stream shows starring us, and if possible, donate to local or national organizations doing the work.

Last but not least, don't forget to tip drag queens!

There are lots of ways to be an ally, this is a very small list. Check out the resources on page 16 to find out more ways to get involved and learn!



By: Carl Cruise-Baxter (@carls.collages)



By: SJ Graphics (@sahiradraws)



By: Jess Vossen (@indigiqueenart)

Resources

Elizabeth Fry Society of Peterborough (Act Out)
Email: elisa@efryptbo.org
Phone: 705-790-5452
Instagram: @actoutatefry
Website: efryptbo.org

Gender Affirming Spaces Project (GASP!)
Email: gender.affirming.spaces@gmail.com
Instagram: @gender_affirming_spaces
Facebook: @gasp.ptbo

Trent Centre for Women and Trans People
Email: coordinator@trentcwtp.com
Instagram: @centreforwtp
Facebook: @TrentCWTP

Pride Outside Peterborough
Email: prideoutsideptbo@gmail.com
Instagram: @pride_outside_ptbo

Trans Peer Outreach (CMHA HKPR)
Email: transpeeroutreach@cmhahkpr.ca
Phone: 705-748-6711 ext. 2100
Instagram: @transpeeroutreach
Facebook: @TransPeerOutreach

PFLAG Peterborough
Email: peterboroughon@pflagcanada.ca
Phone: 1-888-530-6777 ext. 583
Instagram: @pflagptbo
Website: pflagpeterborough.com

Rainbow Youth
Email: info@parn.ca
Phone: 705-749-9110
Instagram: @youth_rainbow

PARN (Peterborough AIDS Resource Network)
Email: info@parn.ca
Phone: 705-749-9110
Instagram: @parn4counties
Facebook: @PARN4Counties
Website: parn.ca

NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

LGBT Youthline
Phone: 1-800-268-9688
Texting: 647-694-4275
Email: helpline@youthline.ca
Website: youthline.ca
Instagram: @lgbtyouthline
Facebook: @lgbtyouthline

Trans Lifeline
Phone (Canada): 1-877-330-6366
Phone (USA): 1-877-565-8860
Website: translifeline.org

The Trevor Project
Phone: 1-866-488-7386
Texting: 678-678
Website: thetrevorproject.org



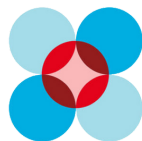
Thank you

A huge, unending thank you to Abby, Alana, Ali, Anonymous, Anonymous, Carl, Chelsey, Christine, Clare, Coal, Debbie, Elyssa, Everett, Incubus, Izzy, Jesse, Jo, Katie, Kit Coffee, Leighla, Mackenzie, Mal, Mama, Michelle, Midas, Package Plus, Pretty By Her, Sahira, Sam, Sarah, Saturn, Terry, Thelonias, Vic, and Ziysah.

A special thank you to Brittany Zeus for design, inspiration, and motivation.



BALSAM FOUNDATION



Ontario
Community
Changemakers



