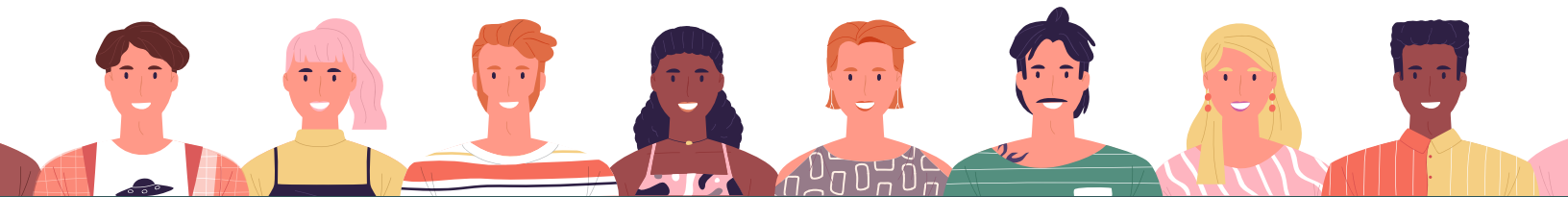


# QUICK TIPS FOR UNDERSTANDING PRONOUNS

(AND USING THEM CORRECTLY!)



## WHAT ARE PRONOUNS?

- A pronoun is a word that is used instead of a noun or noun phrase (e.g., we, us, or they).
- Everyone has pronouns—not just transgender, gender diverse, and nonbinary people.
- Respecting someone’s identity means using the gender pronouns with which they identify.

## WHY ASK ABOUT PRONOUNS?

- To make sure someone is addressed correctly and not misgendered
- To help someone feel welcome and more comfortable
- To demonstrate respect for others
- To avoid making assumptions about someone’s gender or pronouns based on the way they look
- When everyone shares their pronouns, it does not single out transgender or gender diverse people



## HOW DO I ASK ABOUT PRONOUNS?

- “Hi, I’m Rebecca, and I use she/her/hers as my pronouns. How about you?”
- “What are your pronouns?”
- “What pronouns do you use?”
- “What pronouns should I use for you?”
- Avoid asking for someone’s “preferred” pronouns.

## WHAT ABOUT THEY/THEM PRONOUNS?

- They/them/their/theirs are nonbinary and inclusive gender pronouns.
- They/them pronouns are often (though not always!) used by people whose gender identity is outside of the male-female gender binary.
- They/them pronouns are grammatically correct for a single person.
- Examples:
  - *Sam said that they are going to meet with their friends today.*
  - *I know they’ve been working hard to improve their coping skills.*
  - *I think that sweatshirt belongs to Alex because I saw them wearing it yesterday.*



## WHAT DO I DO IF I MAKE A MISTAKE?

- Briefly apologize and acknowledge your mistake.
- Say something right away, like “Thank you for correcting me.”
- Keep trying to use the correct pronouns.
- Practice the pronouns ahead of time.
- If you realize your mistake later, apologize in private and move on.
- Do not go on and on about how bad you feel or how hard it is for you to get it right.