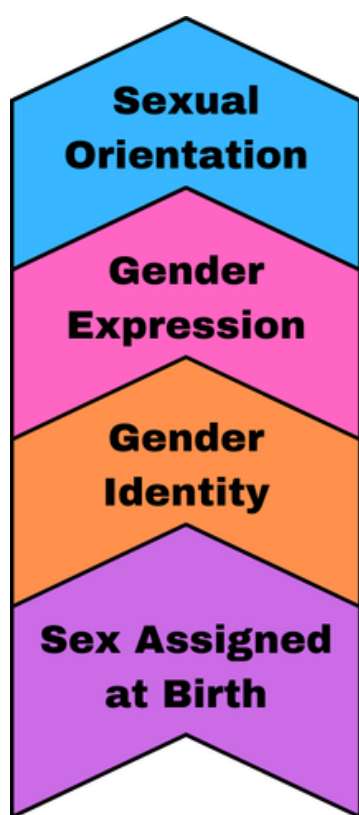




SOGIE & Childhood Development

Children feel and absorb information about gender and sexuality at younger ages than one might imagine. Use this information to build a foundational understanding of **sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, (SOGIE)**, and when and how SOGIE emerges in childhood development.

Note: Not all LGBTQ+ people “know” they are LGBTQ+ as children. Generally, identity development follows these milestones, however every person’s journey is different.



1

Sex Assigned at Birth

Age development begins: 0

Sex is assigned based on the appearance of genitals before or at birth. Intersex is a describes people whose biological sex does not fit into the strict categories of male or female. Many intersex babies are incorrectly assigned either male or female because not all intersex traits are observable at birth. Additionally, caregivers and/ or doctors may make surgical changes to an intersex babies genitalia in order to conform to expectations of sex.

2

Gender Identity

Age development begins: 2.5- 6 years old

Gender identity begins to form in early childhood as children develop a sense of self. Young children may make statements about what their gender definitively is or is not. Children who are being made to conform to gender expectations that do not align with their sense of self may show confusion and/or emotional distress. This distress is often mistaken for defiance.

3

Gender Expression

Age development begins: 2.5- 6 years old

Gender expression develops alongside gender identity. Children make observations and categorizations about the world around them (“That is a girl toy”, “this is a boy color”, etc.) and match up these with their sense of self. As such, gender expression exploration is very common at this age. Children may want to change their appearance and change interests many times over, well into adolescence.

4

Sexual Orientation

Age development begins: 6- 12 years old

Due to anti-LGBTQ+ bias, same-gender attraction is incorrectly viewed as more sexualized heterosexual attraction. Importantly, when it comes to youth, romantic emotions of attraction develop before physical sexual feelings, which come with puberty. In fact, LGBTQ+ youth commonly feel that they are “different” from their peers before discovering their sexual orientation. This often results in “late-blooming” when it comes to dating and intimate relationships.

Sources:

Brill, Stephanie and Lisa Kenney. 2016. “The Transgender Teen.” Cleis Press: New Jersey.

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National LGBTQ Institute on Intimate Partner Violence

A PROJECT OF THE LOS ANGELES LGBT CENTER

In partnership with the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs and In Our Own Voices, Inc.



SOGIE Principles

Developed by the Los Angeles LGBT Center, these principles equip providers with the mindset to make meaningful connections with people in the LGBTQ+ community.

1 Distinct and Separate

Sex assigned at birth, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation are distinct from one another- they are not interchangeable.

2 Exist on Spectrums

Identities exist on spectrums. No one's identity, lived experience, or language to describe these is exactly the same.

3 Intersectional

Identities in SOGIE intersect with other identities like race, class, ability, and more, to create life experiences.

4 Universal

Everyone has a SOGIE. Identity development is a natural, ongoing part of the human experience.

5 Self-Defined

How one understands, articulates, and shares their SOGIE is self-determined.

Additional Resources

National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs: National advocacy for local LGBTQ+ communities.
avp.org/ncavp

In Our Own Voices, Inc.: Serving the needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual, & transgender people of color, our friends and families.
ioov.org

love is respect: Healthy relationships for young adults.
loveisrespect.org

InterACT: Advocates for Intersex Youth.
interactadvocates.org



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The National LGBTQ Institute on Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is a project of the **Los Angeles LGBT Center**, in close collaboration with the **National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs (NCAVP)**, and **In Our Own Voices, Inc.**

The National LGBTQ+ Youth Survivor Training and Technical Assistance (TTA) Project is a project of the Institute funded by the Office of Violence Against Women to address the unique needs of LGBTQ+ youth (24 and under) survivors. The Youth Survivor TTA Project brings the Institute's training and technical assistance services to providers who work with youth in any setting to meet the needs of LGBTQ+ youth survivors wherever they are.

Trainings provided by the Institute are always free and may be in-person at your agency or via Zoom.

To book a training or learn more, visit our website:
lgbtqipvinstitute.org

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