



TRANSGENDER DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR) is annually observed on November 20, honouring the memory of those whose lives were lost in acts of anti-transgender violence.

The Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR) was started by a transgender advocate, Gwendolyn Ann Smith as a vigil to honour the memory of Rita Hester, a transgender woman who was killed in 1998. The vigil commemorated all the transgender people lost to violence that year and began an important memorial that has become the annual Transgender Day of Remembrance.

The equality clause within South Africa's Constitution is a celebratory victory for transgender persons. Sexual orientation and gender are protected within South Africa's Bill of Rights.

In 2014, Transgender Intersex Africa (TIA) and Iranti-org in partnership with ARASA, have identified increased violations transgender and gender non-conforming learners face in their schools. Reported violations relate to bullying, physical violence, intimidation and public humiliation by teachers and learners, harassment in bathrooms, sexual violence and social exclusion. As a result, many transgender children suffer from depression, attempt suicide and often don't complete school.

South Africa's Constitution allows the Department of Education to create gender affirming learning environments in which all children can learn in an environment that ensures their right to freely embody their gender identity and gender expression.

We are committed to working with the Government to create safer, gender affirming learning environments for all learners in South Africa. We insist that South Africa's school curriculum include life orientation materials on transgender rights. All teachers in South Africa should be trained on working in an environment with learners of various sexual orientations and gender identities.

The following have been extracted from GLAAD (www.glaad.org) on suggestions for the correct use of terminologies related to transgender language.

Transgender-Specific Terminology

Transgender

An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from what is typically associated with the sex they were assigned at birth. People under the transgender umbrella may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms – including *transgender*. Some of those terms are defined below. Use the descriptive term preferred by the individual. Many transgender people are prescribed hormones by their doctors to change their bodies. Some undergo surgery as well. But not all transgender people can or will take those steps, and a transgender identity is not dependent upon medical procedures.

Transsexual

An older term that originated in the medical and psychological communities. Still preferred by some people who have permanently changed – or seek to change – their bodies through medical interventions (including but not limited to hormones and/or surgeries). Unlike *transgender*, *transsexual* is **not** an umbrella term. Many transgender people do not identify as transsexual and prefer the word *transgender*. It is best to ask which term an individual prefers. If preferred, use as an adjective: transsexual woman or transsexual man.

Trans

Used as shorthand to mean *transgender* or *transsexual* - or sometimes to be inclusive of a wide variety of identities under the transgender umbrella. Because its meaning is not precise or widely understood, be careful when using it with audiences who may not understand what it means. Avoid unless used in a direct quote or in cases where you can clearly explain the term's meaning in the context of your story.

Transgender man

People who were assigned female at birth but identify and live as a man may use this term to describe themselves. They may shorten it to trans man. (Note: *trans man*, not "transman.") Some may also use FTM, an abbreviation for female-to-male. Some may prefer to simply be called *men*, without any modifier. It is best to ask which term an individual prefers.

Transgender woman

People who were assigned male at birth but identify and live as a woman may use this term to describe themselves. They may shorten to trans woman. (Note: *trans woman*, not “transwoman.”) Some may also use MTF, an abbreviation for male-to-female. Some may prefer to simply be called *women*, without any modifier. It is best to ask which term an individual prefers.

Cross-dresser

While anyone may wear clothes associated with a different sex, the term *cross-dresser* is typically used to refer to heterosexual men who occasionally wear clothes, makeup, and accessories culturally associated with women. This activity is a form of gender expression, and not done for entertainment purposes. Cross-dressers do not wish to permanently change their sex or live full-time as women. *Replaces the term “transvestite.”*

PLEASE NOTE: Transgender women are not cross-dressers or drag queens. Drag queens are men, typically gay men, who dress like women for the purpose of entertainment. **Be aware of the differences between transgender women, cross-dressers, and drag queens. Use the term preferred by the individual.** Do not use the word “transvestite” at all, unless someone specifically self-identifies that way.

Transition

Altering one’s birth sex is not a one-step procedure; it is a complex process that occurs over a long period of time.

Transition includes some or all of the following personal, medical, and legal steps: telling one’s family, friends, and colleagues; using a different name and new pronouns; dressing differently; changing one’s name and/or sex on legal documents; hormone therapy; and possibly (though not always) one or more types of surgery. The exact steps involved in transition vary from person to person. **Avoid the phrase “sex change.”**

Sex Reassignment Surgery (SRS)

Refers to medically-supervised surgical interventions, and is only one small part of transition (*see transition* above). Avoid the phrase “sex change operation.” Do not refer to someone as being “pre-op” or “post-op.” Not all transgender people choose to, or can afford to, undergo medical surgeries.

Gender Identity Disorder (GID)

Outdated, see Gender Dysphoria

Gender Dysphoria

“Gender Identity Disorder” has been replaced with *Gender Dysphoria*, and the criteria for diagnosis have also changed. The necessity of a psychiatric diagnosis remains controversial, as both psychiatric and medical authorities recommend individualized medical treatment through hormones and/or surgeries to treat gender dysphoria. Some transgender advocates believe the inclusion of Gender Dysphoria which is necessary in order to advocate for health insurance that covers the medically necessary treatment recommended for transgender people.



FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

Trans Intersex Africa (TIA)

TIA was founded in 2010 and focuses on transgender and intersex issues in previously disadvantaged communities in South Africa. TIA seeks to break the silence and stop the ignorance surrounding the existence of the black transgender and intersex people in African communities and bring knowledge of applicable terminologies and a better understanding of transgender and intersexuality.

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Iranti-org

Iranti-Org is an African visual media organisation established in 2012. It works within a human rights framework to raise issues of sexual orientation and gender identities. To date, Iranti-org documents hate crimes and human rights violations based on sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression. Iranti-org has set up the African Queer Media Makers Network, which seeks to build the media making capacity of LGBTI activists in Southern Africa.

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Iranti-org

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