

# Gender Identity, Gender Expression, and Sexual Orientation

## *Lesson Plan*

**Resource:** H&PE Elementary Resources

**Unit:** Human Development and Sexual Health

**Grade(s):** 8

**Lesson:** 2 of 5

## H&PE Curriculum Expectations

**2019 H&PE Curriculum Expectations:** A1.2, A1.5, D1.5

## Materials

- Access to a shared document (chart paper and markers or online interactive tool)
- **[Teacher Resource: Anecdotal Recording Chart \(PDF\)](#)**

## Learning Goals

- We are learning to use our coping and self-awareness skills to understand gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation.
- We are learning to identify factors that can help individuals of all identities and orientations develop a positive self-concept.

## Overall Assessment

Use the Teacher Resource: Anecdotal Recording Chart to observe and provide written and verbal feedback of students' understanding of gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation and identify factors that can help individuals of all identities and orientations develop a positive self-concept.

## Minds-On

Share the learning goals with the class and co-construct success criteria with students. Consider posting the success criteria in the learning space for reference throughout the lesson.

Remind students of general group rules, including the importance of showing respect for others' ideas and opinions.

Divide students into groups of 4-5 and provide access to a shared document for groups to create a **Mind Map**. Have students draw the outline of a body in the centre of their Mind Map. Use the following teacher prompt to have students generate a list of factors that impact a person's self-concept.

**Teacher prompt:** "Self-concept refers to the thoughts and feelings we have about ourselves and who we are. What are some factors that affect a person's self-concept?"

*Student responses:*

- "What we think of ourselves."
- "How we think others view us."
- "Accepting ourselves."
- "Feeling accepted by others."
- "Our social environment."
- "Stereotypes and bias affect how we might see ourselves."
- "Opinions of others who are important to us."
- "Being aware of our strengths and needs."
- "Our cultural identity."

- “Support we have from others.”
- “Our body image.”
- “Our mental health and emotional well-being.”
- “Our physical abilities.”
- “Having a sense of purpose.”

Have students record their ideas around the outside of the body. Invite students to share their ideas, encouraging other groups to add new ideas to their Mind Maps.

Using Direct Instruction, explain to students that a person’s self-concept is affected by a number of factors including the thoughts and feelings they have about themselves and who they are, and their interactions with others and the world around them. It can be influenced by the perceived opinions of others or through an understanding of their own behaviour and actions. Self-concept can affect how a person feels about themselves.

## Action

Post the following terms for students to reference: Sex, Gender Identity, Sexual Orientation, Gender Expression. Use an **Elbow Partner** strategy to have students think about what they know about each term and what questions they might have.

Share the definitions and have elbow partners compare what they think they know and what they now know based on the definitions.

Terms and Definitions:

- Sex: (sometimes called biological sex, anatomical sex, or physical sex) is comprised of things like genitals, chromosomes, hormones, body hair, and more.
- Gender identity: refers to a person’s internal sense or feeling of being a woman, a man, both, neither, or anywhere on the gender spectrum, which may or may not be the same as the person’s birth-assigned sex. It is different from and does not determine a person’s sexual orientation.

- Sexual orientation: a term for the emotional, physical, romantic, sexual and spiritual attraction, desire, or affection for another person of the same or different gender.
- Gender expression: how a person publicly presents or expresses their gender. This can include behaviour and outward appearance, such as dress, hair, make-up, body language and voice. A person's chosen name and pronoun are also common ways people express their gender. Others perceive a person's gender through these attributes.

(The definitions were excerpted and adapted from:

- Ontario Ministry of Education. (2019). [The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1–8: Health and Physical Education](#);
- The Genderbread Person. (2017). [Genderbread Person v4.0: Breaking a complicated concept into bite-sizes, digestible pieces.](#))

Use Direct Instruction and the following prompts for students to understand the concept of gender and how it contributes to a person's identity.

- **Teacher prompt:** "Gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation are connected to the way a person sees themselves and their interactions with others and have a strong impact on an individual's self-concept. Write the word, "Sex" on the body outline in the place where genitals would be. Sex (sometimes called biological sex, anatomical sex, or physical sex) is comprised of things like genitals, chromosomes, hormones, body hair, and more. But one thing it's not called is gender."
- **Teacher prompt:** "Draw a brain in the head of the body outline and write the words "Gender Identity". Gender identity refers to a person's internal sense or feeling of being a female, a male, both, neither, or anywhere on the gender spectrum, which may or may not be the same as the person's birth-assigned sex. It is different from and does not determine a person's sexual orientation."
- **Teacher prompt:** "Draw a heart in the chest of the body outline. Sexual orientation is a term for the emotional, physical, romantic, sexual and spiritual attraction, desire, or affection for another person of the same or different gender. It is who you are attracted to and want to have an intimate relationship with."
- **Teacher prompt:** "Draw a circle around the outside of the body outline. Gender expression is how a person publicly presents or expresses their gender. This can include behaviour and outward

appearance, such as dress, hair, make-up, body language and voice. A person's chosen name and pronoun are also common ways people express their gender. Others perceive a person's gender through these attributes."

After each teacher prompt, have students record the information on their Mind Map as instructed. Consider showing students a visual representation of the components that make up an individual's identity to deepen their understanding of gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation. Refer to the Note to Teachers section for additional information.

Continuing with Direct Instruction, emphasize that understanding and accepting one's own gender identity and sexual orientation can have a strong impact on the development of one's overall self-concept. It is essential to treat people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions with respect and acceptance.

Use the following teacher prompt to lead a large group discussion about support for self and others to understand one's gender identity and sexual orientation and help all individuals of all identities and orientations develop a positive self-concept and feel accepted and included (pause after each prompt and instruct students to add the class-generated responses to their Mind Map).

- **Teacher prompt:** "Young people can develop positively if they understand their gender identity and their sexual orientation, and if these are respected by themselves, their family, and their community. What kind of support do people need to help them understand their gender identity and their sexual orientation?"

*Student responses:*

- - "It's important for people to have role models that they can relate to – for example, people of similar ages or cultures."
  - "It's important to have all gender identities and sexual orientations portrayed positively in the media, in literature, and in materials we use at school."
  - "When we treat everyone with respect and kindness, we provide the support that people need."
  - "Family, school, and community support are crucial, so we need to be part of making sure everyone is supported and feels accepted in our school and community."

- “Other trusted adults, community organizations, and school support groups such as gay-straight alliances can also help.”
- **Teacher prompt:** “How can we recognize and respect the uniqueness of all people so that everyone can develop a positive self-concept?”

*Student responses:*

- - “Every person is worthy of respect and has the right to be free from discrimination, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.”
  - “We can talk about our differences and what makes us unique with respect and listen carefully when others share their experiences.”
  - “We can accept that sometimes we will have to agree to disagree. Accepting the uniqueness of every individual may be a way to become more accepting of ourselves.”
  - “We can treat others with dignity and the same degree of respect we would like to be treated with ourselves.”
  - “We all need love and support as we grow and mature. When needed, support can come from school and community organizations.”

## Consolidation

Divide students into pairs. Have pairs create a slide that contains a positive message that educates others and promotes a safe and inclusive community for all individuals of all identities and orientations. Invite pairs to share their message with the class, using the sharing to reinforce and extend students understanding of gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation, and factors that can help individuals of all identities and orientations develop a positive self-concept. Compile the slides into a full deck of messages that can be shared with the school or community.

## Note to Teachers

For additional information about the components of human identity, refer to the following websites:

- [\*\*Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights: Galaxy Activity Instructions\*\*](#)

- [Eagle: Genderbread Person: Components of Human Identity](#)
- [Scarleteen: Sex ed for the real world](#)
- [Sex Information & Education Council of Canada: Sexual Health Education Resources](#)
- [Sex Information & Education Council of Canada: Sexual Health Education in Schools and Other Settings: Questions & Answers](#)
- [SOGI 123 Education](#)
- [The Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada - Sex and U: Resource Library](#)
- [Trans Student Educational Resources](#)
- [The Genderbread Person](#)
- [Teen Health Source: Gender Identity & Sexual Orientation](#)
- [As/Is YouTube Channel: What It's Like to Be Intersex \(Video\)](#)