

Professionals



What professionals what to ask YP

1. Can I know more about your identity? Like what pronouns you use?

Have open and honest conversations with young people about their identity, so you have the opportunity to ask them questions if they feel comfortable answering. These conversations can be casual, like asking someone for their pronouns in passing, or slightly more formal. with deeper conversations around how they feel about their identity.

2. What do you need? How can I make you the most comfortable? Like, what affirming language should we use?

Many young people just want their identity respected and to be protected and safe within their learning or social environment. They don't want to be othered because of one aspect of their identity.

You are allowed to ask young people these questions, but we recommend having these conversations in private or specific spaces where LGBT+ conversations are expected.

If you want further guidance, we recommend checking out these resources to help you learn more about allyship:

- [Guide to Being an Ally to Transgender and Nonbinary Young People](#)
- [Good Practice Tips for Working with Young Trans People](#)
- [Trans Inclusive Residential: A Guide For Youth Organisations](#)
- [Trans and Non-Binary Inclusion Resource List for Professionals and Organisations](#)

3. How should we address concerns/conflict?

Your organisation needs to make a definitive statement of LGBT+ inclusivity to refer to if you receive push back from your service users or employees. This includes implementing equality and diversity policies that specifically covers trans and non-binary individuals and routes to reporting discrimination. Implementing a zero-tolerance environment on discrimination is beneficial for every young person, not just LGBT+ individuals.

We recommend '[calling in vs calling out](#)' as a resource to directly tackle discrimination and transphobic beliefs.

4. What training should we provide for our staff?

Young people want professionals to receive LGBT+ awareness and inclusivity training. This is something Space Youth Project can provide, such as self-taught classes and zoom/in-person training sessions to individuals, organisations, and local authorities. Our volunteer Mel also offers workshops to schools on diversity and inclusivity.

5. How does dysphoria work?

Gender dysphoria is the feeling of discomfort or distress that might occur in people whose gender identity differs from their sex assigned at birth or sex-related physical characteristics. Not every transgender or non-binary person presents with gender dysphoria, however, within the UK – gender dysphoria is considered a diagnosis.

Gender euphoria is defined as satisfaction or joy caused when one's gendered experience aligns with their gender identity, rather than with the gender they were assigned at birth.

We recommend checking out these resources to help you learn more about gender dysphoria.

- [NHS Gender Dysphoria](#)

6. Are you out to parents/family?

We recommend asking young people this to ensure you aren't working on the assumption they are out to everybody. This can help you know what name and pronouns to use when talking to parents/family to avoid outing a young person.

7. Why should I help you?

Professionals have a legal duty to support every young person they work with, including LGBT+ young people. Gender and sexuality are part of the protected characteristics under The Equality Act 2010

8. Do you feel safe being LGBT+?

Each young person has a different sense of safety and is often dependant on their physical location. A lot of SYP young people report feeling unsafe at school but often feel safe with their family and friends.

9. Are you comfortable with me updating your notes?

Keep young people informed of your actions and if updating notes means other professionals might have access that information. Ensure they know this so they can make a clear decision.

10. Did coming out benefit you?

Every young person's coming out story is different, with some having positive reactions while others experience negative.

11. What is your plan on transitioning?

Every transgender individual is unique and there is no right or wrong way to transition. You're allowed to have discussions about their plans to transition but know they don't owe you this information and to keep in mind confidentiality when having these conversations.

What professionals want to ask SYP

1. How can we provide safeguarding effectively?

An individuals' trans or non-binary identity is not a safeguarding risk if they express this to you. It needs to be followed up with a conversation on where the young person is at in their journey, who knows and who they would like to know, what changes will be implemented going forward, etc.

However, outing someone to their family without their consent can become a safeguarding issue as it may make their environment unsafe.

2. How can we support young people?

Many young people just want their identity respected and to be protected and safe within their learning or social environment. They don't want to be othered because of one aspect of their identity.

We recommend professionals receive LGBT+ awareness and inclusivity training. This is something Space Youth Project can provide, such as self-taught classes and zoom/in-person training sessions to individual, organisations, and local authorities. Our volunteer Mel also offers workshops to schools on diversity and inclusivity.

3. How to better communicate with young people, parents, & other agencies?

Have honest conversations with parents where appropriate and only with the young persons' consent that they are out to their family members. Involve the parents in implementing changes that can feel affirming to the young persons' gender identity.

Reach out to us and others. Make connections that will make it easier for you to signpost directly to services.

4. How should we address concerns/conflict?

Your organisation needs to make a definitive statement of LGBT+ inclusivity to refer to if you receive push back from your service users or employees. This includes implementing equality and diversity policies that specifically covers trans and non-binary individuals and routes to reporting discrimination. Implementing a zero-tolerance environment on discrimination is beneficial for every young person, not just LGBT+ individuals.

We recommend [‘calling in vs calling out’](#) as a resource to directly tackle discrimination and transphobic beliefs.

5. What does SYP need us to do for young people?

Many young people just want their identity respected and to be protected and safe within their learning or social environment. They don't want to be othered because of one aspect of their identity.

Be aware of the current challenges young LGBT+ people are facing by staying aware of news and legal changes.

Signpost and advertise our service to all young people, don't target young people you know are LGBT+ because you may be working with an LGBT+ individual without knowing it because they haven't come out yet.

6. How to support students despite government guidance?

We understand the frustration current professionals are feeling about draft guidance that doesn't promote the best practice. Like Schools Out say - We believe that every LGBT+ person should feel safe, seen and thrive in education and beyond. Through education and advocacy, we empower people in all learning settings to create environments where all LGBT+ people feel safe, seen, and supported

If you want further guidance, we recommend checking out these resources to help you:

- [Maximising trans inclusion after the Supreme Court Judgment](#)

7. What am I allowed to say/do within my role?

We understand professionals are frustrated by the limitations of their role and the guidance recommended to them.

If you would like a better understanding of what you can or can't do within your role, we recommend checking out these resources to help you:

- [Guide to Being an Ally to Transgender and Nonbinary Young People](#)
- [Good Practice Tips for Working with Young Trans People](#)
- [Maximising trans inclusion after the Supreme Court Judgment](#)

8. What does SYP do?

Space Youth Project offers a variety of services including:

- Youth Groups – Free drop-in youth groups for LGBT+ young people, including a Bournemouth based groups specifically for trans, non-binary, and gender questioning young people
- Peer Leadership Programme – Supernovas is an opportunity for our young people to get more engaged in the organisation to access volunteering and training opportunities
- Family Support – Bi-monthly Space Family Days provide support for the families of trans and non-binary young people happening all across Dorset. Families can also access our 121 services to access individualised support
- 121s – We can offer individual support within our youth groups for free or outside our groups at a cost. Some external organisations can refer or provide funding for young people to access 121s
- Awareness Training – We can provide inclusivity training such as self-taught classes and zoom/in-person training sessions to individuals, organisations, and local authorities. Our volunteer Mel also offers workshops to schools on diversity and inclusivity.

- Events & Trips – We also go on trips and plan events throughout the year including National Trust trips, Pride events, young people planned activities, and exclusive development opportunities
- Support with Resources – Within any of our services you can request resources or help with anything, even non-LGBT+ issues. We can signpost or refer you to who can help
- Admin Support – We can provide support in navigating legal transition, including witness on a name change and letters of support/evidence
- Counselling – Sometimes individuals volunteer with us as part of their counselling training and we can on occasion provide counselling sessions within group times. We also have a volunteer counsellor in the BPC groups who can provide counselling to 18+ young people