

Sexuality: Gender, sex, & sexual orientation

Sexuality is a broad, multidimensional concept inclusive of sex, gender identities, sexual orientation, and more.

(Ellis et al., 2023)

What are the differences?



Gender Expressed

- External expression of gender
- Social and cultural norms
- Grooming, clothing, voice, body characteristics
- Mannerisms
- **Gender expressed is how someone expresses their gender on the outside.**



Gender Identity

- Inner sense of one's self as masculine, feminine, combinations of both or beyond, or no gender
- One's personal sense of gender which may or may not correlate with their sex assigned at birth
- **Gender Identity is internal feelings about one's gender.**



Sex

- Anatomical, genetic, and biological characteristics that has usually been categorized as either female or male and is designated at birth
- Terms such as "male," "intersex," or "female" are typically used as reference to one's sex
- **Sex is assigned at birth due to anatomical and biological characteristics.**



Sexual Orientation

- Physical, emotional, and romantic attractions towards other people (i.e. straight, lesbian, bisexual, gay, asexual, etc.)
- **Sexual orientation is attraction to other people.**

It is important to know how these terms intersect and differ to use appropriate language with clients.

References

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