



## **Gender Inclusion/LGBTQ Policies and Practices at Centers for Spiritual Living Youth Camps**

Centers for Spiritual Living (“CSL”) is wholeheartedly committed to adopting robust standards of inclusiveness, understanding, and equitable treatment of all staff and campers attending CSL Youth Camps, and to creating an atmosphere at camp where individuals and communities of diverse sexuality and gender identity and expression are safe, supported, respected, empowered and truly equal. CSL is inclusive and welcoming of all forms of diversity.

CSL prohibits discrimination against or harassment of any person in any of its programs or activities on the basis of sex, gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation. CSL Youth Camps do not discriminate against individuals (including youth campers, adult volunteers and staff members) on any of these bases.

This document was developed to provide guidance for youth campers, adult volunteers and staff members attending CSL Youth Camps, and for their parents where appropriate, as to how CSL implements its gender inclusion and LGBTQ policies and practices at camp and to answer frequently asked questions about them. As you read through the questions and answers, please keep in mind that the information is the same for all individuals, whether they are youth campers, adult volunteers or staff members.

### **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

#### **1. What are the differences between sex, gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation?**

**Sex** is a medical term that refers to a combination of physiological attributes. These attributes include a person’s sex and reproductive organs, chromosomes, gonads, hormones, and secondary sex characteristics. Generally, people are assigned male or female sex based upon their anatomical characteristics at birth. It will also be helpful to explain two other terms related to sex: **sex assigned at birth** and **intersex**.

**Sex assigned at birth** refers to a person’s sex designation as recorded on their birth certificate. Generally, a medical professional or guardian designates a newborn’s sex either “male” or “female” after examining the infant’s genitalia.

**Intersex** is a term that refers to a person who has a combination of male and female physiological attributes. Sometimes people are designated intersex at birth after an examination of genitalia; other times, people are designated intersex later in life.

**Gender identity** refers to a person's internal sense of their own gender. Everyone has a gender identity. A person's gender identity may or may not match their sex assigned at birth. Some common gender identities include man, woman, gender neutral, gender fluid, transgender man, transgender woman, and gender non-binary. But people may have other gender identities as well. It will also be helpful to explain two other terms related to gender identity: **transgender** and **gender transition**.

**Transgender** is a term that refers to a person whose gender identity does not match the sex they were assigned at birth. A **transgender male** refers to a (delete extra space) person who identifies as male but was assigned female sex at birth. A **transgender female** refers to a person who identifies as female but was assigned male sex at birth.

**Gender transition** refers to a process in which a person asserts the sex that corresponds to their gender identity rather than their sex assigned at birth. A person in gender transition may (or may not) undergo gender transition surgery, alter their dress/grooming habits, change their name, or use pronouns that are consistent with their gender identity. A person may begin gender transition at any point in their life, and gender transition may happen over a short or extended duration of time.

**Gender expression** refers to how a person presents their gender to others. This can include how a person dresses, styles their hair, speaks, and many other factors.

**Sexual orientation** refers to who a person is attracted to. A person who is a **lesbian** is a woman who is attracted to women. A person who is **gay** is a man who is attracted to men. A person who is **bisexual** is a person who is attracted to others of the person's own gender, and genders different than their own. A person who is **pansexual** is a person who is attracted to others regardless of sex, gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation. A person who is **asexual** is a person who experiences no or little sexual attraction. Although often confused, gender identity and sexual orientation are two distinct and separate aspects of a person's identity.

## **2. How do CSL Youth Camps help ensure that campers who identify as transgender and intersex feel comfortable at camp?**

CSL Youth Camps present welcoming programs where youth who identify as transgender and intersex feel safe to participate. These are some of the ways that CSL Youth Camps help ensure a great experience for youth who identify as transgender or intersex:

- CSL's gender inclusion and LGBTQ policies are widely and publicly shared with the entire camp community. This document is included in the camp registration process together with a statement that all individuals are welcome to participate in camp.
- All camp staff and volunteers receive training about inclusivity in advance of camp, including a discussion about sex, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation, as well as coaching on how to answer campers' and families' questions.

- Campers who choose to identify themselves to the camp as non-binary, transgender or intersex will be given the opportunity to discuss the options available at camp for sleeping, bathrooms, and showering.
- Camp staff, volunteers and campers are encouraged to ask for and address campers with the pronouns and/or names they use.
- In general, CSL Youth Camps provide cabins which are designated as male, female, and non-binary/non-gendered, and campers will be assigned to a cabin in accordance with the cabin preference designated in the camper's registration. Campers who choose to identify themselves to the camp as non-binary, transgender or intersex will be assigned to a cabin in accordance with the gender identity they use.
- In general, CSL Youth Camps avoid segregating and categorizing campers by gender in its program and activities.
- Camp staff remain available at all times to discuss any concerns that parents or campers may have about participating in camp.

### **3. How do CSL Youth Camps verify that an individual is really intersex or transgender?**

Verification is neither necessary nor appropriate. We do not require any medical or identification documentation that reflects an individual's gender identity, and the camp may not ask for them. Campers are not required to notify the camp that they are transgender or intersex and electing not to inform the camp is perfectly fine. If an individual chooses to disclose that they are transgender or intersex, or at any stage of a gender transition, we will treat that person no differently than other campers.

### **4. Where should people who identify as transgender or intersex sleep, use the restroom and shower?**

Individuals who identify as transgender or intersex sleep, use the restroom, shower and participate at camp in alignment with their gender identity. As stated above, sleeping cabins are designated as male, female, or non-binary/non-gendered, and restroom and shower facilities will be provided in a manner that respects the privacy of all campers.

### **5. What about the dress code at the swimming pool?**

All campers at CSL Youth Camps, regardless of gender identity or expression, are required to adhere to the following guidelines regarding bathing suits and dress at camp:

*Participants must be dressed appropriately for daily activities outdoors including potential multiple extended evening activities outdoors. The type and style of clothing and hair are individual and personal. CSL Youth Camps shall be concerned only when clothing choices are extreme or could cause disruption or be unsafe. Examples of clothing materials not allowed at camp include, but are not limited to, clothing, hats, backpacks and other accessories which show obscene words, pictures, hate language, slurs, sexually suggestive statements, weapons, or the use of alcohol, marijuana, tobacco, and other drugs. All bottoms (pants, shorts, skirts, other) should completely cover underwear, butt cheeks, and genitals. All tops should completely cover the chest area.*

*Participants enjoying the water facilities (pool and slip n slide) shall follow the dress code while traveling to and from other areas of camp and their cabins to the pool (i.e., must wear a cover-*

*up, shirt/shorts or be wrapped in a towel). While at the pool all participants shall wear appropriate swim suits (i.e., cut-offs, sweat pants, basketball shorts, thongs, or speedos are not allowed).*

**6. Will CSL Youth Camp notify parents of other campers that a transgender or intersex camper will be attending camp?**

No. Gender identity and sex assigned at birth are considered personally identifiable information, which must be kept confidential. Protecting transgender and intersex individuals' privacy is critical to maintaining safety and well-being, ensuring that individuals are treated consistent with their gender identity, and preventing potential harm. The same is true for sexual orientation. If parents or campers are uncomfortable with these policies, they may decide to limit their own participation in camp.

**7. Will CSL Youth Camp notify camp staff and volunteers, or the camper's CSL home community, that a transgender or intersex camper will be attending camp?**

Only in very limited situations. As stated above, personally identifiable information (including gender identity and sex assigned at birth) must be kept confidential. This information may only be disclosed to those camp staff members and volunteers that have a legitimate programmatic need for the information. For example, a camp staff member and/or volunteer may need to know in order to ensure a specific request by the camper is fulfilled. A camper simply identifying as transgender does not constitute a legitimate programmatic need. Camp staff members and volunteers who do not have a legitimate programmatic need for the information will not be informed.

Parents and campers are advised that a camper's assigned cabin, whether male, female or non-binary/non-gendered, may be disclosed in information shared for camp administration purposes with a camper's CSL home community, but that otherwise the camper's personal identifiable information will be kept confidential.

**8. What will CSL Youth Camp do if a camper identifies as transgender, but the camper's parents or guardians are not supportive of their child's gender identity?**

In all cases, CSL Youth Camp will treat campers who identify as transgender according to their gender identity even in circumstances in which the youth member's own parent or guardian raises objections or concerns. While the parents or guardians may choose to not allow their child to participate in CSL Youth Camp, the camp will not discriminate against the camper to accommodate the parents' or guardians' discomfort.

**9. How will CSL Youth Camp respond if a camper (or campers' parents) say that they do not want to stay in a cabin with a youth who identifies as transgender?**

CSL's gender inclusion and LGBTQ policies and practices prohibit us from collecting or disclosing information about individuals' gender identity, and our view is that a youth refusing to share a cabin with another youth who identifies as transgender is discriminatory. While prospective campers (or their parents or guardians) may choose not to participate in CSL Youth Camp, our camp will not allow discrimination against any individual, despite objections or concerns from staff members, volunteers, campers, and family members.

**10. Aren't you putting the rights of children who identify as transgender over the rights of other children?**

CSL Youth Camp provides an equal opportunity for all youth and families to participate in camp programs. Ensuring full participation for transgender campers does not infringe on the rights or opportunities of other campers, and participation by all campers is entirely voluntary.

**11. How will CSL Youth Camp respond if a camper is being harassed at camp because of sexual orientation, gender identity and/or gender expression?**

Staff members and volunteers will respond to and fully investigate any report of harassment at camp, whether received directly from a camper or an adult. CSL Youth Camp is committed to providing a safe environment free of harassment based on any individual's sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. If camp staff determines that harassment has occurred, the camper who breached the code of conduct related to harassment may be asked to leave camp early, at the camper's own expense.

**12. Who can I talk to if I have questions regarding CSL's Gender Inclusion and LGBTQ Policies and Practices at CSL Youth Camp?**

If you have any questions or concerns regarding CSL's Gender Inclusion and LGBTQ Policies and Practices at CSL Youth Camp, please [contact us](#).