



At Telethon Kids, we want all staff and students to feel safe, supported and empowered so together we can make the Institute the best place to work for everyone. Transgender (trans) and gender diverse people face particular challenges with having their identity affirmed and supported by those around them. This guide explores strategies we can all adopt to support trans and gender diverse colleagues. Please note, in this guide, the term ‘transgender’ includes binary and non-binary identities.

1 Use your colleague’s chosen name and pronouns

Referring to someone by using their chosen name and pronouns is one of the simplest ways you can acknowledge and respect their gender identity. A person’s chosen name may not always be the same as their legal name. It is important that you consistently use the correct language when referring to people (i.e., even when they are not present). You may accidentally refer to someone incorrectly, and that’s okay. If you make a mistake, apologise, correct yourself, and then continue with your conversation. Make sure you don’t dwell on a mistake, as this can make the person feel uncomfortable.

2 Correcting others

We all have a role to play in ensuring that our colleagues feel respected and included at work. The onus shouldn’t always be on transgender people to ensure others are using the correct language when referring to them. The voice of an ally can be extremely impactful, so if you hear someone refer to a colleague incorrectly, and you are aware that the colleague is open about their gender identity, kindly correct the person. Once again, it is important to not dwell on a mistake. If the person you are speaking with raises questions about the correction, it is a good idea to move your discussion to a private place. If you are not sure if your colleague is open to others about their gender identity, it would be best to check in with them first to see if they would be happy with you correcting others.



3 Use the information you have been provided

Try to use gender neutral language when referring to people until you are explicitly aware of their gender and pronouns. This means you should not assume, based on someone's appearance or behaviour, that they are a man or a woman. You can find out how to refer to someone correctly by seeing if they are wearing a pronoun badge, looking at their email signature, or kindly asking "what are your pronouns?". If someone informs you that their name and/or pronouns are different to what people are referring to them as, check if it is okay for you to share this with others when necessary. Then consistently apply steps 1 and 2.

4 Be a visible ally

It is important that cisgender people (people whose gender identity aligns with the gender presumed for them at birth) also share their pronouns. This is a simple way to lessen the burden on transgender people, who often feel that they must 'come out' when interacting with others. Wearing a pronoun pin on your Telethon Kids lanyard or including your pronouns in your email signature are simple steps you can take to support transgender people. This reinforces that a person's name, appearance and behaviour should not automatically assign them a gender label.

- **Email signature:** please visit the [Password Self-Service](#) site to update your pronouns in your email signature. *Note: this will take approximately 24 hours to update.*
- **Pronoun pin:** If you would like a free pronoun pin to wear on your Telethon Kids lanyard, please email [James Fazio – Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator](#), specifying which pronoun(s) you would like to wear. You can also purchase pronoun/ally pins online or at Pride events.

5 Avoid unnecessary questions

If a colleague informs you that they are transgender, or that they have changed their name or pronouns, it is likely that you will ask some questions. It is important to ensure that you only ask questions that will help you support your colleague at work. Any other information is up to the individual to share with you if they are comfortable doing so. It's also a good idea to firstly ask if the person is comfortable with you asking questions. Your role is to ensure the person feels safe, respected and included at work; therefore, your questions should not go beyond that scope.