

RESPECT

PERSON-FIRST LANGUAGE

WITH LGBTQIA+ YOUTH

What is Person-first language?

Person-first language emphasizes the person as an individual, before any other identity-defining language.



How do you implement person-first language?



Using respectful, person-first language promotes understanding and acceptance, emphasizing the value and worth of individuals while being inclusive. When addressing students who identify outside binary constraints, it is considerate to learn their preferred pronouns or preferred name so that you can acknowledge them with respect.

Begin this practice
as early as possible!
This helps to build
rapport from the
first day of school.



Want to learn more?

gardenstateequality.org

Personalize language!

Intentionally talk to students about their interests, compliment their style, or show genuine curiosity in their hobbies / extra-curricular activities.

Students surveyed* indicated that support and acceptance are best shown through the following actions:

- 88% Trusting that I know who I am
- 81% Standing up for me
- 62% Looking up things about LGBTQ+ identities on their own to better understand
- 59% Respecting my pronouns
- 57% Showing support for how I express my gender

THIS MUST CHANGE

Non-binary students from a 2024 survey** report being called an "it" and being seen as an object instead of human.

What is currently said	What can be said instead
"Good morning boys and girls! I will read role call of your names, please indicate you are here by raising your hand."	"Good morning everyone, on your surveys please let me know if you have a preferred nickname or pronouns, that way I can address you how you would prefer."
"Husband/Wife. Mom/Dad"*	"Parent, Guardian, Significant Other, Partner"
No comments about student interests	Genuine compliments: "That jacket is so stylish!"** "You writing is so interesting, keep at it!"
" 'It'** thinks..."	"They think"
"Hey man"	"Hey kiddo"

References:

*Trevor Project 2024 Mental Health Survey Results

**Teenage student responses/feedback to GSE anonymous Youth Survey, 2024