Ann & Robert H. Lurie
Children's Hospital of Chicago™
Gender and Sex Development Program

# KEY TERMS

**Sex**
- Reproductive anatomy (external and internal genitalia (e.g., penis, vagina, gonads, reproductive tracts, etc.)
- Determines birth-assigned male or female gender (i.e., "natal gender")

**Gender Identity**
- A person's internal, deeply-felt sense of being male, female, something other, or in between. (most children have a strong sense between ages 4-6)

**Gender Expression**
- An individual's characteristics and behaviors such as appearance, dress, mannerisms, speech patterns, and social interactions that are perceived as masculine or feminine. (begins around ages 2-3)

**Gender Nonconformity**
- Gender expressions that fall outside of societal expectations for one's sex assigned at birth
- May (or may not) impact gender identity:
    - Natal male: "I am a girl and I like to express femininity."
    - Natal male: "I am a boy and I like to express femininity."

**Sexual Orientation**
- The gender to which one is romantically and/or sexually attracted

**Transgender or Trans**
- Individuals with an affirmed gender identity different than their sex-assigned-at-birth
- Transgender can be used as an umbrella term that encompasses diversity of gender identities and expressions
- Applies to identity, not necessarily body parts

**Gender Role**
- This is the set of roles, activities, expectations and behaviors assigned to females and males by society

**Cisgender (cis- - "on this side of")**
- Term used to describe people whose gender identity is congruent with biological sex

*Sources include Welcoming Schools, TYFA, Illinois Safe Schools Alliance, Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago*

**Gender fluid/expansive/creative**

- Conveys a wider, more flexible range of gender expression, with a range of interests and behaviors. Expanding beyond traditional gender stereotypes. It reinforces the notion that gender is not binary, but a continuum; and that many children and adults express their gender in multiple ways.

**Affirming**

- The word 'affirm' is used to acknowledge the identity of an individual.
- For example: They are not changing their gender, rather, we are changing our perceptions based upon what the individual has expressed to us.