

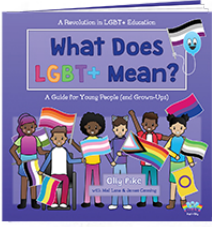
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What Does LGBT+ Mean? A guide for young people (and grown-ups)

Olly Pike

Pop'n'Olly 2021

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This glossy, highly illustrated children's book packs a lot of information into its 40 pages. Before you even open the book, the cover displays 10 different LGBT flags –

I wonder how many of them readers could identify? (Don't worry if the answer is 'not many', there's a handy LGBT+ flag guide towards the back of the book). Author Olly Pike is the director of Pop'n'Olly, an LGBT+ and equality focused organisation, which promotes education and acceptance, through training and resources such as this book.

For anyone struggling with the language around sex and gender, adults included, this book is a great place to start. It differentiates between assigned sex and gender and gender identity, then goes on to define transgender, non-binary and intersex. Next comes an outline of gender stereotypes and some useful reflective questions which ask the reader to consider whether it's fair to judge someone based on their gender, and whether certain clothes, toys or hobbies are, associated with a particular gender.

Romantic love is addressed, in a child-friendly way, including the feelings associated with attraction and falling in love, as well as identifying as aromantic. There's an invitation to the reader to consider the portrayals of romance they've seen in films and books, and whether and how they might compare to reality. Sexual orientation is considered too, with more clear definitions – and more flags – of heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual and asexual.

There's an excellent consideration of privilege, which is defined as '...when life is a bit easier for someone, just because of their identity', and of discrimination, which

outlines the nine characteristics that are protected by law. There are questions to consider about both topics, which encourage thought and discussion. The book includes an illustrated history of Pride and suggestions about how to be accepting and inclusive of those who identify as LGBT+, with advice about how and where to find support. This is an excellent, factual and child-friendly guide, which grown-ups will find invaluable too. Every child should have access to it, however they identify.

Jeanine Connor is a child and adolescent psychotherapist and editor of this journal

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