



Intersex: *What You Need to Know*

Pride in Federal Service

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interACT uses innovative legal and other strategies, to advocate for the human rights of children born with intersex traits.



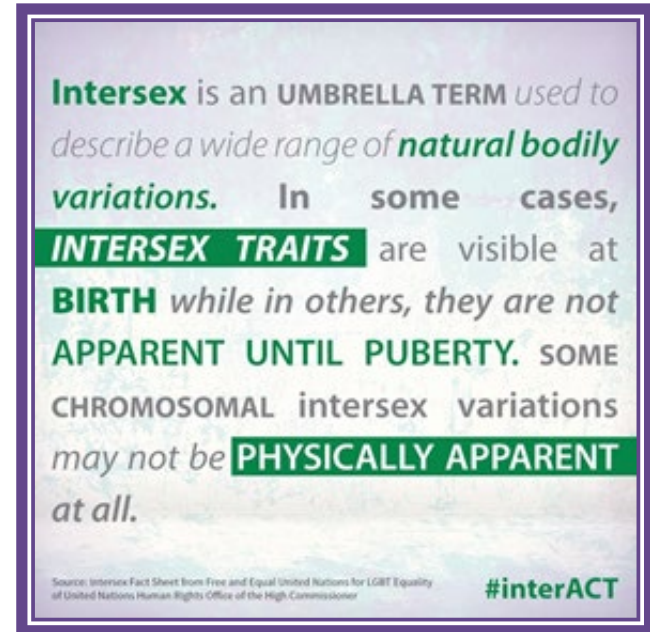
Agenda:

1. What *is* intersex & key issues?
2. Our Stories
3. Steps to take towards becoming intersex affirming & inclusive workplace



Defining Intersex

“**Intersex**” refers to bodies that express a wide range of physiological variations of sex characteristics and development that may not fit traditional conceptions about male or female bodies.



Intersex is an **UMBRELLA TERM** used to describe a wide range of **natural bodily variations**. In some cases, **INTERSEX TRAITS** are visible at **BIRTH** while in others, they are not **APPARENT UNTIL PUBERTY**. SOME **CHROMOSOMAL** intersex variations may not be **PHYSICALLY APPARENT** at all.

Source: Intersex Fact Sheet from Free and Equal United Nations for LGBT Equality of United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner

#interACT



There are lots of ways
to be intersex.





**INTERNAL AND/OR
EXTERNAL REPRODUCTIVE
ORGANS**



**CHROMOSOMAL
DIFFERENCE**



**HORMONAL
(PRODUCTION AND
RECEPTION)**



How common is intersex?



*Up to 1.7 percent of babies are born
with sex characteristics that don't fit
typical definitions of male and female.*



That makes being intersex as
common as being a **redhead**

Like and share to spread the word

visit www.unfe.org/intersex-awareness
for more information

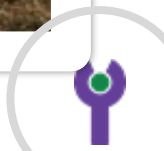


Bria's Story





Kimberly



Trauma & Harm

Physical:

Scarring

Chronic pain

Loss of sexual sensation/function

Urinary incontinence

Sterilization

Need for lifelong hormone replacement therapy

Complications requiring multiple follow-up surgeries

Psychological:

Depression, PTSD, increased risk of suicide

Feelings of shame, isolation, and inadequacy

Sex assignment not matching eventual gender identity



Intersex surgeries are **non-lifesaving procedures** with significant lifelong effects recommended to parents because of **assumptions about gender and sexuality.**



Key Issues Facing Intersex People

Anti-intersex bias (erasure)

Medical Intervention to “Fix” Children

Lack of Competent Care for Adults

Right to identify – Gender Identity Markers



Intersex Identity







Building Foundational Knowledge

What is the Connection Between LGBTQ and Intersex?

The “I” for intersex has been increasingly included as a part of the LGBTQI broader movement. In different parts of the world, the reason for the incorporation of the intersex, or “I” as a part of “LGBTQI” has varied. In some parts of the globe, adding “intersex” was considered to be a “logical step” after adding “T” to LGBTQ, while in other areas adding the “I” was driven by governments and institutions.⁵

Intersex and LGBTQ advocacy is aligned throughout much of the world because of similar challenges facing both communities in understanding and representation. While the LGBTQ and intersex communities have distinct needs and experiences, both have a common cause in fighting for the

rights of those who do not fit society’s traditional binary norms and expectations around sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity. Furthermore, the discrimination faced by intersex people is often heavily rooted in the same pervasive homophobia, transphobia, and stigmatization that continues to harm the LGBTQ community.

Both transgender and intersex people have a shared interest in autonomy and grapple with the loss of decision-making authority over their own bodies. Further, just like LGBTQ people have been subjected to harmful conversion therapy in an attempt to erase their healthy variations of sexuality and/or gender identity, intersex people continue to be subjected to interventions that try to erase their intersex status by “fixing” physical differences without their consent.



Adding the “I”

1. Avoid assumptions about intersex experiences
2. Intersex is different from sexual preference and gender identity
3. Like anyone, intersex people can have any sexual preference and/or gender identity
4. Being intersex is not the same as being LGBTQ, but there are many similarities



Top 10 Federal Priorities

1. Protect Bodily Autonomy/Right to Make Decisions about Repro and Sexual Functioning
2. Prohibit Discrimination at Work, School and in Health care
3. Reverse Ban on Intersex People Serving in the Military
4. Test and Implement Intersex Status Measures in Federal Surveys
5. Promote Ethical Research on Intersex Health Well-Being
6. Ensure Intersex People Guide Intersex Policy
7. Promote Intersex Visibility and Youth Leadership
8. Reform Display and Use of Gender Markers Across Government
9. Support Intersex Immigrants and Global Human Rights
10. Appoint Highly Qualified Intersex People to Administration



Workplace Inclusion Tips







Identify your intersex employees on relevant forms as a voluntary way of self disclosure and means of recognition and inclusion.



Ensure any equity and inclusion policies and activities are intersex-affirming.



Ensure your intersex employees are physically and emotionally healthy.



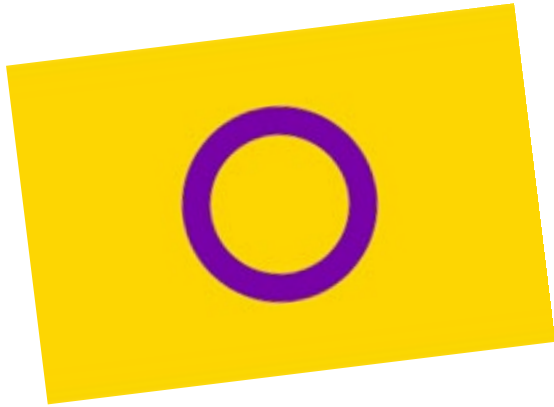
Educate others *including future parents* in your company that intersex medical interventions are usually unnecessary and should not occur until an individual can participate in the decision.



Make sure your health insurance is not reimbursing for what has been deemed a form of torture by international human rights organizations.



Provide intersex resources and Invite intersex speakers to present to staff teams or at key diversity days, events (like Pride or IAD!)



THANK YOU!

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