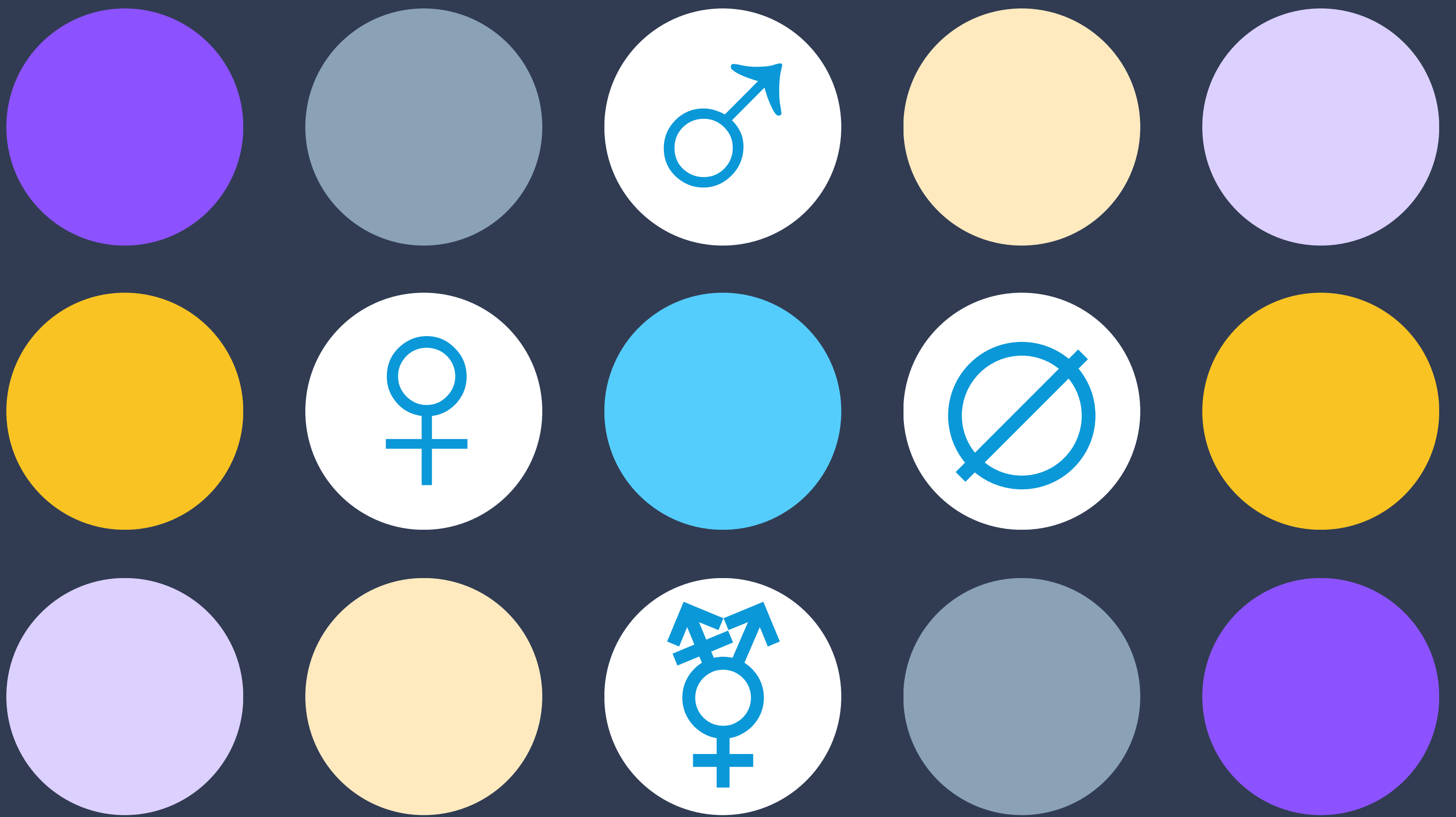


MARCH 2023

GENDER TERMINOLOGY



Youth Justice
Institute

An initiative of the Division of Criminal Justice Services,
Office of Children and Family Services and University at Albany

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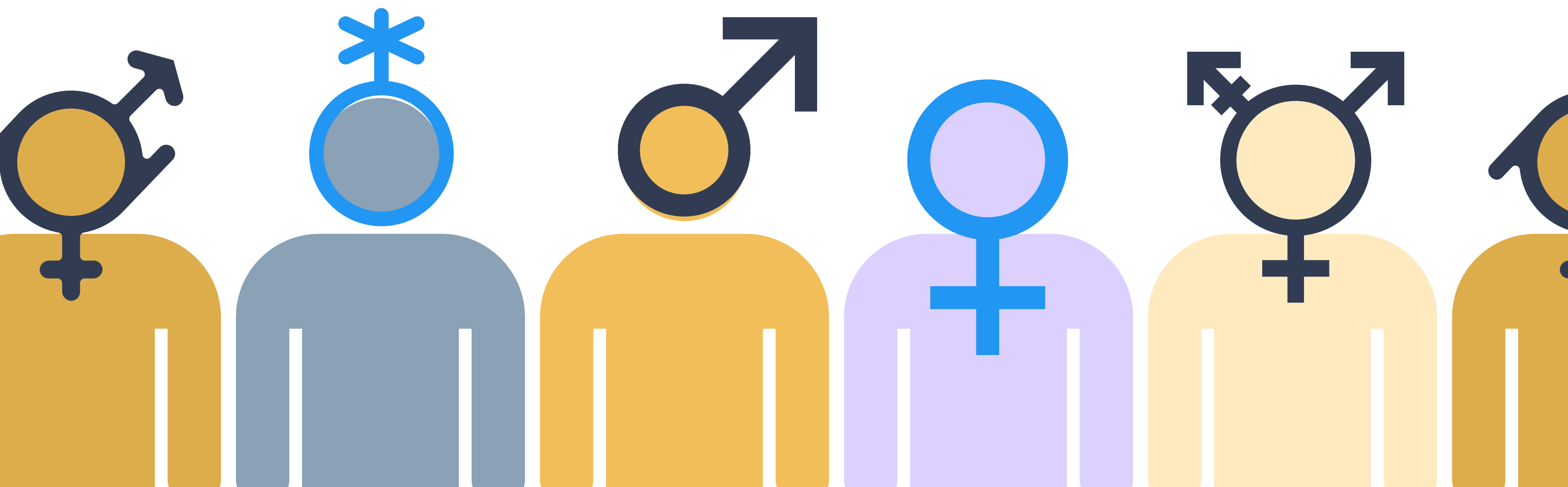
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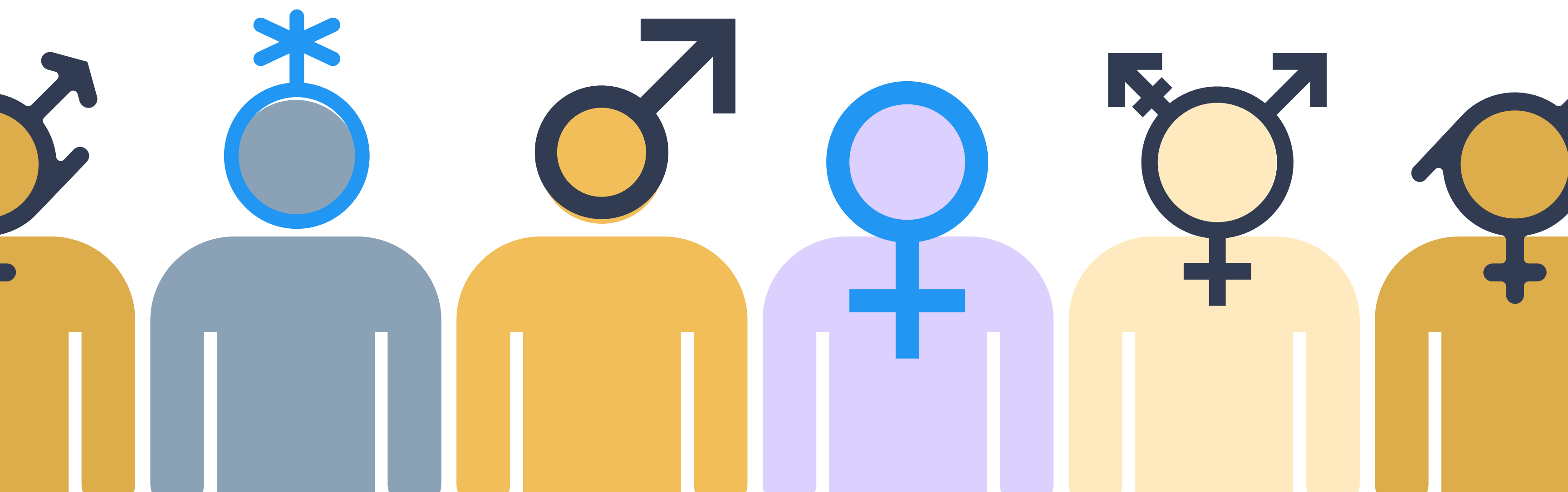
INTRODUCTION

This booklet covers some **key terms** related to gender to clarify and define the language used on the NYS Youth Justice Institute's [Gender & Youth Justice Microsite](#).

These terms include both standard definitions quoted from a single source and the Youth Justice Institute's own interpretations of these terms, inspired from a variety of sources available in the references section.

As we are constantly evolving in our understanding of gender and sexuality, we understand that the information provided might not be a comprehensive collection of all relevant terms.

This document is intended to serve as a quick guide for those interested in learning more about how we define the terminology used throughout our website.





SEX & GENDER

According to the World Health Organization, “**sex**” refers to the biological characteristics that define humans as “female” or “male” at birth. While these sets of biological characteristics such as chromosomes and genitalia are not mutually exclusive, as intersex individuals may possess both, they tend to be used to differentiate humans as males and females.

Gender refers to the “social construct of norms, behaviors and roles that varies between societies and over time,” while **gender identity** is “one’s own internal sense of self and their gender, whether that is man, woman, neither or both” (NPR).

GENDER IDENTITY LABELS

Cisgender describes people whose gender aligns with their sex assigned at birth. For example, a person who is assigned female at birth and identifies as a girl or woman.

Transgender describes people whose gender does not align with their sex assigned at birth. For example, a person who is assigned male at birth and identifies as a girl or woman.

Nonbinary describes people whose gender does not align with the gender binary, meaning they do not identify as strictly men or women. Some nonbinary people may also choose to identify as transgender.



VISIT OUR MICROSITE
TO LEARN MORE



PRONOUNS

The Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) defines **pronouns** as "the words you may like others to use for you in place of your proper name."

Examples:

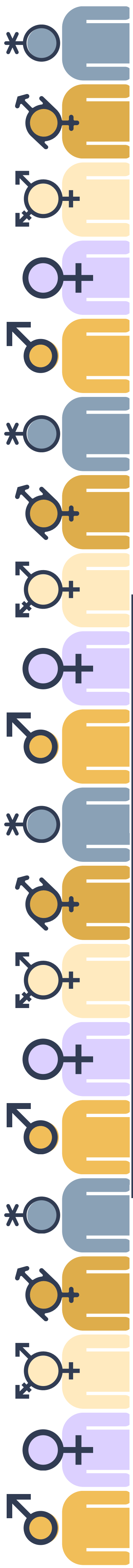
The use of one's correct **pronouns** is one way to be **gender-affirming**, or supportive of others by acknowledging and respecting their gender identity.

To **misgender** someone is to refer to someone as the wrong gender or with the wrong pronouns.

Everyone has **preferred pronouns**, whether they are cisgender, transgender, or nonbinary and these pronouns are valid reflections of one's unique gender identity.

She / Her **THEY / THEM** *Ze / Hir* *Xe / Xem* He / Him

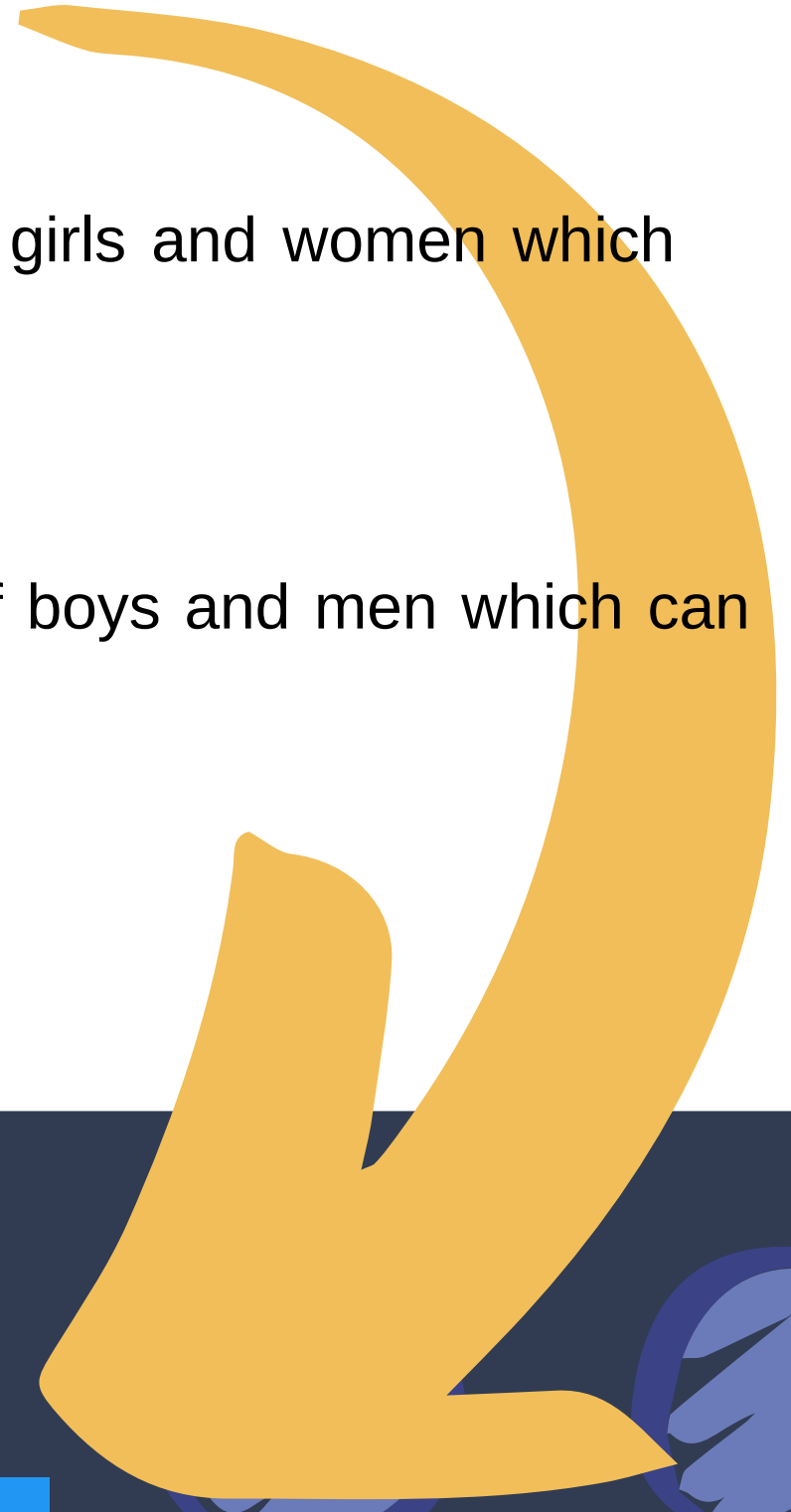




GENDER ATTRIBUTES

Femininity refers to the cultural expectations we have of girls and women which can vary across time, place, and culture .

Masculinity refers to the cultural expectations we have of boys and men which can vary across time, place, and culture .



Examples:

While **skirts** are viewed as feminine in the United States, there is a lengthy history of men wearing kilts in Scotland.

Long hair is frequently worn among men in various Indigenous cultures.

Blue was historically viewed as a more feminine color in the United States until the 1950s.

GENDER PERFORMATIVITY

Gender performativity indicates that assigned sex at birth does not determine one's gender expression or attributes. Instead, each person can perform gender in different ways. This term was first coined by philosopher and gender theorist, Judith Butler.

GENDER IDENTITY & EXPRESSION

Gender is a central component of identity for most people, one that is both internally felt and externally demonstrated through self-expression.

Gender identity is "one's own internal sense of self and their gender, whether that is man, woman, neither or both" (NPR).

Gender expression describes the ways in which one might choose to express their gender externally to others through clothing, hair, makeup, body language, and verbalization.

Those who are transgender or gender nonconforming may seek **gender-affirming care** or medical care that affirms one's gender identity through puberty blockers, hormones, speech therapy, and various surgical procedures.

CONCEPTS OF PATRIARCHY

Patriarchy is defined in the open source sociology dictionary as "a society, system, or group in which men dominate women and have the power and authority."

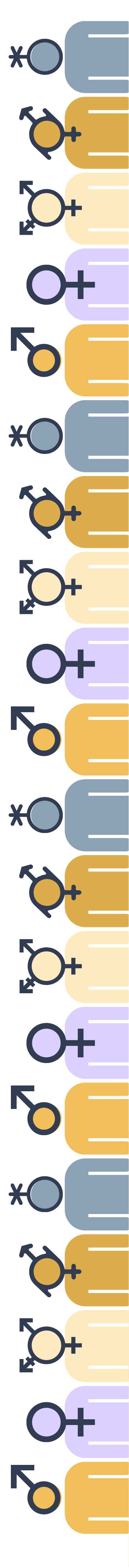
According to sociologist, Raewyn Connell, "**Hegemonic masculinity** [is] understood as the pattern of practice (i.e., things done, not just a set of role expectations or an identity) that allow[s] men's dominance over women to continue" (p. 832).

The National Conference for Community and Justice explains that **cis-sexism** is "the discrimination against and oppression of transgender, nonbinary, and gender nonconforming people."

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Sexual orientation/attraction orientation is a person's physical, romantic, and/or emotional attraction towards other people. Sexual orientation or attraction orientation is distinct from gender identity.





Heterosexism is the idea that heterosexuality is the norm and that it is superior to other types of relationships.

Compulsory heterosexuality is the practice of only entering heterosexual relationships without questioning one's own identity because of internalized heterosexism or homophobia.

Homophobia is a sense of fear, mistrust, or discomfort with people who are perceived to be non-heterosexual.

RESPONSIVITY

Gender responsive indicates the intent for programs, policies, or materials to recognize that men, women, nonbinary, transgender, and those of diverse gender identities have different life experiences and to tailor their support to these individuals.

When something is **LGBTQ+ responsive**, it means to understand and consider how attraction orientation impacts experiences in the criminal justice system, especially for LGBTQ+ people. For example, LGBTQ+ youth of color are overrepresented in the justice system and are more likely to experience violence and trauma.

Intersectionality is a term coined by legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw that describes the way systems of inequality and discrimination intersect to create unique, mutually reinforcing effects. For instance, gender equality policies need to consider racial, socioeconomic, and sexual orientation-based disparities or risk-reinforcing inequalities among women.



**GOT QUESTIONS OR
SUGGESTIONS?**

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