

Re-purposing Existing Washrooms

Working Toward Gender Inclusive Spaces

PREAMBLE

Trans* and gender non-conforming people often feel uncomfortable and are subject to harassment and violence when using gender-specific campus washrooms. “Gender-inclusive” washrooms—available to people of all genders—provide a safe facility for trans* or gender non-conforming people on campus. These washrooms also help families with children (such as mothers bringing sons, or fathers bringing daughters, to a restroom) and people with disabilities who need the assistance of an attendant of a different gender.

A rapidly growing number of colleges and universities are creating gender-inclusive washrooms, either through renovations or by simply changing the signs on mens/ womens washrooms.

Where gender-inclusive washrooms do not exist, one set of washrooms in a building can be made into gender-inclusive washrooms during special events as an educational tool and to provide a safer space for trans* and gender non-conforming people, as well as other attendees that would need to use such a washroom. Below outlines one method suggested to change already-existing gender specific washrooms to gender inclusive for special occasions or events.

METHOD

1. Label the washroom with signs saying ‘Gender-Inclusive Washroom’ over any pre-existing washroom labels that have ‘Male’ or ‘Female’ written on them.
2. Define ‘Gender-Inclusive’ washrooms with some information on why they are necessary for safety of members in our community.
3. Outline other washroom options for folks that would like to use ‘male-specific’ and ‘female-specific’ washrooms.
4. Contact information for anyone who has issues with the washrooms or would like more information on the topic of gender-inclusive washrooms.

POTENTIAL ISSUES

Some religious beliefs are based on a binary model of gender and on this basis, require that two genders be separated. To ensure that accommodation is made for faith practices, a washroom in close proximity that are gender-specific need to be available.

SAMPLE SIGNAGE ICONS

