

Respect My Privacy

- Please don't pressure me. It's my right to decide what to share with others when I'm ready.
- Don't assume things or ask me about my genitals unless I bring it up.
- Please don't share what I told you with anyone else without my permission. This includes your family, friends, significant other, and teachers.
- I have a right to know if you did tell others. Remember it's my experience, not yours.

Understand
that I'm on a
journey and may
still have a long
way to go.



Support My Emotions

- I'm scared people will think I'm abnormal. Please treat me with dignity and respect.
- Being intersex might be a huge deal for me, or it may not affect me at all! Each intersex person deals with being intersex differently.
- Please don't say that you wish for part of my experience, or that you think I'm lucky.
- Don't minimize my intersex experience because of the other good things in my life.
- I may have had surgery with or without my permission, and it may be hard for me to accept myself when doctors and others haven't.
- Most intersex people can't have biological kids. Coping with infertility can be a difficult process. Please don't say things like 'you can just adopt!' There are many ways to build a family, please respect all choices.
- Be aware that people born intersex are often prescribed hormones that may affect their emotions, mood, or behavior and in some cases cause new bodily changes.

Thanks
for reading,
please share
this with your
friends!



interACT Youth
is a space for intersex youth
to raise their voices, share
their stories, and change
the world.

interACT Youth
is a project of
InterACT

Advocates for Intersex Youth

www.interACTadvocates.org

www.interACTyouth.org

@interACT_adv

365 Boston Post Road Suite 163

Sudbury, MA 01776

707-793-1190



**What We Wish
Our Friends Knew**

interACT Youth

is a group of intersex advocates in their teens and twenties, working to raise intersex awareness. We created this brochure to show our friends the best ways to support us on our intersex journeys.

What is intersex?

People with intersex traits, sometimes referred to by doctors as Differences of Sex Development (DSDs), are born with physical differences inside and/or outside their body. This happens when our body's sex chromosomes, organs, and/or hormones don't line up in a way that is typical for a "male" or "female." People find out they're intersex at any point in their life, and some never find out at all.

There is not ONE intersex experience.



There are many intersex variations, and **an estimated 1.5% of the population is born with intersex traits**, the same as natural-born redheads. How many people with red hair are in your school?

There are probably that many intersex kids, too!



Many intersex kids feel shame from negative experiences at doctors' offices, possible surgeries, secrecy, and even reactions from friends and family. This can make it hard to share our stories, but we're working to change that!

Educating our friends is important to create a world where intersex kids are free to be their true, authentic selves.



Provide a Safe Space

- Talking about being intersex can be difficult. I may need time to process what it means before I find the right moment to share it with you.
- Check in with me to see how I am doing, and to let me know you care. Remind me often that I can come to you for support. Questions like "How do you feel about it?" and "What's your favorite or least favorite part?" are great places to start.
- My feelings may change over time. Please don't assume that because I'm okay today, I'll be okay tomorrow.
- If you've already heard of intersex, please don't assume things about me. Just ask questions!
- Please respect that my intersex body means my experience may be different than yours. For example, I may be a boy who sits down to pee or a girl who doesn't get her period.
- If something I tell you doesn't make sense, say something like "I don't understand it all yet, but I want to keep learning so I can support you."

Let me know you appreciate how hard it might be to tell you these personal details, and that you're thankful I shared them with you.

