



## How Welcoming to Sexual and Gender Minority Youth Is Your Practice?

March 3, 2023

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**Article type:** [Pediatrics Blog](#)

**Topics:** [Advocacy](#), [Electronic Health Records](#)

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The best way to create an environment that is comfortable for our patients is for them to feel as though you are accepting and nonjudgmental of them, no matter what they tell us.

Taking this type of matter-of-fact, straightforward approach is particularly important for our patients who are sexual and gender minority (SGM). They often feel stigmatized, and it's important for them to feel safe in our practices. However, many health care providers—or their staff—don't feel comfortable talking about sexual orientation and gender identity.

If you fall into this category, this week in *Pediatrics*, we have an article that will help! We are early releasing a Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Justice feature entitled, "Inclusive and Affirming Care Strategies for Sexual and Gender Minority Patients," by Dr. Stacey Stokes and Dr. Matthew Lecuyer from Children's National Hospital ([10.1542/peds.2022-057699](https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2022-057699)).

This article provides some basic steps for making changes in your practice or institution – starting with getting buy-in from stakeholders to standardizing the documentation of gender affirming language in the electronic health record.

One's sexual orientation and gender identity is important, and we need to be comfortable with asking questions such as "What pronouns do you use?" and calling the youth by their chosen name. We also need to make sure that everyone in our practice, from the person who greets them to the person who checks them out, is using the correct pronouns and names.

Taking the steps to assure that this is happening demonstrates our respect and acceptance for each patient.  
Take a look at this article if you need some suggestions for first steps.

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