

The problem with ‘preferred pronouns’

It seems kind and simple to ask children at school to state their ‘preferred pronouns’.

The intention is to prevent or reduce the possibility anyone might ‘misgender’ a child who is not obviously a boy or a girl. The idea being that ‘misgendering’ will be traumatising for them and that, by using ‘preferred pronouns’, everyone can demonstrate they are inclusive and an ally to trans or non-binary identifying peers. Further, the practice is a statement of support for the belief that everyone has a gender identity, as opposed to a sex.

However, pronoun declarations have unintended consequences, and give only an illusion of kindness.

Do youngsters really understand what they’re choosing?

Plenty of primary-aged kids are not even clear on what a pronoun is, or of biological differences between the sexes, or even on standard gender stereotypical differences. Further, young kids make things up. If you asked a junior class who can play the piano, more hands are likely to go up than those who really have the skill. On different days, kids can claim they are all sorts of different animals or objects. It is hardly plausible to ask young children to name their pronouns.

Do pronouns make everyone feel comfortable?

Quite likely a call for ‘preferred pronouns’ will put several students on the spot.

Children who are simply questioning their gender expression and wondering how they fit in may feel forced to make an immediate choice before they are ready.

A ‘tom boy’ girl who does not conform to the gender stereotype of her sex, may feel very uncomfortable when she sees the raised eyebrows as she calls her pronouns out as ‘she and her’. A boy who is not obviously ‘masculine’, but states his pronouns are ‘he and him’, may also receive pressure to conform. Either child may feel they have to say they are non-binary to avoid scrutiny.

Even ‘passing’ on the question may have consequences, when preferred pronouns are backed up by the teacher, the school and even the new law of the land.

Do pronouns encourage acceptance?

Students who conform to the pronoun ritual are rewarded with affirmation and warmth and are regularly described as ‘stunning and brave’. Indeed, it has been argued that this is why some kids who are otherwise socially awkward and don’t fit in, such as learners with autism, feel encouraged to join the transgender train.

The compulsory pronoun question in class presses all children to doubt their connection with their sexed bodies; it is the beginning of grooming for the transgender delusion. Announcing pronouns repeatedly reinforces the idea of transgender identities and is [correlated with an increase in children persisting in their body dissociation.](#)

Do pronouns build resilience?

Asking everyone to use 'preferred pronouns' is teaching transgender children to be fragile. The message is that, for them to be perfectly happy, the world must adhere to their desires. In the words of a mother of a transgender child:

"Part of the resilience we have to teach all children is that things won't always go your way and you really can roll with it. If someone happens to accurately clock a trans-youth's sex, the person is simply observing reality. You don't have to be afraid or angry when someone notices that. It is easier to put on slippers than to carpet the whole world."

The illusion of kindness

'Preferred pronouns' teach our children that their gender identification is a more important classification than their biological sex. What happened to the notion of accepting people as they are and not putting them in boxes drenched in harmful male and female stereotypes?

It is an illusion that asking kids for their pronouns is helpful to them in any way. In reality, it pushes kids back into rigid boxes, normalises a delusion and is really a form of bullying.