

Tips For Using Gender Pronouns

SPEAK SLOWLY

The muscle memory of your brain has been trained to refer to your person with one set of pronouns, and it needs time to relearn a new way to refer to them. If you speak slowly and focus on what you are saying, it will help your brain not to slip up.



PRACTICE

Practice the new pronouns to yourself, out loud, and then with other people. Start with writing them down, and then send texts to someone you trust who will practice with you. Practicing builds those muscle memories for both speaking and typing and makes it less likely that you will slip up.



SUBSTITUTE

Instead of using your child's name, use pronouns and lots of them. In conversations about your child, overuse pronouns to being almost obnoxious. You won't do this forever, only until you are comfortable with the new pronouns.



USE THEIR NAME

You may need to use only your person's name for a time while you work on learning a new set of pronouns. Referring to them in the third person will help you learn their new name and discover where you still get hung up with the old pronouns.



APOLOGIZE

Mistakes happen. The most important thing is that you don't make a mistake about you. Apologize, course correct, and then move on. If you realize after the fact that you made a mistake, apologize in private.



BE PATIENT

It takes time to learn something new, including a new set of pronouns for your person. You can't expect to master this new skill overnight. Keep practicing, and eventually, it will be like second nature.

