# Resources For Trans & Questioning Students At Brown

3rd Edition

GenderAction

Spring 2011

Brown is the first place where, when I came out to a friend as transgender, he said, "Well, duh." And that made me feel pretty good.

*- Ash Sofman*

## An Introduction

This guide is designed for incoming first year students who identify as transgender, transsexual, genderqueer, androgynous, two-spirit, third gender, or any gender not in the binary. The guide lists many of the resources available on campus. We hope that this helps you navigate Brown University, see what we have to offer, and convince you what an exciting and welcoming place this is!

## Who We Are:

GenderAction is the trans/gender advocacy sub-group of the Queer Alliance. We work with campus administration to make Brown an accepting place for students of all gender identities and expressions. Right now we are working with Health Services, Psychological Services, Residential Life, Computing and Information Services, and other Brown institutions. In addition, we organize educational events and performances throughout the year such as Trans 101 workshops and Trans Week. We are also starting a social group called *Gender. For questions or to join our listserv contact queer@brown.edu.

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## On-Campus Health and Psychological Services

### Health Services on Campus

**University Health Services (401-863-3953)** provides confidential medical care, testing and treatment. Emergency contraceptive pills and treatment for sexually transmitted infections are available. Emergency care is available 24 hours a day. Located in Andrews House (13 Brown Street) at the corner of Brown and Charlesfield Streets.

- Health Services' general website for booking appointments and exploring what health services can provide can be found here: **brown.edu/health**
- Health Services also offers free HIV testing by appointment.

**Brown Health Education** is a very helpful resource for various health-related issues such as sexual health, drug and alcohol use, nutrition, general health, sexual assault, harassment, and dating violence.

- The website for Brown Health Education includes a section on trans health. It can be found at **brown.edu/healthed**

**Health Services FAQ:**

**What steps is Health Services taking to become more welcoming to trans students?**

Working with a consultant (hired Feb. 2010) who graduated from Brown, Health Services has undertaken these initiatives, among others, to be more welcoming and to improve care for trans students:

- Training medical providers.

  - As of April 2010, most health services staff have attended a 2-hour Trans 101 from a Healthcare Perspective training with Dr. Turco of Dartmouth Health Services, an endocrinologist, and some of his trans patients. Some staff have additional education, and GenderAction anticipates more training sessions in the future.

- Identifying specific medical providers (see p. 5) who are developing expertise in trans health issues and who have expressed particular interest in working with trans students.

- Training medical assistants and schedulers.

- Compiling a comprehensive review of trans-friendly services, including paperwork, signs and posters in the building, and the Health Services and Health Education websites, to identify areas for improvement. Some illustrative (not comprehensive) areas identified by April 2010 that are being addressed are:

  - Including an optional gender identity history question on appropriate intake forms.
  - Determining ways to incorporate preferred name and pronoun.
  - Including an optional checkbox to initiate a conversation about gender identity-related treatment preferences with your provider on appropriate forms.
  - Promoting testicular/gynecological health to students of diverse genders.
  - Updating trans health section of the health education website.
  - Revising the medical release form to ensure information related to gender identity is only released with the students' permission.

**Are there specific providers I can request at Health Services?**

Students are welcome to make appointments with any provider at Health Services. In addition, some of Health Services' medical providers are working on developing particular expertise in transgender health care. You can request any of these providers by name when you call to make an appointment:

- Cindy Capra, Nurse Practitioner
- Laura Ward, Nurse Practitioner
- Patricia Maier, Physician
- Marsha Miller, Physician

You can learn more about these providers, including pictures and education backgrounds, at www.brown.edu/health. These providers are pursuing training in this area as of April 2010 and are still learning about trans care. Throughout this learning process, Health Services encourages trans students to utilize their services and would be

grateful for feedback. If you have any concerns or questions about care at Health Services, please contact Lynn_Dupont@brown.edu. Lynn is the Associate Director of Health Services and she follows up on all student feedback.

**What trans-related procedures will Brown Student Health Insurance cover?**

Currently, Brown Student Health Insurance does not cover hormones or surgery. However, many students do not have Brown health insurance and Health Services will work with students to arrange insurance coverage/payment. Whatever your insurance, do not let cost concerns stop you from making (free) appointments at Health Services or discussing options with providers.

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Psychological Services on Campus

**Psychological Services at Brown (401-863-3476)** is located in J. Walter Wilson Room 516. Note: its primary purpose is brief therapy and external referrals. Each student gets seven free visits per semester.

- Psychological services website: http://www.brown.edu/Student_Services/Psychological_Services/
- If you have a psychiatric emergency or have been sexually assaulted or harassed, crisis support is available 24 hours a day during the school year through Brown's Psychological Services on-call system at **401-863-3476**. Also, Sexual Assault and Harassment Crisis Support is available at Brown 24 hours a day by phoning **401-863-6000**

**Psych Services FAQ:**

**Can Psych Services refer me to providers specializing in gender identity or generally transgender-friendly counseling?**

Yes. We will work with each student on an individual basis to make referrals—the first step is to meet with someone in Psych Services so

we can learn how best to meet your needs. Then the provider you met with will do research specifically on your behalf to make an appropriate referral. We are potentially limited by the resources available in the community.

**Can Psych Services provide a letter vouching for me to get gender reassignment surgery?**

These letters are usually provided by clinicians who have been working with the student for some time and who are specialists in gender identity. Since our work with all students is brief (maximum of seven sessions/year), we are not able to provide this service. We would refer students to the local community for specialty services.

**Whom at Psych Services should I contact about receiving transgender-friendly care?**

When you call, it is best to tell the Office Manager, Donna Barao, that you prefer to see one of the clinicians who identify themselves as transgender-friendly.

**Whom should I contact to give feedback or voice concerns?**

We always welcome your feedback. Please be in touch with the Director, Belinda Johnson. It's best to contact her by phone (401.863-3476). Her e-mail address is Belinda_Johnson@Brown.edu

**What training have Psych Services staff received in giving care to transgender people?**

In January 2011, Sara Kimmel, a LGBT mental health specialist at Harvard, came to train the psych services staff in transgender sensitivity, including pronouns and unique problems that trans students might face. GenderAction hopes to help psych services make this a recurring training topic.

**Can Psych Services refer me to providers specializing in gender identity or generally transgender-friendly counseling?**

Yes. They will work with each student on an individual basis to make referrals—the first step is to meet with someone in Psych Services. This

referral network has recently been updated, and there are now options for trans students who would like to continue their counseling.

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Sexual Assault Services on Campus

**Sexual Assault Response and Prevention Program Coordinator (401-863-2794):** This is the main contact person for students affected by sexual violence. Confidential services include support for a survivor or the friends of a survivor, help filing a complaint (if that is the student's choice), and educational programs for the student community.

**Sexual Assault FAQ**

**What training has Sexual Assault Services received on trans care?**

Sexual Assault Services is trans-friendly and aware of trans issues in a general sense. It has been receptive and responded to students' trans-related concerns. The medical training Sexual Assault Services has had relating to trans issues as of April 2010 consists of a 2-hour Trans 101 from a Healthcare Perspective workshop led by Dr. Turco of Dartmouth Health Services. Sexual Assault Services will receive more medical training on trans care in the future.

**Are gender-specific support groups open to transgender people who identify as that gender?**
Yes. Currently there is only a group for female-identified sexual assault survivors. However, students can also request a specific group and/or program, including a group/program for another (or multiple) gender(s). The Sexual Assault Response and Prevention Program Coordinator is happy to work with students to create a new program or group.

**General Sexual Assault Support Contacts:**

***Sexual Assault Response Line***
***401.863-6000***
This line is available through Psychological Services' on-call system. Confidential crisis support and information is available for any Brown student dealing with sexual assault. The on-call counselor is also available to accompany a victim to the hospital.

***Sexual Assault Response and Prevention Program Coordinator***
***401.863-2794***
The coordinator is available to help students affected by sexual violence. Confidential services include support for a survivor or the friends of a survivor, help exploring options to address the incident (such as filing a complaint, if that is the student's choice) and educational programs for the student community. When you speak to the coordinator, you do not have to pursue any specific course of action and no action will be taken unless it's something you choose.

***Psychological Services***
***401.863-3476***
Clinicians provide confidential crisis support, follow-up appointments, and 24-hour on-call services for any Brown student dealing with sexual assault. Located at J Walter Wilson, Room 516.

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**Off-Campus Health and Psychological Services**
The most trans and gender-variant friendly health care practitioners in Rhode Island are part of the Comprehensive Community Action Program (CCAP). CCAP doctors can be your primary care physician and/or your mental health counselor. They can also prescribe hormones. The clinic charges on a sliding-scale basis, which means that the less money you make, the less you have to pay. Also, the local organization Lifelines is in the process of setting up a referral program whereby you can talk to them and they can triage you into the appropriate standard of care if you are too nervous to talk to the physician yourself. See the "Local Organizations" section of this pamphlet for further information about Lifelines.
CCAP website: http://www.comcap.org/
CCAP phone number: 401-943-1981

Another good resource in the area is Dr. Marie Sauro. She is a therapist who has respectfully and knowledgeably treated trans and gender-variant people in the past. She takes most insurances and works within walking distance of campus.
Dr. Marie Sauro phone number: (401) 829 - 7527
Dr. Marie Sauro website: www.aimforchance.com

The **Youthprideri.org** site includes the article "How to Interview a Therapist or Doctor," found under Resources, which details helpful information when meeting with a therapist or doctor for the first time on- or off-campus:
http://www.youthprideri.org/Resources/HowtoInterviewaTherapistorDoctor/tabid/192/Default.aspx

**Email Change & Name Change**

Brown is currently in the process of creating a 2-tiered system for names, where you will be able to put your preferred name on internal documents and systems. However, this takes time, and we are unsure what precisely this will look like next year.
In the current system, if you've recently changed the name that you go by, you may change your @brown.edu email address to reflect that. Email Dean Jonah Allen Ward in the Office of Student Life (jonah_ward@brown.edu), who will put you in touch with Computing and Information Services (CIS). CIS will send you an email when your new email address has been set up. Both your old name and your new name will show up in the online Brown directory until your name change is legally completed.
If you want a less extensive process, you might take the option of just changing how your Brown email shows up in people's inboxes. (Your email would still be legalname@brown.edu but your name in the From section of someone's inbox would appear as Preferred Name.) You can do this using the Gmail-style Settings.
At the moment, the name on your ID and the name listed in Banner (Brown's online system) cannot be changed unless and until your name change has been legally processed. This is under review along with other systems.

## Student Groups

**Queer Alliance**
This is the umbrella organization for Brown's LGBTQ student groups. Check out its website at http://queer.brown.edu/ for a listing of all of its exciting subgroups and projects. All are open and welcoming.

Some of the subgroups directly relating to trans issues include:
- QUEST - A confidential weekly support group for questioning students.
- GenderAction - An advocacy group concerning transgender, transsexual, gender queer, polygender, two spirit, and gender varient issues.
- Hi-T - A biweekly study break for LGBTQ and Allied students, where they don't actually serve tea, but something much hotter… See old friends and make new ones! All are welcome!

Some student groups outside of the QA that are directly relevant include:
- The Next Thing (TNT) - a confidential support and discussion space for bisexual, gay, lesbian, queer, questioning, transgender, and two-spirit people of color.
- Sexual Health Education and Empowerment Council (SHEEC) - a student run council for the promotion of sexual health and wellness on campus.
- Queer Hillel - a discussion group for Jewish students that concentrates on the intersections of Judaism and the LGBTQ community.
- The Gender & Sexuality Studies Departmental Undergraduate Group (GNSS DUG) - a space for students to meet and talk with other students interested in gender and sexuality.

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## Local or Relatively Local Resources

**Trans/Gender Queer/Questioning Youth support group at Youth Pride Inc**. www.youthprideri.org
Meets at Youth Pride RI every other Tuesday at 5:30pm (for youth ages 13-23). Call 401-421-5626 or email Jaye (jaye@youthprideri.org) for more information.

**Borderlands TGI Peer Support Group at Lifelines RI** www.lifelinesri.org
Meets on the first and third Tuesdays of the month from 6:45-9:00pm. Email info@lifelinesri.org for the meeting's location.

**Compass (FTM)** www.compassftm.org
Meets on the first Thursday of the month in the Boston Metro area.

**Southern New England FTM Peer Support Group**
https://sites.google.com/site/sneftmgroup/
This group is for people who identify somewhere on the trans-masculine spectrum and/or who were assigned female at birth but do not feel that is an accurate or complete description of their gender.

**You are not alone group (MTF) at Tiffany Club of New England, Waltham, MA** www.tcne.org
Meets on the third Thursday of the month.

**New Horizons at AIDS Project Worcester**
www.aidsprojectworcester.org
Open to anyone who is transgender identified, gender variant, or questioning. Meets Sundays at 6pm at AIDS Project Worcester: 85 Green St. Worcester, MA. For more information, contact Jesse Pack at AIDS Project Worcester at (508)755-3773 or jessep@aidsprojectworcester.org.

**Trans Partners NE (TPNE)** http://www.transpartnersne.vpweb.com
A group of partners—women, men, gay, straight, bi, trans—who all have one thing in common: a partner who identifies as transgender.

**FTM SOFFA Group**
http://groups.yahoo.com/group/BostonFTMSOFFAgroup
For Significant Others, Family, Friends and Allies of FTM's. Meets in the Boston area monthly and it has an online list-serve component as well. To join the on-line group or get information about meetings contact: BostonFTMSOFFAgroup-owner@yahoogroups.com

## General Information

***I think I might be Transgender. Now what do I do?***
This pamphlet, written by transgender youth, provides answers for young people who feel that the gender to which they were born, or assigned at birth, does not fit them. (2004) Find this pamphlet at *http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/youth/health/pamphlets/transgender.pdf*

**TransYouth.Com** *www.transyouth.com*
This website was created to link trans youth and the people in their lives with current resources.

**T-Vox** *www.t-vox.org*
A comprehensive advice, information, and support website on the internet for genderqueer, intersex, transgender and transsexual people, their friends, and their family.

**Gender Crash** *www.gendercrash.com*
The last Gender Crash open mic night was January 8, 2009, but the website is still up and contains a lot of good information and resources.

**Gender Talk** *www.gendertalk.com*
The home of the leading talk radio program on all issues of gender—and much more

**Trans-Active Education and Advocacy** *www.transactiveonline.org*
This website has resources for youth, parents, educators and health care providers.

**Safe2Pee** *www.safe2pee.org*
This is a resource list of gender neutral and single stall bathrooms all over the US and some international locations. Anyone can add a safe bathroom to this list.

**LGBTQ Resource Center**

Website: brown.edu/lgbtq
Location: 321 Faunce House, 75 Waterman St.
The LGBTQ Resource Center provides a comprehensive range of education, information and advocacy services. It works to create and maintain an open, safe and inclusive environment for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning students, faculty, and staff, their families and friends, and the campus community at large.
We recognize that sexual orientation and gender expression work through and are influenced by race, ethnicity, gender, culture, age, disability, class, faith and other social characteristics. In keeping with the ideals of Brown University we commit to justice, equality, and respect for all persons in all of our endeavors.

**First Year Housing**

All first-year residence peer leaders have at least basic training in Trans 101. Incoming first years who are trans, genderqueer, or in any way identify their gender differently than is traditional have alternative housing options. If you feel you need help with advocacy or advice in any way, please contact the LGBTQ Resource Center or GenderAction.

Here is the process for getting gender-related alternative housing as a first-year:

1. There are two ways to initiate the process:

   a. On the general online housing form, under Part C, there is red link to a page about alternative housing for reasons of gender identity. That page lists the phone number to request a discussion about special accommodations for reasons relating to gender identity. You can also email natalie_basil@brown.edu if you are uncomfortable calling (they forgot to put the email on the page). You can call or email Res Life and they will respond using that form of communication.

   b. The gender you put into the general online housing form's gender blank does not match the gender that is recorded for you in Banner (the gender you claimed in your college

application. Natalie Basil will automatically contact you by email to ask whether you want housing options. Any gender, including those other than male or female, is welcome.

*NOTE: Please do not joke around with the form, for instance putting things like "a rabbit" as your gender. This wastes Res Life's time, as they have to sort through all the forms and then call those students to figure out how to place them. This abuse of the options Res Life offers encourages a hostile attitude toward accommodations for transgender students.*

2. Either a or b initiates a discussion between you and Res Life staff where they will try to understand your needs and will offer various options. If you are uncomfortable having this discussion via email or phone, or if you feel that your needs are not being properly met, contact Kelly Garrett, the LGBTQ Coordinator, for support at any point in the process. We highly recommend finding advocates if your experience is not 100% satisfactory; the process is not transparent so no one can help you if you don't ask.

3. If you feel, after being presented with housing options, that they do not fit your needs, you may at any time opt back into the default doubles housing with someone of your legal sex. It is fine to call or email Natalie Basil just to explore options/ask questions about the process.

We cannot give a comprehensive list of the options you may be presented with because Res Life has not developed such a list, due to the small number of cases they have dealt with thus far. Also, certain options will only be available in certain situations according to Res Life's judgment (for instance, they cannot think of a situation in which they would recommend off-campus housing to a first-year, and thus would not list it as an option, though it is within their powers). SOME more likely options that MAY be available include:

- Placement in a single in a building with a gender neutral bathroom.

- Ability to choose a roommate you already know prior to coming to Brown (from Summer at Brown or your hometown, for example).

- Placement in a double with initially no roommate but a plan to "pull in" someone you meet at Brown who is willing to move (regardless of legal sex).

- Placement in a first-year dorm that has a private lockable bathroom for every two rooms.

Other variations on these options may be available, so do not treat this as a comprehensive or guaranteed list.

Check out http://reslife.brown.edu/current_students/special_needs.html for Res Life's information.

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**Gender-Neutral Housing After First Year**

After first year, gender neutral housing is available to anyone, and exists for many dorms available in the housing lottery. Check out http://reslife.brown.edu/current_students/special_needs.html for more information.

Whether or not one is required to live in gender neutral housing depends on the genders one's housing group lists on the housing lottery application form (not legal or Banner system gender).

Example scenario 1: A transgender man whose housing group is also all-male can indicate a male gender on the housing lottery application, regardless of his gender on record with Brown in Banner. Such a group would not be considered mixed gender and can live in buildings not designated gender neutral.

Example scenario 2: The group of anyone who leaves the gender box on the housing lottery application blank (this is allowed) will be designated as gender neutral and limited to gender neutral housing.

## Gender-Neutral Bathrooms

First years work with Natalie Basil to set up a bathroom situation that meets their needs (see above section on First Year Housing sample options). Many of the post-first-year gender-neutral housing options are suites with a private, single occupancy bathroom. West House, Brown's co-op, is also gender neutral and has a single occupancy bathroom. In the event you get stuck with gender neutral housing that does not have a bathroom that meets your needs, you should contact Natalie Basil for a discussion; however, she advises students to first "make all attempts" to choose housing with a good bathroom situation. The average residence hall usually does not have gender-neutral bathrooms. Some dorms may opt to classify their bathrooms as gender-neutral, but not all dorms have control over this.

As far as public restrooms go, there are various gender neutral bathrooms on campus. For a listing of those not in residence halls, see http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/lgbtq/genderneutralrestrooms.html.
Maps of gender neutral bathroom locations on campus are available in the Faunce Lobby and in the LGBTQ Resource Center.

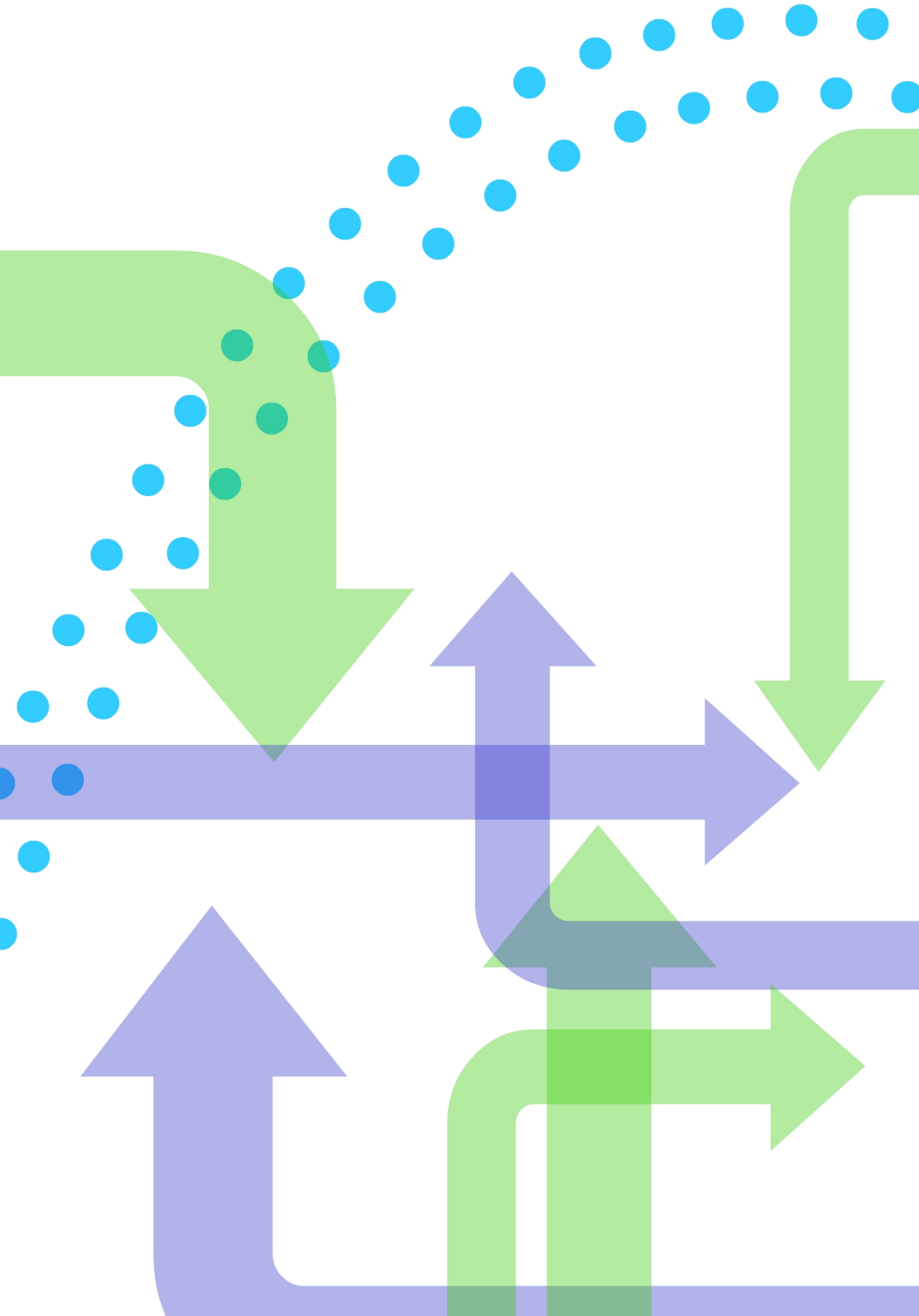
## Gyms and Athletics

Most gyms have gender-segregated changing rooms. The gym in Keeney Quad does not. GenderAction is working with the developers of the new aquatics center, and thus far gender neutral changing areas and restrooms are included in the plans.

Club and intramural sports are significantly less concerned with gender than varsity athletics. Many sports at the club and intramural levels do not discriminate in regard to gender or gender identity.

## RI Laws

Rhode Island law explicitly provides that discrimination based on gender identity or expression constitutes an unfair employment practice. Discrimination based on gender identity in credit, housing and public accommodations is also prohibited.

**Contact Us:**

If you have more specific questions or concerns, you can contact the Queer Alliance at queer@brown.edu, or email the co-presidents of GenderAction directly; Alvina_Pillai@brown.edu and Madeleine_jennewein@brown.edu