GABRIELLE O'BRIEN: Hello everyone. Thank you for joining us today for this ADCET webinar. My name is Gabrielle O'Brien and my pronouns are she/her. I'm the senior project officer for ADCET, which stands for the Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training.

This webinar is being live captioned by Sharon from Bradley Reporting. Jane will put a link in for live captions in the chat as we are having a few technical issues.

ADCET is hosted by the University of Tasmania, and so I would like to acknowledge the Palawa and Pakana people of Lutruwita. I'm joining you today from the lands of the Turrbal and the Jagera people in Meeanjin or Brisbane. I pay my respects to Elders past, present and emerging on both these lands and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples here, and I acknowledge their ongoing connection to country, land and sea. Feel free to put what country you are on in the chat and to share where you are. And if you would like to put your pronouns in your profile, please also feel free.

Before we begin, just some minor housekeeping information. Please ensure your mic is off and phones are on silent. This webinar is being recorded. The recording will be available on the ADCET website in the current days and we will also include copies of the slide presentation.

Throughout this presentation feel free to use the chat box with us and each other, but please remember to choose everyone if you want everyone to read what you have to say. If you have a question you would like to put to Jax today, please use the Q&A box, and if you're having any technical difficulties please email admin@adcet.edu.au. So now I want to introduce our presenter for today. I'm very pleased to present Jax Jacki Brown, whose preferred name is Jax and whose pronouns are they/them. Jax is coming to us from Melbourne Wurundjeri country.

In today's webinar, Jax is tackling the topic of affirming LGBTIQA+ people with disability. Jax will bring their lived experience and professional expertise to this topic to explore the experiences of LGBTIQA+ people with disability and how we, as practitioners and humans, can be more inclusive. So thank you, Jax, for your time today and I'll now hand over to you.

JAX JACKI BROWN: Thank you, and what a pleasure it is to be with you this afternoon. I'll be talking about affirming LGBTIQA+ people with disabilities, how you can be supportive and affirming when working with us. And I'll be talking for about the next 40 to 45 minutes, and then we'll have time for questions at the end. So please put your questions in the Q&A box if something occurs to you as we move through my presentation. I would love to hear from you. If I don't get through all the questions or if there is something that you would like to ask me one-on-one at a later time, I'll be also providing my contact details at the end as well. I'm really open to that conversation.

So my name is Jax and I've been working in the LGBTIQA+ disability rights space as an activist and as an educator, and I'll introduce myself more in a moment, but first I want to acknowledge that I'm on the land of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nations. Today I pay my respects to their Elders past, present and emerging, and extend my respect to any Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people who are joining us this afternoon. This land was never ceded and the process of colonisation, occupation, incarceration and genocide that began over two centuries ago continues to this day. In the face of this though, I want to recognise the strength, resilience and pride of the First Nations people of this land.

The artwork that you can see on your screen is by an artist called Peter Waples-Crowe, who is a Ngarigo man from the high country of NSW, and also has Wurundjeri connections as well. Peter lives and works on Naarm, also known as Melbourne, and he's gay, and this work that he's made a couple of years ago speaks to his feelings and his experiences of being part of a group but also feeling on the outer of another group because of his multiple identities. He says, "I'm inside culture because I'm Aboriginal; I'm outside because I'm gay. I'm inside gay culture because I'm gay, and I'm outside because I'm Aboriginal". And I really encourage you to look him up and look up his artwork as well. He's an amazing human.

I want to take a moment to pay deep respect to the First Peoples Disability Network Australia which is an organisation run by and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disabilities. I encourage you to look them up to find ways you can support the important work that they're doing.

So who am I? Well, I am a parent. I am a performer. I do some performance poetry as well as public speaking and workshops. I'm a friend and I'm a partner. There's a variety of images on the screen of me with some friends, me holding my child on my lap, my four-year-old on my lap in my power wheelchair, and me with my partner as well. A quick visual description of me. I'm a white person with short dark hair and glasses, and I'm wearing a button up shirt with tiny green cactuses on it. I'm also wearing black jeans and boots with rainbow laces but you can't see those and I'm seated in my manual wheelchair. My pronouns, as we said at the beginning, are they/them. As you can see from the images on your screen, I'm a lot of different things. I'm a queer person, I'm nonbinary, and I use two different types of wheelchairs. I use my manual wheelchair and also a power wheelchair. These two different types of chairs really influence how I'm perceived when I'm out and about, and how I'm related to by other people, and also the different access to spaces that I have, depending on what chair I'm using.

I'm also dyslexic, and you'll notice that I'm looking across to the side today. That's because I'm reading some notes to keep myself to time, but reading is hard for my brain, so I'll do my best to read what I've written but I hope that we can create a space here in the next hour together that is disability affirming. And by that, I mean that we can create a space where we feel that it's a safe space to talk about our disabilities openly and to talk about our access needs.

I'm probably going to cough a little bit in this presentation, and my apologies. I've had COVID recently and I'm still recovering, so, yeah, my apologies for that but I'll do my best.

Being disabled, queer and nonbinary are all super important parts of my identities, as well as being an activist, a parent, a partner and a friend. I've worked in the LGBTIQA+ disability rights space for over 10 years and I'm passionate about disability rights and LGBTIQA+ rights and I'm really committed to social justice and to playing my small part in the bigger struggle.

I was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia last year for my work in the LGBTIQA+ disability rights space, and when I got that award I felt really conflicted about it. It feels really strange to have the colonist nation state recognise my activism and give it value in some way by giving me that award, but I chose to accept it, and I chose to accept it in part because I want to use the power that it brings to travel that power. To travel that space of who gets to hold power and how, and who is excluded from different spaces and places because of our marginality.

So I often use the OAM after my name to open doors for other marginalised people to get them into spaces they wouldn't get into if I hadn't, perhaps, given a letter of reference or put my name forward in the advance of their work as well.

Just a give note on language. So I'll be using the term “disabled” in my talk and I'm doing so really deliberately in the context of the social model of disability, and under the social model disabled comes to mean a form of oppression or disadvantage because of ableism. So in this context, disabled is a political term, and I'm also aware that I'm using the term “intersectionality”, and I'm using it as a white person, and I really want to acknowledge its history and that it was first coined by Kimberley Crenshaw, an African American woman in the 1980s, as a way to think about racism and sexism and how they intersect or overlap in the lives of black women. At its core, intersectionality is a political term, and it asks us to think about systemic inequality, power and privilege and how we must address these things.

So there's a picture on screen of me as a five-year-old with my crutches at the time in our backyard in suburban NSW where I grew up. Growing up, I wasn't expected to have a job, a long-term partner or a child. My parents didn't really have a vision of my life where I could achieve things or aspire to the things that other nondisabled people could. This was largely because the doctors and the specialists that we interacted with on a weekly basis were really stuck in this negative deficit view of disability and also that my parents didn't seek out other adults with disability for me to feel connected to.

My disabilities, however, were never going to go away. They were never going to disappear, no matter how many surgeries or therapies my body was subjected to. This allusive idea of "Normal", which is also a social construct, was not something that I could ever attain, and yet I was not provided with any positive way to think about my disabilities growing up. The narrative I heard over and over again was that I was special and brave and that I would overcome my limitations. And the idea that I would have to learn to live with this body as it is and that disability would remain and that it could become something I could feel proud of and find an identity and community because of was not something anyone ever said to me as a young person.

The influence of the medical profession, of doctors, of specialists, of physiotherapists, of occupational therapists, in shaping how I and other people with disabilities view ourselves is massive, whether you are born with a disability or you acquire your disability at some point in your life.

The medical model of disability remains the dominant way of thinking about disability in western society. Under this model, a person's impairment or condition is the problem. Disability is to be cured or minimised. Disabled people are seen as less than, or flawed, or in need of help or pitied, and from this model comes ideas of special services for special people, like special schools, which I'm a survivor of, or segregated employment or group homes, as well as many more.

The medical discourse positions the sexuality of people with disabilities as abnormal, defective, deviant, as something to be policed or controlled. The cost of this approach on me was that I spent many years feeling exiled from my body, disconnected from other disabled people and the disability community. The medical profession and the medical model shapes how we see our bodies, how we learn to view them as less than nondisabled people, as bad or unworthy of love. This model does the opposite of allowing us to feel disability pride, and we hold these histories of shame in our bodies.

So how did I move from this shame to a space of pride? There's an image on your screen of a bunch of people with disabilities under a banner that says "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere", which is a quote by Martin Luther King Junior, and it's an image from the disability rights movement in the US in the 1980s.

Well, I moved towards pride in my early 20s being connected to and becoming friends with another disabled person who was living a few streets away from me in my small regional country town in NSW, and through this connection that we were both able to start reading books about disability history and discussing our bodies and lives in new and exciting ways. I was lucky enough to stumble across a few books on disability rights and the disability rights movement which showed me that disabled people were not passive or to be pitied but that we have a long and vibrant history of activism and advocacy of fighting for our rights together.

The social model of disability arose in the UK in the 1980s. Social barriers and attitudes disabled people, not their bodies and minds being not normative and, as I said, under the social model “disabled” or “disabled people” is a political term and disability becomes an identity. The social model enabled me to no longer view myself and my body as a problem but to see disability as a sociopolitical question. A question of access, identity and of human rights.

I came to understand that many of the barriers that I was facing as a wheelchair user weren't because my body was wrong but because the environment had been built to be inaccessible. Also that people held, either consciously or unconsciously, many outdated prejudices and stereotypes about disability. The idea that disability is socially created was really transformative in how I saw my body and how I saw the world around me and also how I felt about other disabled people.

So now there's an image on screen of me at a protest earlier this year in Melbourne in March that was defending the cuts to the NDIS under the previous government.

Being connected to other disabled people, and again I use the term “disabled” here politically to describe how we've been disabled and disadvantaged by an inaccessible society and attitudes. Being connected to other disabled people has, and continues to be, central to me feeling and practising my disability pride. There is a long and vibrant history of people with disabilities fighting for our rights in Australia and internationally. Understanding that I'm not alone in coming up against some of the discrimination and barriers that I continue to face and that I am part of a movement which is fighting for our human rights gives me a sense of connection, resilience and pride.

So there's an image on your screen, a black and white image, of UK artist and activist Liz Crow and she's seated in her manual wheelchair and she's wearing a T-shirt that says disability pride. She's on some kind of stage or scaffolding and there's a quote on screen as well which is by Liz which says, "For many years now, the social model of disability has enabled me to confront, survive and even surmount countless situations of exclusion and discrimination. It has enabled a vision of ourselves free from the constraints of disability oppression and provided a direction for our commitment to social change. It has played a central role in promoting disabled peoples' individual self-worth, collective identity and political organisation. I don't think it is an exaggeration to say that the social model has saved lives".

Now, by highlighting the value of the social model in my life and in the lives of other disabled people, it's not to dismiss or downplay the whiteness of the disability rights movement historically and today. It is also to be acknowledged that the movement has dismissed cisgendered women and feminist concerns of the gendered nature of their oppression. Disability feminists were actively told by theleaders of a disability rights movement that to bring up their concerns around their bodily experience of disability, for example, their experience of pain, to talk about their intimate lives, sexuality, and reproductive rights were personal issues, and that airing such issues publicly would confuse nondisabled people and they would again think that disability was a personal issue and not a political issue. But, as we know, the personal is political.

However, for many people with disabilities talking about their intimate lives and the barriers they face in terms of their sexuality and gender expression can be hard because without a political lens it's easy to internalise the ableism you're encountering and to think that you're the problem. For me, engaging in disability rights as a queer person and then later coming out as nonbinary, I've realised that much of the disability activist space is very heterosexual, very cisgender, and that it hasn't been very welcoming to me and other LGBTIQA+ people. At times, it's even been hostile and transphobic. And, look, part of these reactions, I think, from disabled folks is due to the internalised ableism they're experiencing. The pressure to try and fit in. To not be more different than you already are. So they see many LGBTIQA+ disabled people as pushing the boundaries too much.

The same can be said, unfortunately, for the LGBTIQA+ community and their responses to folks with disabilities. In that ableism is present in these spaces too, even though as queer and trans people we can think radically about power, gender, bodies and sexuality. Too often people think folks with disability don't belong in these spaces and we continue to be excluded. We can't get into many of the bars or clubs. So we're just not there, we're not visible. Because we're not visible we're not thought of as potential lovers, as partners, as even a possible hot pash on a Saturday night.

Speaking of hot pashes, here's a hot pash for you all to keep your attention, and because it's hot and I like to add a bit of sauciness to my presentation. This picture was taken over 8 years ago now when I was in the first few months of my relationship with my partner, Ann, and it’s at that time in a relationship – I’m sure you’ve all been there - where you're really in lust with each other, and you can't keep your hands off each other. I wrote a little article for a sexuality mag down here in Melbourne called Archer. If you haven't heard of them, you should check it out. They just did a disability issue last year in December which just won an award because it was so amazing.

Anyway, I wrote this article called the Politics of Pashing. It was about how pashing my girlfriend in public was a political act because we rarely see disabled queer people in popular culture, on TV, in books, in film, and the editor rang me up and said, “Look, I'd really love to take some photos to accompany your article”, and I said to my girlfriend, “Do you want to come and pash me around the streets and we'll have a photographer take some snaps?” She said, “Sure.” So we went into Melbourne in the CBD on a busy Saturday morning and took this and a bunch of other photos. Look, I really love this image. I love it because it captures that time in our relationship, before we had a child and when we had much more time to pash about the place. So it captures, you know, that initial stage of our relationship, but I also love it because for me it's an image that I wish I'd seen as a young queer disabled person growing up. It's an image that says to me, you are lovable, you are desired just as you are. Not in spite of your disability. Not trying to minimise your disability, but you're loved and desired for all that you are with your disability included as a central part of that.

We never see images like this in our media or on our streets. We never see our bodies depicted as desired, as lovable and as valued. There's a quote on the screen by a writer and educator Anne Finger that says, "Sexuality is often the source of our deepest oppression; it's often the source of our deepest pain. It's easier for us to talk about and formulate strategies for challenging discrimination and employment, education and housing than to talk about our exclusion from sexuality and reproduction".

As I've outlined, the disability rights movement has historically, and still today, struggled to include sexuality rights in its understanding of the disadvantages we, as disabled people, face. This quote and the work of other disabled people challenges that erasure. However, gender identity for trans and gender diverse folks is rarely even considered by the disability rights movement and this, along with the experience of First Nations people with disabilities, are the new frontiers for disability activism and advocacy.

So there's an image on your screen of Alison Lapper, a UK artist. It's a massive marble statue which was in Trafalgar Square in 2005, and it's of her when she was pregnant with her son at the time, and she was born missing an arm and a leg. So this image is an image I also think that we rarely see of disabled people and that's one of us being pregnant or birthing and parenting children. So as we look at this image, I want you to think about who is considered the default body or mind when we think about reproductive rights, when we think about pregnancy, birthing and parenting.

The image that often springs to mind is of nondisabled people. It's of cisgendered people, ie people who aren't transgender, and it's often of white people. Who is allowed to become a parent? And whose reproductive choices are limited, controlled or judged? Often people with disabilities are not given the opportunity to enact our reproductive choices. Cis women with intellectual disabilities are routinely put on birth control as a means of preventing them from getting pregnant and have less opportunities to form relationships and to start a family because of ableist assumptions and attitudes.

In Michael Gill's seminal work called Already doing it - Intellectual Disability and Sexual Agency he notes, "Individuals with intellectual disabilities, sexual needs were ignored. Their sexual behaviour was punished and they were randomly sterilised. They were closeted in their homes or isolated in large institutions, segregated by sex to prevent them from reproducing. In fact, they were actually oppressed largely because of their sexuality".

Gendered assumptions around mothering impacts cis women with disabilities where it's presumed in order to be a good mother you need to be able to care for your child completely independently and without the need to use assistance, such as from support workers. Reproductive rights and the choice of whether or not to have children, finding a partner to do that with or going it solo as a parent, these choices are often denied for people with disabilities. They're often denied by the very people in our lives who are meant to support us. Parents, support workers, service providers continue to gatekeep and manage our access to sexual health knowledge and limit our access to events, pubs and bars where we might form relationships and explore our sexuality.

And for LGBTIQA+ people with disabilities we face additional challenges. Here's another quote from Gill which says, "Gay men, lesbians, gender queer and gender nonconforming persons, racial minority populations, poor people, disabled people are often discouraged to reproduce for fear that they cannot, will not, or should not contribute to the future of the human race".

The idea that disabled people will create disabled babies should we reproduce is deeply ableist. It holds at its core the idea that disability is inherently a bad thing, that disabled people will make bad parents, and we know this is not true. Here's another quote, "Robert McRuer, however, argues that crip/queer perspectives can challenge assumptions about which bodies are able to inhabit and lay claim to normative conceptions of agency, family and ultimately identity". We deliberately trouble notions of who is permitted to be sexual and how, who is worthy of love and connection of value.

Disability is part of human variation. It's an aspect of diversity but it's rarely thought about in those terms. I don't want to change my body or brain. I want to change society, for it's society and people's attitudes that disable me. I want to challenge ableism, including sexual ableism.

So let's briefly explore some of the challenges of the LGBTIQA+ people with disabilities in Australia. We know that LGBTIQA+ people with disabilities experience higher rates of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation with a recent writing looking at the health and well-being of LGBTIQA+ young people in Australia finding that in the last 12 months LGBTIQA+ people with disabilities have experienced the falling rates of harassment or assault based on their sexuality or gender identity. 52.7% had experienced verbal abuse, 15% physical abuse and 31.7% sexual abuse. And it's worth noting that although this report was published in 2021, the survey responses were provided in 2019, so it would be really interesting to know the impact of living through the COVID-19 pandemic had on LGBTIQA+ people' experiences of mental health and violence, and I would suspect, given the other evidence we know in terms of the impact of the pandemic, those rates would sadly have increased across this time.

The Disability Royal Commission, which is occurring now, has had some closed sessions with LGBTIQA+ people with disabilities looking into our experiences, and they have found what many of us have already known in our lives. That we are subject to intersecting and overlapping forms of disadvantage. We know that, as I've said, family members and support workers, those very people who should be supporting us to be our full selves, are often not affirming our identities. And this is a real issue when we might need support to go to LGBTIQA+ events. When we might need support to buy clothes and dress in ways that affirm and express our gender identity.

The NDIS is a massive system which only 10% of people with disabilities in Australia have access to, but for those of us who do have access to it, it's a key way that we're able to meet our basic support needs. But sadly, the NDIS is not LGBTIQA+ responsive. From Local Area Coordinators, to the planners who help you write your plan, to the support workers you have in your life. All these people often lack knowledge of LGBTIQA+ issues and identities leaving many people to feel unsupported and even unsafe to disclose their sexuality or their gender identity.

So let's now explore some practical ways that you can be supportive and affirming of LGBTIQA+ people with disabilities. So pronouns are really an important way to let people know your gender identity and how you want people to talk about you. Using someone's pronouns signals to them, especially if they're trans or gender diverse, that you respect and affirm their gender identity. So on the slide there's some gendered pronouns which are he/him/his or she/her/hers, and there's some gendered neutral pronouns, they/them/theirs, or ze/zir/zirs. These gender neutral pronouns are often used by nonbinary or gender fluid folks.

A person's pronouns may change over time. Someone might use she or they pronouns now but might use they/them in the future, or might use a combination of pronouns. So they might use she in a particular context and they in another context. When they're out or feel more supported to do so. It's really best practice to check in with the person if you're unsure about what pronouns they're using. A really easy way to start doing that is to get into the habit of introducing yourself with your pronouns. So saying, “Hi, my name is X and my pronouns are X. Can I ask what your pronouns are?” Another way to signal that you are thinking about pronouns and wanting to be inclusive is to include them in your email signatures, besides your name in Zoom and Teams, or wear a pronoun badge when you're at work.

Here is another list of ways that you can be affirming. It's not an exhaustive list. I would love to hear your comments or questions on additional things that you think are important as well. An important one, though, I think, and at the very top there, is to know that gender is not a binary but it's a spectrum. So a spectrum with female being at one end and male being at the other end and people might move along the spectrum across their lifespan. Another thing is that 80% of disabilities are invisible. So when we think about what disability looks like, we often think about a wheelchair user or someone with a visible disability, but it's much more common for people to have invisible disabilities. So we really need to create a culture, whether that's in an educational context or a work context or a broader societal context where people feel safe and respected to talk about their disabilities. Where they feel safe to disclose these things.

Also being across the different important days of significance is really a key way of signalling you're supportive and finding ways you can celebrate them in your workplace, you know, at your place of education, even with your friend group. They're important things to be across and to find out ways of marking those days.

Also forms are really important. Having a space where people can write their preferred name, if their legal name and preferred name are different, is really key and having an open text box for gender so people can write in their gender identity in the language that's most affirming for them. And maintaining confidentiality. So just because someone's told you what their pronouns are or what their sexuality is, you know, treating that with respect and confidentiality. So they might have only told you because they trust you and they feel connected to you. So making sure that you don't share that information with other people.

Checking in directly with people about what their pronouns are and what different contexts they would like you to use those pronouns in, and also if they've told you what their preferred name is, checking in about that as well because, again, they might have trusted you with that information but they mightn't have told the rest of the workplace or they mightn’t have told their friends or parents if they're still living at home if they're a young person. So really having direct conversations with the people that you're connected in with about this stuff is really important.

Also, if you make a mistake and you misgender someone, if you use the wrong pronoun for someone, apologise, pick up on your mistake. Say, “Oh, I'm really sorry. I'll try and do better next time.” Don't go into a shame spiral about it. Don't turn it into a massive thing because then that person who you've misgendered feels like they need to hold that space for you. Just apologise, say “I'm really sorry”, and try and do better next time.

Don't make assumptions based on how someone's voice sounds or how they look as to what their gender identity might be. So really listening to what the person is telling you around what their pronouns are, what their name is and respecting that and mirroring that back to that person is a really important thing to do and really affirming. And the last one on the slide there, invest in LGBTIQA+ disability, First Nations, CALD trainings which are designed and delivered by people with lived experience. And don't just have this training as a one-off, but thinking about how you can embed it in your organisation so that people who may start in your organisation are also getting access to this training and this knowledge and people who have been there for a while are getting a refresher in some of this stuff. And I think it's really important to have these trainings be delivered and designed by people who live these experiences because then we can bring the richness and the complexity of our lives and the knowledges that we hold into these trainings to make it interesting and informative, but also to pay marginalised people for the work that we do in terms of educating and trying to create social change.

This is a quote by one of my favourite authors who is called Eli Clare. He's a trans queer disabled writer from the US. He's written a bunch of poetry books which if you're a poet like I am I would encourage you to check out. He's also written a book called Beautiful Imperfection, which is a beautiful book about his grappling with QR. So this idea of wanting to engage with the medical profession for pain management, for particular things around his disability, but also then holding a space of understanding a human rights perspective and a social model perspective on disability, and how to kind of hold both those frameworks or models in his understanding of his body and his activism, and he also writes a lot on whiteness and how to practise true allyship with people of colour if you're a white person and environmental justice as well. Anyway, he's a beautiful writer. I encourage you to look him up and read some of his work.

But I've included a quote here which I really love which says, "Pride works in direct opposition to internalised oppression. The latter provides a fertile ground for shame, denial and self-hatred and fear. And the former encourages anger, strength and joy. To transform self-hatred into pride is a fundamental act of resistance". I really love this quote because it shows the power of pride to shift how we feel about ourselves and it shows how it can give us resilience when we encounter homophobia, transphobia, biphobia or ableism. To many people, the idea of disability pride seems counterintuitive. How can you feel pride in something that is presumed to be inherently negative?

Disability is often assumed it's just an experience of pain or the experience of isolation, abuse or discrimination. It is assumed that the experience of disability gives us nothing of value, nothing positive. But that's wrong and there's lots of good things about being disabled. And, yes, I really want to acknowledge that pain and illness sure as heck are really hard to deal with and they're really hard for me to deal with, but disability pride doesn't deny those experiences but it says that how I experience my body, and the barriers that I face, and the hard things that I've gone through and the hard things that I'm probably going to go through are not my fault and they're heavily influenced or impacted by the ableism that I also experience.

My disability gives me access to a different experience of the world, a different understanding of the way bodies and minds can be, and the value found in being different from the supposed norm. My disability gives me a different perspective on gender and on power, as well as an access to a vibrant and feisty disability community and culture.

So I'm going to go to questions in a second. I wanted to put up my contact details, and there's two pride flags which mean a lot to me on the screen. The one on the left is the disability pride flag, which was a collaborative design effort by Anne Margel with the disability community, and there's also the progress pride flag which is the rainbow pride flag with the black and brown stripes added and pink and blue and white colours as well in the triangle to signify the inclusion of trans people and First Nations people and black and brown people of colour. So it's a relatively new pride flag, both of them are relatively new. It's thinking about who are the most marginalised parts of the LGBTIQA+ community and how can we visually represent their inclusion in our pride flag.

So there's my contact details down there. If you have questions now, I'd really love to hear them. As I said, if we don't have time I will happily answer them after this as well, but also if you want to reach out to me, if you feel like I've said some stuff today and you would like to read some more stuff on the experience of LGBTIQA+ people with disabilities, I'm a bit of a nerd for this stuff, so I can give you some reports to read, some journal articles to follow up on, some connection points into groups that are being run for our community by our community, but also if you have a question or you just want to touch base but you don't want to ask it in a public forum such as this, I'm really open to hearing from you and having that conversation one-on-one as well because I know sometimes when I talk it can bring up stuff for people, and I would love to be able to be there and supportive of you and just connect in, and to know what resonated as well would be nice.

So thanks so much for having me give this little presentation and now over to question time. Here's a list of - not an extensive list but a list of some resources. The slide deck will also go up on the website when the presentation is put up as well. So you have access to downloading this and following it up in your own time as well.

GABRIELLE: Thanks, Jax. That was so powerful, and some of the comments that have come through have also reinforced how powerful people have found this presentation. It's really important for us to have voices like yours to open our eyes and open our doors for greater inclusion. So we have had some questions about an expanded reading list that people would love to find out about and additional resources, so we'll work with Jax to get some of those in, but we've also got some questions as well.

The first one is a comment really. Jax, your reference to oppression where you were guided by the likes of Paulo Freire, pedagogy of the oppressed. Perhaps you can be Freire advocating for the oppressed in our present day. That's a lovely compliment.

The next question is from Elizabeth, I worry that we have minimal representation happening in higher education classes. Whose voices and research is studied and who is omitted; who is visually represented and who is omitted. How might we advocate or improve this in the higher education sector?

JAX: Yeah, look, that's a lovely question. I think for me, I loved university. I haven't gone on to post – I’ve got my bachelor in cultural studies but I haven't gone on to Honours. I think it's about providing students with disabilities those pathways that feel welcoming and accessible to them, and meeting their access needs in terms of being able to provide additional support or longer time to complete tasks. I know universities are already doing that work. But I think sometimes, particularly for folks with invisible disabilities, that feeling like you might face barriers in disclosing that, or getting reports or getting specialist support to have evidence around why you might need extra time and what that looks like, can be a bit of a barrier too. So thinking about that in terms of why people mightn't pursue further study to be some of our lecturers and tutors, but also providing opportunities for people with lived experience to come in and give guest lectures. I do some guest lectures for a variety of universities around Australia in disability and LGBTIQA+ stuff. So that can be another avenue of - sorry, I've still got my COVID cough. Of giving voice to that lived experience and that lived expertise that people hold, and really providing students with a capacity to see, you know, the marginalities they might share with those people represented and valued by the university as well.

GABRIELLE: Great. Thanks, Jax. I think increasingly we're seeing more centres and research centres for research around gender studies and disability studies, so hopefully people can seek out those experts in their own institutions. The next question is around, if we have an open field for gender how do we respectfully question if we don't understand what is written?

JAX: That is such a good question, and I haven't had that question before, so good on you. Yeah. Look, I guess it's about if you have - you know, if it's a client you're working with or a student that you're working with and you don't understand what they mean, or what pronouns they might want you to use because they've defined their gender in a way that you haven't come across before, you know, gently having that conversation and asking that question about, “So I'm just wanting to know a bit more about what this term means for you. You know, what pronouns you would like me to use.” I think, as I said, it comes from creating that space where you're - talking about your pronouns and your gender as well so that they feel like you're thinking critically about it and you're positioning yourself within that relationship with them, so they're not feeling singled out in that interaction. So, yeah, I think curious questions are okay, and this space of language, whether it be the language around disability and how we refer to ourselves, or the LGBTIQA+ acronym and what all those letters mean, and gender diversity and the different ways we might identify, these two communities are really shifting and changing and evolving really quickly in terms of the language that we're choosing to use for ourselves and the questions we might have as communities around what is best practice language, for example.

So it's okay to not always feel on top of it. It's okay to sometimes feel a little bit like you're trying to catch up, but creating this space where you're being respectful, you're being open hearted about it and you're being curious in a way that's still supportive, I think, are the key things for me.

GABRIELLE: And some of the questions relate specifically to where people can find, you know, a list of pronouns. Do you have like a go to resource that you prefer, if people want to question - want to find out which are the best resources on pronouns?

JAX: Yes, I have an entire list which I can provide. I probably can't pull up the document right this second.

GABRIELLE: No, that's okay, we'll get it after.

JAX: I can provide it after the fact. There's a bunch of different ones. I've got a four-year-old, as you saw there. I also have a list of children's books around disability and LGBTIQA+ or rainbow families, which I can also provide as well. I think one of the key ways that we can shift some of this stuff as a society is by, of course, you know, teaching the future generations to not be scared of difference, and one of the key ways we can do that is by having awesome books to read to the little people in our lives about the different bodies and minds and identities and making a conversation that you can have with young people that doesn't make you feel out of your depth or scary or whatever. I can provide that as well. I do agree with the comment in the chat which is four-year-olds are the best. I do agree.

GABRIELLE: Another question is from Dexter. Thank you so much for recognising the whiteness of the LGBTIQA+ movement. As a queer of colour it is extremely hard for me to have my voice out there. Can you please make a comment on how queer people are over-represented in nuerodiverse communities and the ableism of the queer communities?

JAX: Yeah, look, it is so true, isn't it, that white people – we hold way more privilege and power and often don't examine that and don't make space for people who are more marginalised to really talk about the complexities of their voices and their experiences and struggles. Yeah.

Look, in terms of the neurodiversity question. There's been some emerging and interesting research done that's found that up to 60% of people who are neurodiverse are also trans or gender diverse. There's a really interesting emerging link between those two populations. I know Drummond Street Services, who I used to work for for a couple of years, did an interesting study around that, that came up with that 60% statistic. Yeah. I mean, I think it's a space that I would love to see more people with lived experience leading that research and doing co-design work around what it looks like and what services and supports trans and gender diverse people need who are neurodiverse and how - you know, how they can do some education of their schools, of their educational institutions, of their families of origin, around what living at that intersection looks like and feels like for them.

GABRIELLE: Thanks, Jax. That's great. We've just got time for a couple more, I think. I've got a couple of people from New Zealand, sorry. I'll pronounce it incorrectly if I try to say the Maori name, but they're after information on disability right groups in New Zealand and information on demographic data, but we might just keep that aside and think about that a little bit later. So I don't want to ignore our colleagues across the ditch but that's kind of a complex question to ask at this point.

But the final question, I think, is when people in areas don't seem to have a connection available, what is the first steps they could take to reach out and create some new group connections?

JAX: Great question. I would say with the New Zealand question, Patsy Frawley, who used to work at Deakin for years and years in the respectful lives and healthy relationships program with people with intellectual disabilities who are co-researchers with her, she has moved to New Zealand now, so she would be a really good person to contact – I can’t remember the name of the university she’s currently working for, but she might be able to answer some of those questions. In terms of reaching out and finding those connections, I would say social media sometimes is a great space for finding grass roots, online groups that are run by and for LGBTIQA+ people or people with disabilities. Looking at what some of your large health organisations have in terms of information and support, so ACON if you're in NSW, Drummond Street Services or Forward Harbour Health if you're in Victoria. I'm not so much across the other states, I'm sorry. Of course, looking at other disability support providers and what they might be thinking about or offering in this space. I would really say try and connect with individuals who belong to the communities that you're trying to find out more about. They'll have the connection points into those kind of grass roots organisations or support groups that will then be able to provide you some kind of more tailored ways of finding out additional information.

I'm happy to be a conduit for that exploration if that would be useful for you. You've got my email address if you want to email with more detail around where you are, who you are and what you're looking for. I'm happy to try and find connection points.

GABRIELLE: Jax, be careful what you wish for. Our ADCET groups are always very engaged. So that's all we have time for in terms of questions today, so I'm sorry if we didn't get to all your questions but we'll try and answer all of those offline, and when we put the information up on our website after the webinar we'll be able to do that.

So just to finish off today we've got some great webinars coming up. Scaffolding students to become independent learners and career ready graduates, Jane is putting these in the chat now. Another one which will be really interesting to those people that wanted to find a bit more inclusive language information, we're having another session that is specifically about developing inclusive language guides with a particular focus on LGBTIQA+ and people with disability. So please look out for those that are coming up.

We're always open to more suggestions about ADCET webinars, so don't be afraid to let us know what you'd like to see. We really do value your feedback about today's session, so we will add a link to the chat now too about a survey of how you felt about today.

Once again, thank you Jax. That's been a fabulous presentation. Really personal and thank you for opening up to all of our participants today. And thank you to our live Captioner as well, Sharon, from Bradley Reporting. And I hope everyone enjoys the rest of their day. Thank you.

JAX: Thank you. See ya.