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<b>Policy Title:</b>	Gender Equity Policy	<b>Effective Date:</b>	January 26, 2025

## FIT ACTIVE BEAUTIFUL FOUNDATION GENDER EQUITY POLICY

### **PURPOSE**

This Gender Equity Policy affirms Fit Active Beautiful Foundation’s (“FAB”) commitment to promoting and maintaining an inclusive, equitable, and respectful environment for FAB Participants. We are dedicated to addressing and dismantling systemic barriers that hinder gender equality, particularly in our work supporting youth and their communities.

### **DEFINITIONS**

These definitions are not for the purpose of labeling FAB Participants but rather to assist in understanding this policy. FAB Participants may or may not use these terms to describe themselves.

**Cisgender** - A person whose gender identity aligns with their biological sex (e.g. a person who is biologically female and identifies as female).

**Gender Expression** - How a person expresses gender, such as their behaviour, their clothing, their hairstyle, activities they participate in, etc. This expression can be masculine, feminine, androgynous or anywhere in between.

**Gender Identity** - A person’s deeply felt sense of being male, female, both, neither, or anywhere along the gender spectrum. One’s gender identity may be the same or different from their sex and may change over the course of one’s lifetime.

**Non-binary** - A person whose gender identity does not align with a binary understanding of gender such as man or woman. It is a gender identity which may include man and woman, androgynous, fluid, multiple, no gender, or a different gender outside of the “woman—man” spectrum.

**Sex** - Sex refers to the biological attributes (i.e., chromosomes, hormones, and reproductive organs) and is often classified as male or female.

**Sexual Orientation** - A description of how a person experiences sexual and romantic attraction. Sexual orientations can include asexual (not experiencing sexual attraction), heterosexual (experiencing attraction to another sex), lesbian and gay (experiencing attraction to the same sex), bisexual (experiencing attraction to more than one sex) and more. It's important to remember that all of us have both a sexual orientation and a gender identity. Knowing a person's gender identity does not give you any information about their sexual orientation.

**Transgender** - A person whose gender identity is different from their biological sex assigned at birth (e.g. someone who is born biologically male and identifies as a female).

**Trans Girl** - A person whose biological sex assigned at birth is male, but whose gender identity is female. She may be transitioning or have already transitioned into being a female.

**Transition** - The process where a person goes from living and identifying as one gender to living and identifying as another.

**Two Spirit** - A culturally specific identity used by some Indigenous people to indicate a person whose gender identity, spiritual identity and/or sexual orientation comprises both male and female spirits.

**FAB Participant** - An individual whose gender identity and / or sex is female and participates in any available FAB programming. The term does not refer specifically to individuals who were born biologically as female and identify as such.

**FAB Member** - Any individual, including a FAB Participant, coach, volunteer, employee or board member who participates in or supports FAB programming.

## SCOPE

This policy applies to all individuals associated with FAB, including employees, board members, volunteers, coaches and participants.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

All FAB directors and officers are responsible for the following:

- participating in gender equity or similar training; and
- ensuring compliance with this policy.

The FAB Secretary is responsible for ensuring this policy is reviewed and approved by the Board at least annually.

The FAB Executive Director is responsible for the following:

- overseeing that gender equity training is provided to FAB coaches; and
- investigating any incidents or allegations of discrimination, bullying or harassment in a prompt and confidential manner.

All FAB Members are responsible for treating everyone with respect and reporting any incidents of discrimination, bullying or harassment.

## **PROCEDURES**

### FAB 5K Challenge Program Participation

Any youth who identifies as female and / or has female biological attributes is welcome to fully participate as a FAB Participant in the FAB 5K Challenge Program.

### Training

FAB coaches will receive annual gender equity training during the annual coaches training weekend. Training will consist of reviewing and discussing this policy.

FAB board members will receive annual gender equity training at a board meeting or will be required to participate in related diversity, inclusion and belonging training offered through an online learning program.

### Best Practices

1. How do I know the gender identity of a FAB Participant?

It is not the role of a FAB Member to determine an individual's gender identity. The only way to know a FAB Participant's gender identity is if they tell you. Coaches/volunteers are often held in positions of trust and a FAB Participant at your location may feel comfortable in reaching out to you.

They may have already reached out to their parents, or they may have not. In any case, an individual is to be considered the final authority on their own gender identity. Self-identification is more important than outward appearance.

2. How should I address a FAB Participant?

Regardless of the sex of the FAB Participant, use the pronoun that the person considers appropriate for himself/herself/themselves. For example, a trans girl may have been identified as male at birth but self-identifies as female and would prefer “she” or “her”. It is always respectful to refer to a person using the pronouns he/she/they prefer. If you need to ask a FAB Participant how they would like to be addressed, you should do so privately.

3. Can I share with others a FAB Participant’s gender identity?

If a FAB Participant discusses their gender identity with you, listen in a respectful and non-judgemental way. Do not brush them off, react with scepticism or disapproval, or pressure them into any particular category. Support them in developing their own understanding of their gender and direct them to gender identity resources included in this policy.

Unless otherwise directed by the FAB Participant, information about an individual’s gender identity should be treated as confidential, and only shared with others when there is a compelling need-to-know (i.e., the FAB Participant is receiving medical treatment and gender identity would be revealed). That said, some FAB Participants may want to share information about their gender identity with their location, and they should be supported to do so in a positive and affirming manner.

When contacting the parents/guardians of a transgender, non-binary or other gender nonconforming FAB Participant, the FAB Participant should be consulted first to determine an appropriate way to reference the FAB Participant’s gender identity. It is strongly suggested that coaches/volunteers privately ask the FAB Participant at the beginning of the season how they want to be addressed in front of parents/guardians and other FAB Members.

4. How can I be supportive of a transgender FAB Participant or a FAB Participant who is transitioning?

Avoid perpetuating gender stereotypes. Many of us enforce gender norms without even realizing it, but these stereotypes hurt everyone, especially transgender young people, gender non-conforming young people, and young women. Think carefully about the messages in everything you say, do, teach, or communicate about gender.

It's important to remember that transition is a process, not a single moment. For many people, transition is something they do over time, and they may transition in some spaces sooner than others. You may have a FAB Participant who is identifying as a boy at home, but as a girl at FAB. As long as she is identifying as a girl at FAB, she is welcome.

5. How do I ensure that there is appropriate washroom access for all FAB Participants?

Any FAB Participant at your location may use the washroom that best corresponds to their gender identity. FAB coaches/volunteers have little control over the washroom access at their FAB location (e.g. school, community centre, community event). If the child requests a more private washroom, please check to see if your FAB location has a single stall washroom. You can also ensure privacy but having a policy of FAB Participants accessing the washroom one at a time.

6. How do I answer questions from my FAB location about the gender identity of another FAB Participant?

Congratulations on creating a safe environment where FAB Participants feel comfortable asking these questions! Some inquiries may be purely innocent, like if a FAB Participant notices a difference (i.e. "why does April keep her hair short") and some may be more targeted (i.e. "I heard that April is transgender. What does that mean?"). When answering these questions, it is important that you remain a positive role model to all FAB Participants. Remember, FAB Participants will look to your own behaviour and reactions as something to imitate.

Your answers will depend on how comfortable the FAB Participant and her parents/guardians are with sharing information. If the FAB Participant wishes information to remain private, respect his/her/their privacy and do not reveal to other FAB Members the child's gender identity. Instead, you

can simply explain that the individual behaves a certain way because of a personal choice (i.e. “April wears her hair short because she likes it that way. I think it looks great.”). For more targeted questions, provide what information you can without revealing anything about the child (i.e. “I can tell you what transgender means, but I cannot share personal information about other FAB Participants.”). If the child would like to share any personal information with FAB Participants, you may like to research some agencies who can speak to your location about gender identities.

7. How do I answer questions from parents, guardians or other adults about a FAB Member’s gender identity?

To protect the privacy of our FAB Members, it is important that you do not discuss personal information about them without their knowledge or consent. The goal is to create a safe and inviting space for our FAB Members and we do not want to break this commitment by speaking about an individual’s situation with other parents and adults. However, if they have specific questions related to gender identity, you can refer them to resources found at the end of this document.

8. What do I do if someone says something derogatory about a FAB Member’s gender identity?

Derogatory comments directed at any FAB Member is harassment and will not be tolerated. Here is a step-by-step guide on how to handle the situation.

1. Address the comment immediately

- Stop the behaviour as soon as it happens. This shows that derogatory or harmful comments are unacceptable.
- Remain calm but firm in your response. For example, you can say, “That kind of language is not allowed here. We respect everyone.”

2. Support the targeted FAB Member

- Check in with the individual who was the target of the comment to offer support privately. Let them know they are valued and respected and ask how they are feeling.
- Assure them that the behaviour will be addressed and that such comments are not tolerated.

3. Educate FAB Members

- Address the group to reinforce values of respect, inclusion and acceptance. Explain that discriminatory behaviour based on gender identity (or any other characteristic) is harmful and goes against the values of FAB.
- Foster discussions about respect and inclusion, emphasizing how everyone deserves to feel safe and respected, regardless of gender identity.

4. Follow up with the individual who made the comment

- Privately talk to the individual who made the comment to explain why the language or behaviour was unacceptable.
- Make it clear that derogatory comments can harm others and won't be tolerated. Encourage them to apologize if appropriate.

If the derogatory comments or harassment continue, further action will be taken in accordance with FAB harassment and bullying policies.

**RELATED DOCUMENTS AND RESOURCES**

If a FAB Participant or their parent / guardian has questions regarding gender identity, you may refer them to the following resources:

- Gender Creative Kids is a Canadian web portal of information and resources for trans youth and adults who support them.

Visit: <http://gendercreativekids.ca>

- Rainbow Health Ontario keeps a database of supportive material about gender independence. Some resources are accessible online, others can be ordered. They ship anywhere in Canada.

Visit: <https://www.rainbowhealthontario.ca/>

- PFLAG Canada is Canada's national organization that helps Canadians with issues of sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression.

Visit: <https://pflagcanada.ca/>

- LGBTQ Youth Line offers peer support and referrals to LGBTQ youth.

Visit: <https://www.youthline.ca>

- Trans Lifeline is a non-profit dedicated to the wellbeing of trans people who run a hotline staffed by trans people.

Visit <http://www.translifelin.org> or call (877) 330-6366

#### **REVIEW AND REVISIONS**

The Gender Equity Policy shall be reviewed by the Board at least annually. Any amendments must be approved by the Board.