A common thread throughout our work, and throughout our website, is the idea that Gender Spectrum supports creating gender inclusive environments. But what does that phrase mean exactly? And how are our efforts having an impact in creating these spaces?

Inclusivity, in its very definition, means to be open to everyone, and not limited to certain people. From a gender standpoint, this means that these services, establishments, schools, practitioners, government agencies, etc. are all welcoming of all kids, regardless of their Gender identity and/or expression.

Gender is all around us. It is actually taught to us, from the moment we are born. Gender expectations and messages bombard us constantly. Upbringing, culture, peers, community, media, and religion, are some of the many influences that shape our understanding of this core aspect of identity. How you learned and interacted with gender as a young child directly influences how you view the world today.

Because of its prominence in everyday life, creating gender inclusive environments, in which everyone is welcome, is critical for the success of the children and teens in your lives. Where everyone is welcome.

What can you do to help create more gender inclusive environments and communities? You can start by providing support, compassion and encouragement to all kids and teens; by teaching them that they matter; by sticking up for them; and by demonstrating support through actively combating gender discrimination.

In order for environments to become truly gender inclusive, it requires all adults and kids of the community to take responsibility for the safety of all children regardless of the clothes they wear, the toys they play with, and other gender expressions. Moving from the notion of gender as a binary concept to a more expansive understanding of the complex nature of the gender spectrum only occurs with a concerted effort by all adult stakeholders and allies.

We talk about gender inclusiveness because gender affects all kids. And we want all kids to have the opportunity to feel welcome, included, and thrive.