

Navigating Gender Identity Disclosure: Psychosocial Profiles and Characteristics Among Canadian Teens - A Response to Saskatchewan's Bill 137

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Abstract

In August 2023, the Government of Saskatchewan revised Chapter 46 of The Education Act, 1995, requiring teachers to inform parents if students under 16 wish to change their name, pronouns, or gender expression. This amendment, Bill 137, poses risks for sexual and gender minority (SGM) youth, including potential rejection from unsupportive families and involuntary disclosure of their gender identity. Prior to this policy change, the UnACoRN Study, involving 9,674 participants across Canada and the US, explored where youth receive affirmation or denial of their identities, including in school environments. Using the UnACoRN data, this project examines correlations between support systems, risk factors, and disclosure strategies among Canadian students aged 15-17 who reported a minoritized gender identity. Using descriptive analysis and Pearson's Chi-squared test, the study identifies significant differences between two groups: those who disclosed to both teachers and parents (n=731) and those who only confided in teachers (n=242). The analysis considers trans experience, gender identities, racial backgrounds, and parents' place of birth, with sensitivity analysis for students aged 15. These findings highlight SGM youth's complexities in navigating disclosure within evolving legislative frameworks. The research underscores the importance of reflecting on policy implications and support systems to mitigate the mental and physical health risks SGM youth encounter in the current social climate.

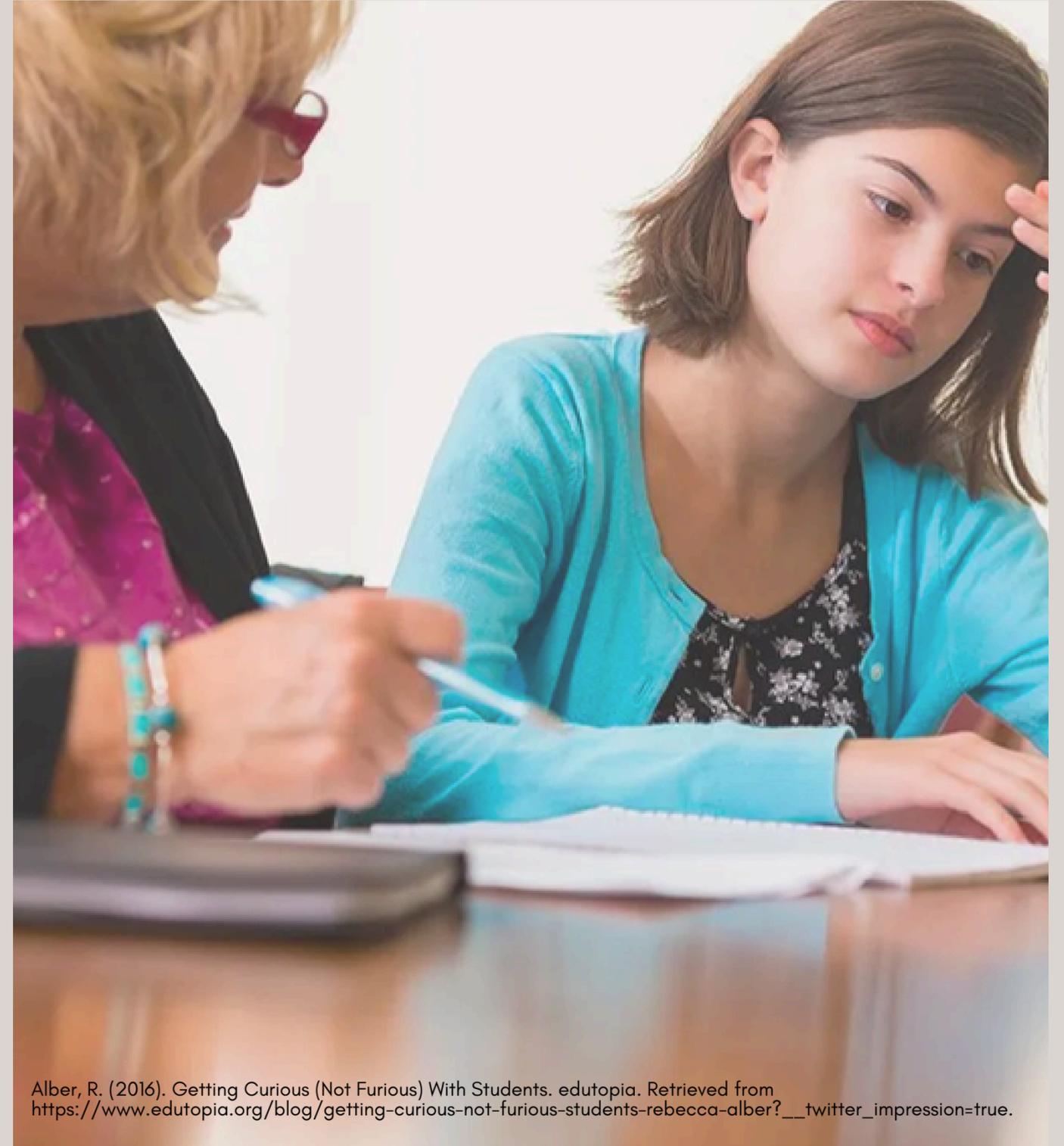
Keywords: gender identity disclosure, sexual and gender minority youth, psychosocial profiles, Canadian teens, education policy



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Navigating Gender Identity Disclosure (coming out): Psychosocial Profiles and Characteristics Among Canadian Teens— A Response to Saskatchewan's Bill 137



Rahmani, E. (n.d.). Two Young People Holding Transgender and Intersex Flags . Canva- baseimage.



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- SGM communities face cumulative minority stressors subjectively and objectively
- Sexual orientation and gender identity and expression change efforts (**SOGIECE**) are correlated with mental health risks.

Bill 137 (amended in August 2023) :

- **Parental consent for students under 16 to change their names or pronouns related to gender expression at school**
- It also restricts sexual health education and prohibits third-party involvement.

- Stigma, unawareness and self-blame **delay and reduce parents' willingness** to seek help for their children
- Teachers (formal) and other support (formal + informal) become important

The UnACoRN Study

opened in 2022 | 

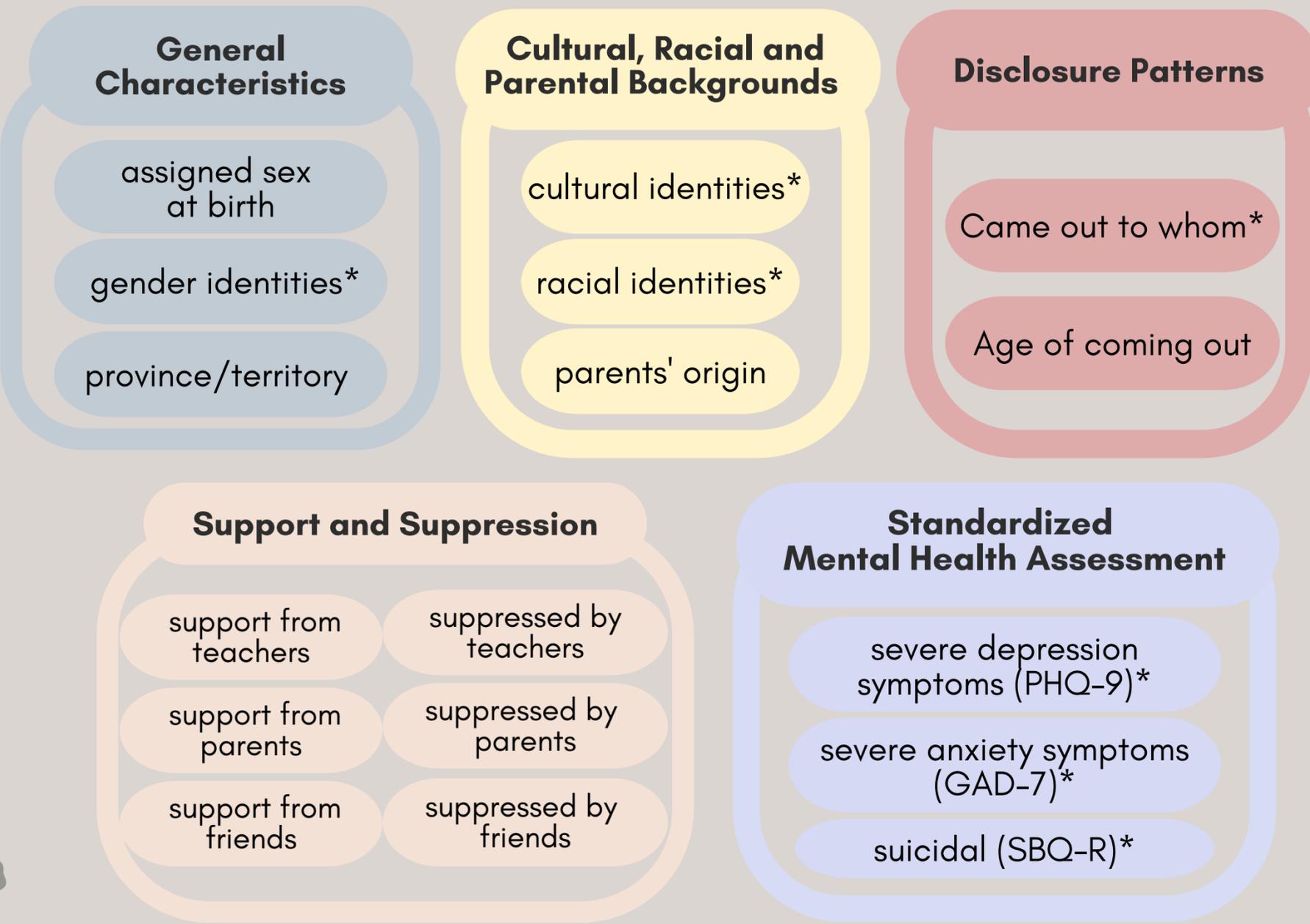


Descriptive Analysis

- 1. Pearson's chi-squared test (Pearson, 1900)
- 2. Fisher's exact test (Connelly, 2016)
- 3. Wilcoxon rank sum test (Wilcoxon, 1946)
- Sensitivity analysis for age 15 (n= 351)



Variables of Interests



General Characteristics

- assigned sex at birth
- gender identities*
- province/territory

Cultural, Racial and Parental Backgrounds

- cultural identities*
- racial identities*
- parents' origin

Disclosure Patterns

- Came out to whom*
- Age of coming out

Support and Suppression

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| support from teachers | suppressed by teachers |
| support from parents | suppressed by parents |
| support from friends | suppressed by friends |

Standardized Mental Health Assessment

- severe depression symptoms (PHQ-9)*
- severe anxiety symptoms (GAD-7)*
- suicidal (SBQ-R)*

Significant difference was observed!



THE PROFILE OF Teens Coming Out to teachers exclusively but not their parents

✓ General Characteristics

assigned sex at birth: More **females**

gender identities*:
More **non-binary, genderfluid & uncertain**

✓ Support and Suppression

Less support from parents

✓ Cultural, Racial and Parental Backgrounds

cultural identities*: More **African, SE Asian, Middle Eastern**

racial identities*: More **Black, Asian & others**

parents' origin: More born **outside Canada**

✓ Disclosure Patterns

came out to whom*:
Less to Teamates and healthcare provider

Later age of coming out

Responding to Bill 137 --- with evidence

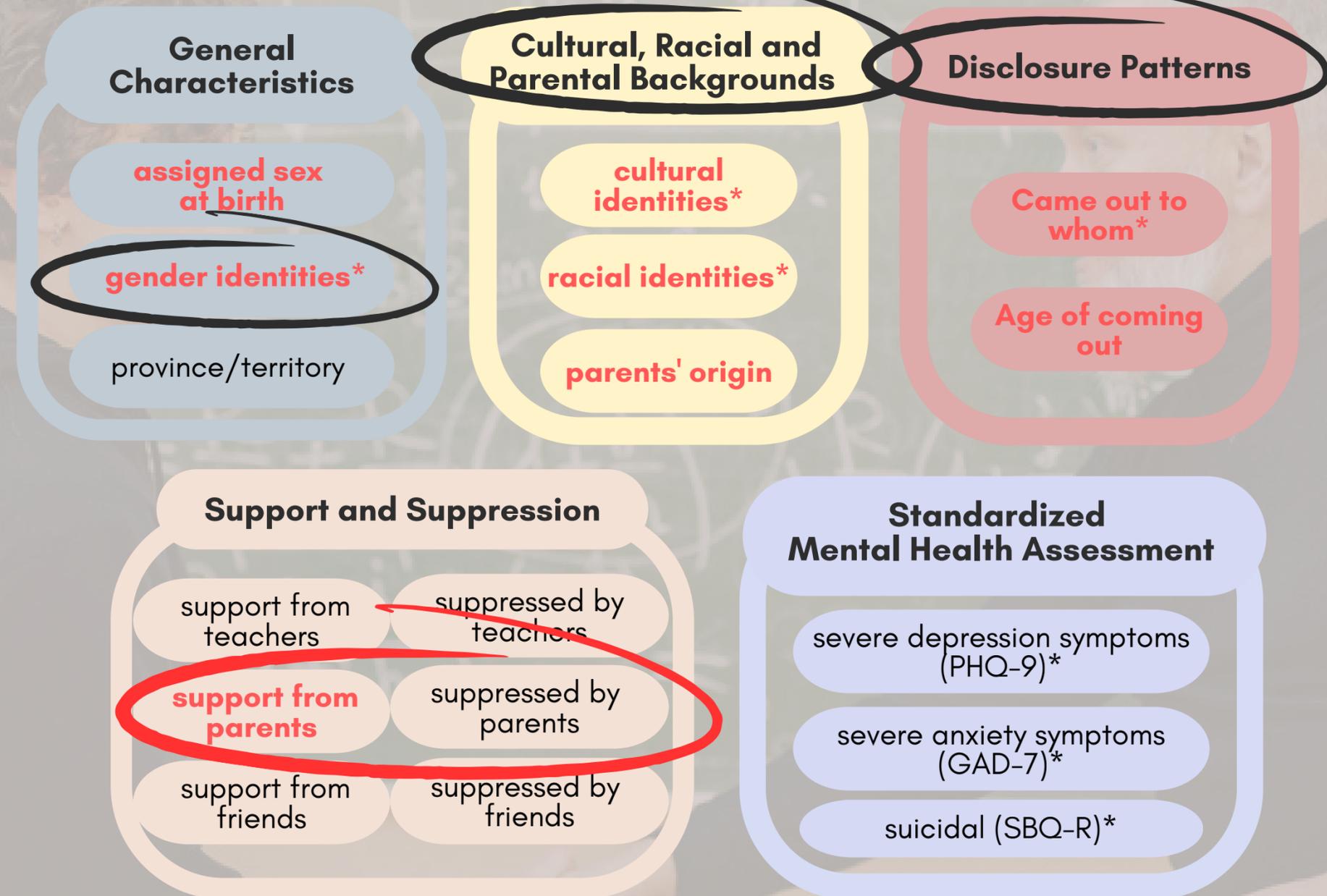


Sask. government passes Parents' Bill of Rights | CBC News

The Saskatchewan government passed Bill 137 Friday, which requires parental consent before a child under 16 can use a different gender-related name or pronoun at school.



Hunter, A. (2023, October 20). Sask. government passes parents' bill of rights CBCnews. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatchewan/sask-parental-rights-law-1.7002088>



Queer Teens need **independent support systems**, especially when one fails!

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