

## Intersex Day of Solidarity

November 19, 2018

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Intersex Day of Solidarity, also known as Intersex Day of Remembrance, took place on 8 November. The day marks the birthday of Herculine Barbin, a French intersex person whose memoirs were later published by the philosopher Michel Foucault, along with contemporary texts and a later fictionalised account.

Intersex people are born with atypical, physical sex characteristics, which may include hormonal, anatomical and genetic differences. “Intersex” is an umbrella term that may include people with a variety of differences that do not fit typical binary notions of male or female bodies.

Unfortunately, intersex people face stigmatisation and discrimination by society from birth, particularly when an intersex variation is visible. In some countries being intersex is perceived as a curse on the family and can result in infanticide and abandonment of intersex children.

Together with Intersex Awareness Day (26 October), Intersex Day of Solidarity, aims to raise awareness of the human rights issues faced by intersex people and attempts to help end shame, secrecy and unwanted genital cosmetic surgeries to intersex children.

While it is illegal to discriminate against a person who is intersex, there are no national guidelines or legislation on the management of people born with variations in sex characteristics in Australia specifically in the context of non-consensual medical interventions.

Australian Human Rights Commissioner Edward Santow has acknowledged the need to “do more in regards to protecting the human rights of people with intersex variations in Australia”.

To “do more” and show solidarity with intersex people, you could:

- learn more about intersex variations and the human rights of intersex people
- promote the visibility of intersex people by having informed conversations with others about the topic
- share insightful information with your networks on social media.

