

# Queer & Trans Parents create Educational Cards to Celebrate Gender Diversity



While awareness around gender diversity has been increasing, two parents from the LGBTQ community saw that gender stereotypes and assumptions still dominate curriculum and educational materials for young children. Maya and Matthew, partners and co-founders of the independent publishing house, Reflection Press, began developing their gender-inclusive educational card deck, *Playing with Pronouns*, last year. The creative duo launched a Kickstarter this month to raise the funds to print their first 250+ decks and have them available for the start of the new school year this Fall.

*“When our kid turned about 4 years old the gender policing on the playground amplified and there were few materials to counter rigid gender stereotypes. The *Playing with Pronouns* game cards were born out of necessity, we needed ways to foster inclusion and respect that were fun and could easily expand into our everyday lives.”*

– Maya & Matthew, co-creators of gender-inclusive educational tools

***Playing with Pronouns*** is an educational card deck for young children designed to expand gender while learning and playing games. It is geared toward ages 4-9 but is versatile and adaptable for other ages and useful for adults wanting to increase their competency around gender diversity.

The game cards are based on the children's books Maya and Matthew wrote together, *They She He Me: Free to Be* and *They, She, He easy as ABC* both published through their independent press. The two see this card deck as a first step in a long line of related educational materials that tie into Maya's Gender Wheel curriculum which provides a holistic and nature-based perspective on gender rooted in social justice.

*"With the standard educational materials available, it was hard to focus on simply learning the ABCs with our kid when simultaneously we had to dismantle stereotypes and counteract a background of invisibility. The Playing with Pronouns card deck and related educational tools and books give us the ability to relax, belong, and focus on the joys of learning," says Maya and Matthew.*

As part of the LGBTQI2S+ community, both say they are deeply committed to creating materials that pass on the beauty and resilience of their community to children. Maya is an award-winning queer Chicana author, artist and progressive educator who has written & illustrated numerous children's books including *Call Me Tree* which is known for not including any gender-specific pronouns. Her work addresses systemic inequity in relation to race, ethnicity, sexism and cissexism using children's books as radical agents of change. Matthew's own trans experience and having been raised by gay dads gives him keen insight into how a lack of inclusion can impact a child's ability and desire to learn and participate in the classroom and other educational settings.

Maya and Matthew provide workshops in the San Francisco Bay Area and across the US that share Maya's Gender Wheel curriculum. The curriculum provides hands-on tools to explore gender in holistic, nature-based ways and places their children's books and educational materials in a larger multidisciplinary context to show how these tools can be used to make change in the classroom and at home.

Learn more about the *Playing with Pronouns* Kickstarter Campaign (<http://kck.st/2EVg8ON>).

View more about The Gender Wheel & related Curriculum ([www.genderwheel.com](http://www.genderwheel.com))



---

**About:** Maya Gonzalez and Matthew SG are the founders of Reflection Press, a queer and trans owned independent press based in San Francisco. Parents and partners, their work uses holistic, nature-based and anti-oppression frameworks to create books and materials that support a strong sense of individuality along with a community model of real inclusion. [www.reflectionpress.com](http://www.reflectionpress.com) and [www.genderwheel.com](http://www.genderwheel.com)