



THE PARENT GUIDE:

FIVE KEYS TO NAVIGATING WHEN YOUR KID COMES OUT AS TRANS OR NON-BINARY



IF YOUR KID JUST CAME OUT TO YOU, HERE ARE 5 SIMPLE BUT POWERFUL THINGS YOU CAN DO TO LOVINGLY HANDLE THE SITUATION

When your child comes out to you as trans, non-binary, or in some way identifying as different than their assigned sex at birth, or you've noticed signs that gender could be an issue for them, you may find yourself feeling confused, not sure if this is the right path for them, and understandably concerned about their wellbeing. We want you to know you are not alone! These are very common reactions.

If you've grabbed this guide, you're likely wondering the best way to address this with your child. Well, we have some answers for you. These 5 approaches are key to supporting your child and you, regardless of where your child's gender lands. They will support your child's overall gender health and improve your relationship with them.

One thing is for sure, it's important to find responsible and accurate sources of information so you can make the best decisions for your family. Here are some expert recommendations for those initial and very important conversations with your kid.

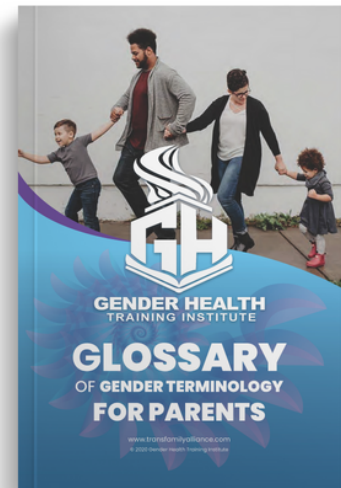


1

Familiarize Yourself with the Correct Terminology and Pronouns

One of the most important ways you can meet and support your child is understanding the terminology and learning to communicate with your kid in a respectful and affirming manner. Language is very important when it comes to gender identity, as it basically conveys how you see a person.

Using proper pronouns to address your kid is a respectful way of saying “I see you”. The easiest way is to simply ask what name and pronouns they want you to use. If they request a different name or pronouns, use them. This will take practice and you’ll likely mess it up. Don’t beat yourself up or talk about how hard this is with your kid, just apologize quickly and correct yourself. Also, don’t worry; using your kid’s requested name and pronouns doesn’t send them down a path of no return, and it’s one of the safest ways to nurture your child as they explore their gender.



Other concepts like gender identity, gender expression, biological sex, and sexual orientation are also important terms to understand and how your kid relates to these will give you a much clearer picture of what they are experiencing. If you want to dive deeper into terminology, we’ve got a glossary we made just for you. [\[DOWNLOAD HERE\]](#)

2

Support and Validate your Kid’s Experience

It all starts by simply using active listening skills and reflecting your kid’s experience in an affirming manner. Most gender diverse people take a long time dealing with their feelings before they tell anyone and this is likely true for your child as well. If your kid feels that you respect and see them, even if you don’t fully understand, it can significantly reduce any anxiety they may experience.

Validating their experience doesn't mean you agree with them or where they want to go, it just lets them know that you are understanding or trying to understand their experience and help them make the best decision. It also offers a beautiful mirror for them and lets them know you see them. The power of this simple action will have a profound positive psychological and resilience building impact on your kid.

3

Educate Yourself in the Basic Constructs of Gender from Accurate and Reliable Sources

In those first moments when you found out that your kid may identify as a different gender than they were assigned at birth, many questions arise. What most of us know about transgender people is usually based on what we picked up from TV, movies, social media, and the opinions of others in our social circle. Sadly, most of the information we received was likely outdated, biased, and misinformed.

There is no doubt that we live in a world where fear captures us and most information out there has been meant to instill fear. As such, the little bit of information you may have received can often lead to even more worry and confusion.

The good news is that science (quality studies) can dispel many myths and beliefs about gender that still prevail in society. This unlearning/relearning process is as challenging as it's refreshing, because having the right information will provide you with clarity and tools to help your kid, your family, and yourself. If all of this sounds confusing, you might check out a beginning workshop like the **Gender 101 Workshop for Parents** or the **Unpacking Gender Workshop for Parents** to get the ball rolling.



4

Recognize the Significance of Your Role in Your Kid's Gender Health

Gender identity is an internal experience that every person has, even if that experience is not identifying with it at all. While we may take some time to understand and explore our gender, it is not an experience that can be taught or influenced by outside sources. That means that your kid is the expert when it comes to their identity and it's not something you have the power to change.

While all the data we have currently shows that neither you nor any therapy out there can change your kid's internal sense of self as a gendered being, the data on parental acceptance and support shows that you do have a lot of control over their gender health. Trying to control your kid's gender identity by managing their gender expression only leads to negative mental and physical health outcomes, yet your support and acceptance is the number one factor in your kid's overall well-being.

Every move toward accepting your child, even if you don't understand it, works to counter the minority stress they will experience and builds incredible resilience for you and your child. You heard that right, you're the most important factor in your kid's physical and emotional wellbeing, as well as their educational success!

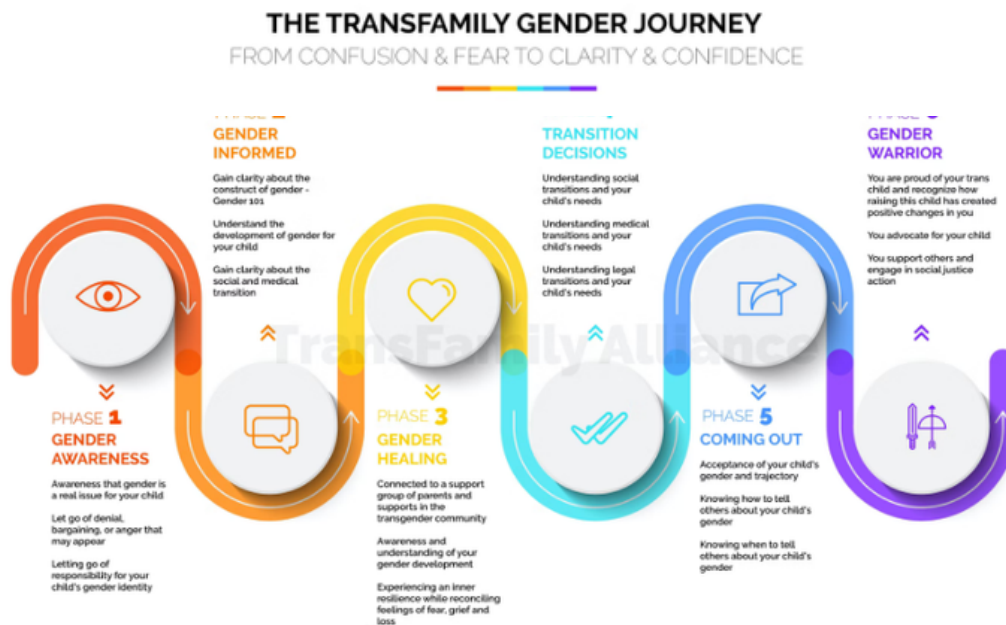


5

Practice Self-Care So You Can Better Care For Your Kid

If you're facing this situation and it's new to you, it's common for you to want the situation to be different and deny it by thinking or hoping this is just a phase. You may feel that somehow you're losing a version of your kid that you love and you're no doubt worrying about their future.

If you haven't realized it yet, it's not just your kid experiencing this Gender Journey, but it's now your family's Journey too. Of course, you're likely in a different phase of the journey than your kid. This is not an easy path, especially in the current political landscape. Most parents find this journey, especially in the beginning, to be a bit of a roller coaster and it's imperative that you put your own mask on first. Take the time to acknowledge the feelings that may arise. If you're finding it all too overwhelming it's often helpful to find a therapist who is gender affirming to help you unpack your own experiences. One of the best things you can do is seek the support of a safe and organized community of parents also on this path so you don't have to navigate this journey alone.



We at the TransFamily Alliance would love for you to join us and let us support you and your family on your journey.

The TransFamily Alliance is a private support community, education, and resource hub for parents that is dedicated to helping you go from confusion, doubt and fear to clarity and confidence raising and supporting a happy, healthy, well-adjusted transgender, non-binary or gender expansive kid.

Come check us out at <https://www.transfamilyalliance.com/membership/> and explore our website for extra resources, articles, and workshops.