

Brief Guidance for Parents



SUPPORTING GENDER-DIVERGENT CHILDREN AND THEIR PARENTS

This brief guidance is aimed at parents of a gender-divergent kids. In a world which pushes more and more to categorize and classify, we want to create space for a wider understanding of gender non-conforming individuals.

COMMUNICATION

When seeking to support the child, perhaps the most important thing you can do is to [try to improve](#) effective communication within the family dynamic. This includes active listening, whereby parents can engage fully in a positive and attentive approach to listening deeply while the child speaks.

It can be helpful to paraphrase and reflect back what your child is saying to you, perhaps with questions such as, “So if I’m hearing you right, you’re saying you are trans and you have always been trans?” Or, “I might have this wrong, so correct me if I do, but are you saying that you want to undergo full medicalization as soon as possible?” It is more helpful to withhold judgment and advice, and instead focus on listening carefully to exactly what your child is trying to communicate. Sometimes our words aren’t an accurate representation of our feelings; parents need to be mindful of this while their child is speaking.

Listening carefully and without judgement is very difficult, especially if the words spoken are shocking – and especially if you, the parent, know a good deal more (or a good deal less) about this subject than your child. However, there is a time for listening and a time for speaking: in this context, timing is ultra-important. If your child is telling you something that feels very important and meaningful to them that communicates in some metaphorical manner how they view themselves and who they are, it is incredibly crushing if this gets dismissed or waved away. It is much more valuable if parents can show they are very focused on what the child is saying at this crucial time.

Keep communication paths open: this is often a key way for your child to reach out to you. If your child tends to confide in you when you are in the car, or late at night when you visit them in their room, or even through online messaging, make sure that you are sensitive to this.

If you can manage to keep the lines of communication open, you will one day have the opportunity to say your piece. At first, however, it is more helpful to understand fully what precisely is going on for your child. Gentle, compassionate curiosity allows the child to trust that they can speak with you about this subject. Some parents feel utterly silenced by their child, and the subject of gender has become “the elephant in the room” that nobody dares mention. Similarly, it is often instinctive for adolescents to silence discussion about sexual matters. If the flavor of such silencing about gender is similar to that of sex, this might indicate that there is some level of sexual repression driving their focus on gender.

It can be important that you don’t overwhelm your child with advice or information when the your child is feeling vulnerable and trying to find themselves. It can sometimes be more helpful to ‘show’ you care rather than ‘tell’.

AUTHENTICITY

Many adolescents use a prepared script when they come out as trans; this can give the impression that they have a shallow understanding of their personality, or even come off as altogether fake. However, the moment of coming out feels like a deeply important event to the adolescent. Patronising fakery is not the appropriate response to your child’s anguished cry from the wilds.

We recommend parents speak from the heart, and give a genuine but muted response, asking for time so they can learn more. For example, you might say, “I can hear that this is deadly serious for you, but I feel out of my depth, so I’m just going to focus on trying to understand rather than trying to figure out what I think just yet.”

DIFFERENT BELIEFS

Some people believe in the concept of gender identity theory. This theory suggests that everyone has a gender within them, akin to a soul: this gender might be male, female, non-binary or perhaps something else. Gender identity theory also argues that some people’s bodies do not match their sense of gender identity. People who believe in this theory often believe that medical transition (taking hormones and even undergoing surgery) is the best way to alleviate gender-related distress.

Other people believe in a more developmental approach. This focuses on the idea that we are born within our bodies, with reproductive organs that produce hormones such as estrogen and testosterone that combine with other aspects of our psyche to shape our behavior. According to this approach, incongruent feelings around gender can be explained by the concept of gender dysphoria. Gender dysphoria is a condition which develops as a result of the distress a person experiences when they are uncomfortable with aspects of their sense of self and the gender roles they perceive society expects from them. People who believe in the developmental model argue that medical transition may or may not relieve this distress, and so a holistic approach can be more appropriate for a young person who is yet to become a fully-functioning adult.

It is not helpful to engage in heavy politicized discussions about whether transwomen are women, or other similar issues. This can lead to further conflict in the family during an already fraught time. Instead, we recommend that you focus on your personal understanding of your child, and find areas where you might agree.

LANGUAGE AND TERMINOLOGY

It is important that parents take the time to learn the fast-changing language, terminology and acronyms, so that these do not become superficial obstacles to communicating with your child during this difficult period. Learning the lingo allows you to keep up with – or even overtake – your child. Giving the child the position of being ‘the expert on trans’ is not helpful; it is more valuable if the parents are the experts on this complex and under-researched subject.

The framing of language is important to help your child gain an understanding of themselves and the world. Queer Theory seeks to subvert power dynamics through changing – ‘queering’ – our language. Your child might become fixated upon language, and it is helpful for parents not to allow themselves to become equally fixated. This is very difficult, and you might need some further support with this.

KNOW YOUR STUFF

Parents need to fully inform themselves about this subject. Some parents dash off and read everything they can about the subject; others might prefer to bury their heads in the sand. Try to strike a good balance.

If the child is led to believe that they are the expert, they will believe they can lead the parents into agreeing with everything they 'know'. Teenagers often believe they know more than they do, and it is not helpful to allow them to live in a fool's paradise. This is why parents need to read the limited evidence that is available. Here are some examples of topics you can inform yourself on:

- [The reality of puberty blockers](#)
- [The role of the school](#)
- The risk of suicide (see section below)

To support your child properly and appropriately, you should be able to provide them with the highest quality of evidence. Equally importantly, be aware that there is a good deal more low-quality, biased evidence; this poses a serious challenge to children's ability to have an informed viewpoint, especially when much of their content is found online and relies upon [poor quality evidence and online surveys](#).

We believe that this new phenomenon of large numbers of young people questioning their gender is best described as '[Rapid Onset Gender Dysphoria](#)'. This description, coined in 2018 by American public health researcher Lisa Littman, provides what we believe is the best account of the new cohort of gender-questioning adolescents: while it is not a diagnosis, this description factors in the strong role of social influence among these children, as well as the significant levels of comorbidities (co-occurring conditions and diagnoses). While the term is not universally accepted, the research upon which it is based has stood the test of substantial academic scrutiny.

We recommend you choose further content from [our online resources section](#) to help you gain a wider perspective on this issue.

Get all the facts
and stats you need
at our sister site,
statsforgender.org.

Click [here](#) to
get started!



COMORBIDITIES

The development of transgender identities is linked with a variety of other conditions and issues, and it's important that you understand how these connections may influence your child's behavior. In particular, you should be aware of the links with:

- Certain neurological conditions such as ASD, ADHD and OCD (see [here](#))
- Mental health issues such as psychosis and depression (see [here](#) and [here](#))
- Disorders such as psychopathology, mood disorders, and anxiety disorders (see [here](#) and [here](#))

For a general overview of the role of comorbidities, you may wish to read [this paper](#) by Dr. Lisa Littman, which investigates many of the topics above, along with the role of eating disorders, trauma, bullying and self-harm.

SUICIDE AND SUICIDALITY

While every suicide is a tragedy and suicidality must be cautiously handled, the risk of suicide is often overstated in the context of gender dysphoria.

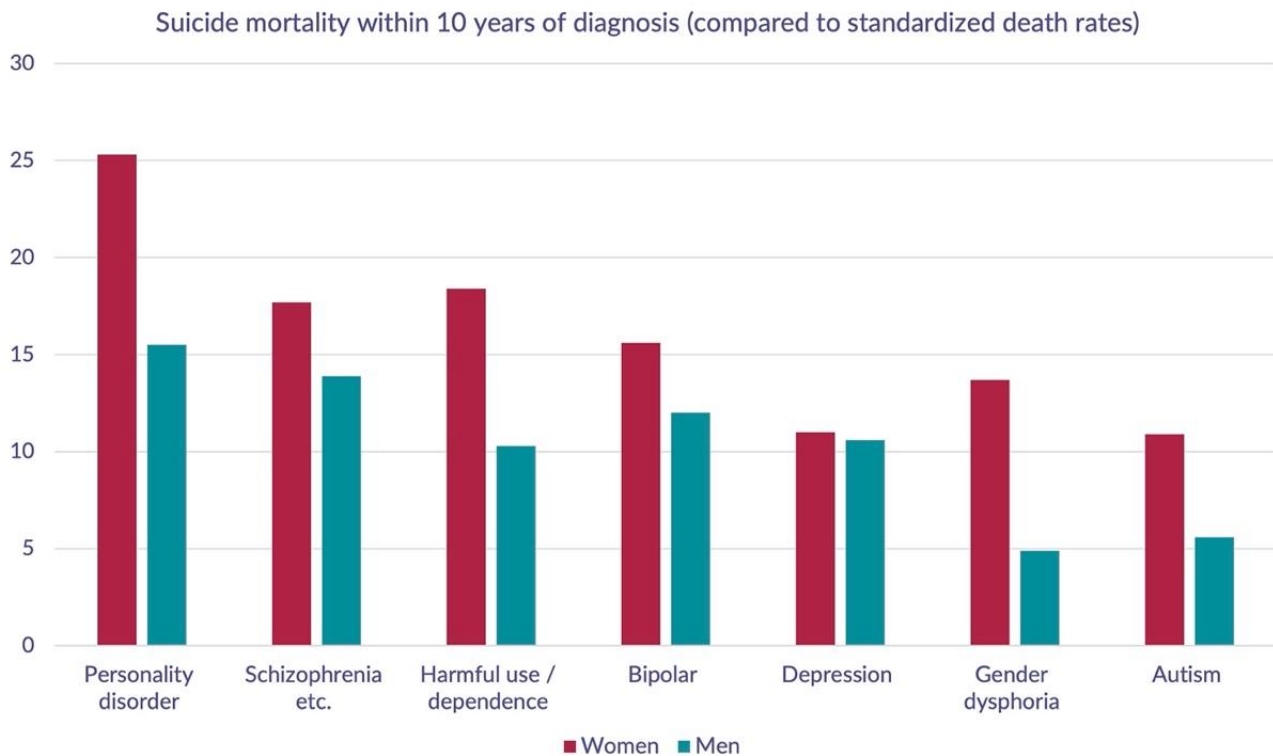
As the Gender Identity Development Service at the UK's largest gender clinic [puts it](#), "suicide is extremely rare." This sentiment is echoed by the Chair of Children and Adolescents at WPATH:



As far as I know there are no studies that say that if we don't start these kids immediately on hormones when they say they want them that they are going to commit suicide. So that is misguided...in terms of needing to intervene medically to prevent suicide and doing it quickly, I know of no studies that have shown that.

— Dr. Laura Edwards-Leeper, Chair of Children and Adolescents at the World Professional Association for Transgender Health

The best quality evidence on suicide comes from a [Swedish Governmental Authority report](#), which places it at 0.6% – lower than many mental health conditions and/or other challenges:



Find out more about suicidality [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#), and via [Stats For Gender](#).

THE GROWTH OF TRANSGENDER IDENTITIES

Gender is a highly contentious field, and the numbers of young people questioning their gender have skyrocketed, with a 2000% rise in the number of young people questioning their gender [observed](#) in many countries.

By contrast, until a few years ago, [roughly 1 in 10,000 males and 1 in 30,000 females experienced gender dysphoria](#). As this is such a new field, there is a serious lack of high quality research. Unfortunately, much of the available research relies upon [poor-quality evidence and online surveys](#). The lack of solid, unbiased evidence poses a serious challenge to everyone's ability to have an informed viewpoint. Because of this, we recommend you learn to penetrate the content so you can determine whether it is reliable, high-quality data.

Many people presume that "trans is the new gay" without giving much more effort into understanding what might be going on. Trans is not the new gay: there are many differences between sexual orientation and gender identity. For example, being gay does not require participation from friends and families; it does not require a change of speech with regards to names and pronouns; and it does not need lifelong medical intervention that carries a heavy burden on the body. Medical transition leads to [infertility](#), [sexual impairment](#), and [significant health complications](#). Such serious consequences suggest that concerned adults assure that any permanent decisions are made with due care and consideration.

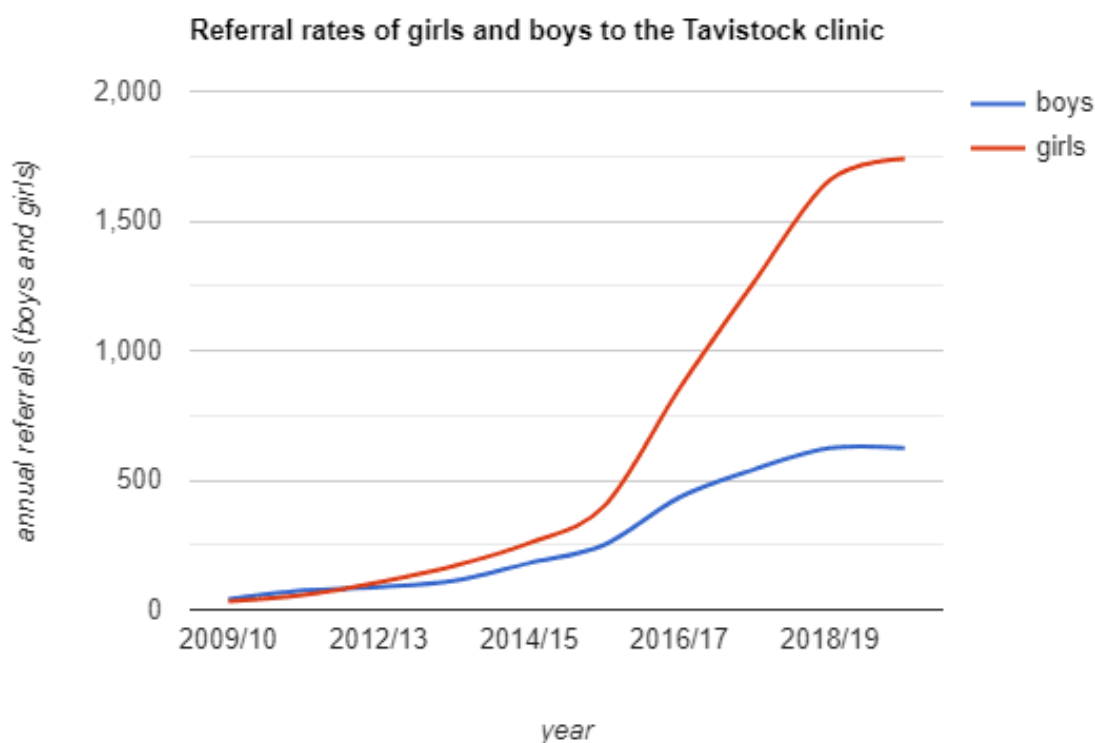
THE ONLINE WORLD

We advise you to be aware of online influences on today's children. Many young people have been profoundly impacted by an online community that doesn't know them in real life: while this may look superficially as though they have acquired an extensive education in Queer Theory and Gender Identity Theory, the reality can be far more pernicious.

While a YouTube influencer may feel like an innocuous or even positive presence, such influence can often be detrimental, encouraging young people to seek short-term solutions for complex problems which deserve a more thoughtful analysis. Undue peer influence, pornography and inappropriate sexual relationships can often go unnoticed when heavy internet use is a feature of a young person's life. As Bayswater Support Group advise: [The internet isn't your family's friend](#).

Parental alienation is a serious issue: children may quickly develop a perception of their parents as controlling, unsupportive, bigoted or even hateful. Even though this may be difficult to navigate, it is imperative that friends and relatives recognize that there are many more underlying complexities to transgender identification than meet the eye. It is accepted within the mental health field that, if at all possible, the parent-child bond should be supported and protected.

This is the first generation of kids to grow up with smart phones in their pockets. When we look at the extraordinary rise in the numbers, such as the data below from the UK'S GIDS, we can easily see how online influences began to take hold in a serious manner:



It is worth noting that WPATH's (World Professional Association for Transgender Health) Standards of Care were published in 2012 – the very same year that the impact of the combination of high speed Wi-Fi, smart phones and social media platforms began to accelerate wildly, some time before a more sophisticated analysis of these phenomena arose.

DIGITAL HYGIENE

It is important to instill some good digital hygiene in the household. Just as we don't drink vodka at 8am in the morning, or live off snacks all day, we need to have certain rules for our online behavior. This could mean no tech is allowed in the bedroom, or that no tech is allowed in the kitchen, or perhaps all technology gets shut down at 9pm for children and at midnight for adults.


Parents will need to use parental controls such as [Circle](#), [Apple Parental Controls](#), [Microsoft Family Features](#), and [Parental Control Software Review](#).

You will also need to educate your child about the echo chamber that arises online. Films such as [The Social Dilemma](#) will help you and your child understand how algorithms effect content. We advise you not to underestimate the impact of YouTube, anime and other internet communications on your child's sense of wellbeing.

Some of your child's utterances may seem ridiculous; it can often feel like your child has had some sort of personality transplant. This is why it is important that you get to know the world in which your child is living. What are they reading? Who are their main influences? Who are they watching on YouTube? Who do they follow on DeviantArt? What are their interactions on Reddit, Tumblr and Discord? And [how could these factors be shaping their behavior](#)? You will understand your child's challenges more fully if you can examine their influencing environment. Also, your child is likely to benefit from stricter rules around their online behavior.

SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD

While the child may seek to narrow their world, it is the parent's role to help the child expand their world. It is vital that you help your child reduce the time they spend online ruminating on their gender identity; to do this, parents should model good digital hygiene and move beyond electronic pastimes. This might mean spending money on new hobbies, activities, and interesting holidays that teach your child to learn how to enjoy and contemplate a world that moves beyond gender distress.



**Out beyond ideas
of wrong-doing
and right-doing,
there is a field.
I'll meet you there.**

— Rumi

It is likely that your child is thinking deeply about the world and how it works. You can join them on this journey by speaking about politics (not gender politics); about music; films; comedy. You might learn about philosophy and psychology so that you can help your child make sense of the world.

Many gender-divergent young people are cerebral: they live in their minds, and are disconnected from their bodies. Activities such as horse-riding, mountaineering, and sailing bring focus to what our bodies *can do*, rather than to how they look or feel, and can provide psychic relief your gender-distressed child.

There is a difference between enabling and supporting: please make sure that you are sensitive to this difference. As a rule of thumb, enabling means that you are helping a person to live in a self-destructive manner, while supporting means you are helping a person to live a healthy life.

Just as your child will benefit from expanding their world, they will also benefit from understanding that everyone in the world is equally important. Your child's demands or feelings are no more important than anybody else's in the household. It is very easy for parents and the gender-divergent child to become completely consumed by gender; conversely, siblings, friends, and family can feel disaffected and alienated by it all. Younger siblings can feel bewildered; older siblings can feel resentful.

It is more helpful for the gender-divergent child to realize that they are but one member of the family, and their needs should not take precedence over other people's needs. This approach contextualizes the situation for the young person and leads to a better understanding of life.

THERAPY

Parents often feel overwhelmed by the new language, the new persona, and the newly formed values and politics, and desperately seek help from professionals as fast as they can. However, it is arguably more effective to slow down, lean in with love and boundaries, and seek better communication within the family dynamics, rather than immediately externalizing the problem and thereby allowing further distances to grow between you. While it is appropriate to get therapeutic support when necessary, [bad therapy is more harmful than no therapy](#), and there is a [risk of negative outcomes](#). As such, you should [take the time to find a therapist who is a good fit for your child](#). We also recommend that parents interview prospective therapists and remain involved in their child's therapeutic progress.

We have serious concerns about affirmation-only therapy, which we believe forecloses other options for the therapeutic client. While it is important to affirm the depth of the young person's feelings, affirmation can stray into confirmation unless the therapist retains the ability to explore the whole picture.

Affirmative-only therapists use a model which prevents them from taking a depth-perspective of the young person's feelings, which risks glossing over other factors which may be causing them to question their gender identity. We strongly believe that therapists' hands should not be tied in this way.

Moving from one therapist to the next can also be harmful for a child, as they can begin to form the view that they are a special case who needs special treatment with an expert. This won't help your child, and may create further long-term challenges. As always, it is more beneficial to proceed slowly, with caution and forethought.

Although this is not the time to engage in self-blame, it can be helpful to consider underlying issues when a child develops gender identity issues. There are often unresolved challenges within the parent-child dynamic that can prevent either the parent or child – or both – from healing. This is why family therapy is often more appropriate than individual therapy in this context.

SCHOOLS

We recommend that you fully inform yourself about your child's school ethos and their guidelines in the context of supporting vulnerable children and their families. If appropriate, contact your school and inform them that your child is vulnerable, is already within a therapeutic process, and will not benefit from uninformed external influences at this critical juncture. Consider sending your school the [Genspect School Guidance](#) and asking to meet with the relevant staff about your child's situation. You might need to actively advocate for your child: [Genspect can help with you this](#).

It is helpful to remember that schools don't have an agenda to push. They are mostly shaped by what is considered best practice guidelines. You can make sure that schools have the most appropriate guidance in this new and rapidly changing field.

Teachers want the best for the children in their care. However, many educational facilities presume that a narrow-minded, gender affirmative approach is the only option when a person identifies as transgender. This isn't true, and it may fall to you to inform the school that other, more progressive approaches exist. These other approaches suggest that, while we should certainly affirm the child's depth of emotion and the validity of their experiences, concerned adults are under no obligation to confirm every thought or belief the child might hold at a particular moment.

It can be helpful to follow up each meeting with a summarizing email, and a request to meet again in a month or two, depending on the context, to re-evaluate the situation. It is recommended that parents keep in regular contact with the school: one very long email is not nearly as effective as a few short ones. Sometimes, if the school is dismissing your concerns, you might have to become a "polite nuisance" to ensure that your child's needs are appropriately met.

If your child's school has socially transitioned your child, we recommend that you seek further support – from Genspect or elsewhere – to ensure that the school learns to acknowledge the primary importance of liaising with the parents when a student is vulnerable. You may need to explain to the school that your child is in the midst of identity formation and this is a normal developmental task of adolescence: it is not appropriate to foreclose other options by fixing on one landing place when further transformation might yet take place.

As [Bernadette Wren pointed out](#):



Schools might wait for the parents to approach them before changing things like names in the register, uniforms, pronouns, toilets, sports. If a school just gets a whisper of a child who may be querying their gender and within minutes they are doing everything to make sure that child is regarded as a member of the opposite sex right from the word go — that may not be the best for that child.

— Bernadette Wren, Consultant Clinical Psychologist at the Gender Identity Developmental Service in London

SOCIAL TRANSITION

Social transition is [a powerful psychological intervention that should not be undertaken without clinical supervision](#). It typically involves a change of name and pronouns, accompanied by the adoption of hairstyles and clothes stereotypically associated with the style of the desired gender.

Girls may wish to wear a binder, to flatten their breasts; boys may wish to “tuck”, reducing the apparent size of their genitalia. However, there are [negative health effects](#) to consider:

- [Binders](#) cause significant problems: overuse can lead to [serious physical complaints](#), including [effects on lung function](#). A sports vest or sports bra can be worn without incurring these risks.
- Equally, [genital “tucking” can be associated with cryptozoospermia](#) and [testicular torsion](#).

Your child might wage a campaign to socially transition. Your child might also become determined to get an appointment at a gender identity clinic. Sometimes, this is a means to ensure they can medically transition; other times, this is to consolidate within their own mind that they are “really transgender”. Although this might seem like the perfect solution for the young person, it is not necessarily the case. This is why a fully-informed perspective is so important.

NAMES AND PRONOUNS

We recommend separating decisions about names and pronouns: these are not the same issue and [need distinct analysis](#).

Young people have adopted nicknames for generations; this can be a valuable compromise at a critical point in the relationship. It may also serve to help the adolescent who wishes to individuate from their parents. On the other hand, it can work to solidify an identity that is still in formation. While a nickname may not feel like a big deal for some, it can feel like a massive step for others: we urge parents to honor their own feelings in this regard. If a nickname feels necessary, we recommend favoring a gender neutral nickname, so as to allow the young person to continue to explore their identity without foreclosing future options.

Although your child might insist on naming themselves, parents have always named their children, and so should have some say in the matter. Parents can choose to use whatever nickname they prefer – even if the child’s friends are calling them some other name – as parents have more say on this matter than anybody else. None of this needs to be written in stone; fluidity and flexibility are more helpful than intransigence or rigidity.



There is no evidence in the literature about the impact of changing our pronouns: this is an entirely new concept and it has unknown consequences on young people's psyches. We do not recommend changing pronouns, especially if this might create a feeling of inauthenticity in your relationship with the young person. When a person is vulnerable, we should try to make sure we can remain authentic and seek to remove any superficial obstacles in our relations. We recommend parents maintain their authority while considering any compromises they might choose to make: it is the parents' job to set the pace and to make the significant decisions. As with all decisions that might have far-reaching consequences, we recommend that parents should remain 'neutrally positive' as they try to weigh up the pros and cons of any decision.

MEDICAL TRANSITION

Many parents are very concerned about foreclosing their child's options for the future: this is why they would rather take the time to weigh up the advantages and disadvantages pertaining to the medicalization of an individual's identity. As the Jungian analyst Lisa Marchiano says, each parent is the world expert on their own child. This is the time to own your authority, to honor your feelings, and to take your time to evaluate each decision you choose to make.

Parents can find it helpful to understand that the desire to medically transition can feel like the most important solution for your child, and one that will resolve all their distress. They might be working through a past trauma, or simply figuring out their identity; they might have repressed their sexuality and [be experiencing intense internalized homophobia](#).

Medical transition leads to [infertility](#), [sexual impairment](#), and [significant health complications](#). These serious consequences suggest that the concerned adults should make sure that any permanent decisions are taken with due care and consideration.

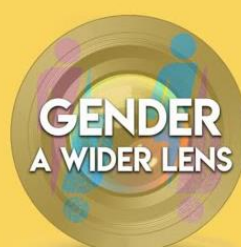
There are growing numbers of people detransitioning. However, there is still no research that yields an estimate of the rate and timing of desistance from a trans identity among older teens and adults. [A recent study](#) demonstrates that the causes of gender distress may only become clear with the benefit of hindsight: factors such as trauma and unmetabolized grief may have profound effects on young minds.

BOUNDARIES

Take your time to figure out your boundaries: this is a very complex and fast-changing field with many variables. We urge that parents don't attempt to move at a fast pace. During uncertain times, it is more valuable for the adults to proceed with caution rather than respond to young people's demands for speed. The teenage brain is [a brain that is still under construction](#), with low judgement, low impulse control, high emotionality and an excitable reward system that is sensitive to social judgement. Adolescence isn't a good time for wise or reliable decision-making.

Take a wider look at gender, with the **Gender: A Wider Lens** podcast.

Click **here** to listen.



It is important for parents to know that a big emotion does not need to be met with a big emotion – and a big emotion does not necessarily entail a crisis. There is no one size that fits all: each family needs to figure out their own boundaries within their own context.

Some parents feel more comfortable establishing and perhaps communicating a bottom line; some prefer to remain more circumspect about their approach; and some believe that the highest priority is to maintain a flexible outlook.

CONNECTING WITH YOUR CHILD

Many different conflicts could be taking place within your child. We urge parents to ‘hasten slowly’, giving the child the space and time to work out any inner conflict. A change in gender identity can sometimes manifest as a concrete physical solution to a psychic trauma, leading to a belief that parts of the self can be discarded or left behind. If your child is experiencing gender-related distress, it is likely that they are also experiencing [significant other challenges](#).

Gender-related distress occurs in a context: it is not an encapsulated condition that occurs on its own, and the impact of complex pre-existing family, social, psychological and/or psychiatric conditions needs to be acknowledged and figured into your understanding of your child’s distress. For example, [ASD can weigh heavily on some young people](#), and they might need more time and space to work through their identity issues. As the therapist Sasha Ayad says, “nobody is simply a walking gender identity.” We contain multitudes.

Many young people may be unaware that the medical profession has made mistakes in the past. From electroshock “treatments” purported to “cure” homosexuality and the scandal of lobotomizing patients to the more recent (and [discredited](#)) phenomenon of “multiple personality disorder”, the healthcare industry cannot claim to have an unblemished record. It may help your relationship with a young person to impress upon them the fact that science is a process, not an endpoint – and scientists get things wrong.

Authenticity is very important when a parent wishes to connect with their child. Many parents of young children put on a show of cheerful competence and become comfortable in that role. However, when the child becomes an adolescent, they crave authentic connection: this show of cheerful competence can feel alienating and superficial. Adolescents can spot fakery from a thousand paces.

There is much more value for a parent to say, “I’m not quite sure what to say to this. I’m feeling overwhelmed by many emotions so I won’t say anything. I’ll have a think and come back to you.” This will be far more effective than responding with a falsely positive statement that you don’t actually believe.

Do the best you can
until you know better.
Then when you know
better, do better.

– Maya Angelou



FINDING BALANCE

Try to regain some balance in your life. Gender has become a heightened political issue and it can feel like every day is a new battle – whether within the media or within the home itself. It is essential that parents learn to take a break from gender; join a choir or a walking club, or do anything that can lift your mind beyond gender for a few moments each week. Contact your friends and speak about other things.

Many parents have lost touch with their friends and family, as the lack of understanding has been very difficult to navigate. The loneliness can be overwhelming at times: that's why we encourage you to reach out not only to parents who are in a similar position with a gender-distressed child, but also to other people who will lift your mind, even for a few minutes, out of the distress.

In times of crisis, we can easily neglect other members of the family. Parents might need to consider the impact on other siblings in the household, while others might need to focus on the general feeling within the family. Trans identification can often be a response to mental distress within the person or within the family; it can be valuable to consider this issue, and see if underlying issues (such as problems with communication) should be addressed rather than focusing solely on gender.

Some parents find it helpful to channel their anger towards advocacy and activism. This can be very helpful, but needs to be balanced with some glimpses of pleasure. The joy of a well-made cup of coffee or the feeling of new sheets on the bed might seem like small crumbs, but when you're floundering during one of the most difficult times in your life, you may need to bring moments of pleasure into your day-to-day existence. Music, art, literature, psychology and philosophy may help you come to terms with the difficult challenges that have landed onto your precious family.

GETTING SUPPORT

It's vital that you get some support for yourself. Join Genspect; join a parent support group; join the many platforms for parents on Discord, Facebook and other online spaces.

This is a lonely, difficult, bewildering and disorientating challenge for your family, and parents will need sufficient support to be able to manage this. The layers of complexity within gender-related distress can feel unfathomable; other parents can easily help you navigate to safe waters.

When our children are in mental distress, we parents can feel an overpowering urge to jump in and save them with a solution to the crisis. Yet sometimes the most important thing a parent can do is sit tight, offer kindness, love, understanding and boundaries, and help the child to expand their world. This can be a long and complicated process, and many parents need to prepare for the long game. There might be desistance; there might be relapse; the gender-related distress might move in another direction and then boomerang back with even more intensity. Make sure you take care of yourself so that you can weather these storms.

Written by Stella O'Malley, Psychotherapist and Executive Director of Genspect

Want to find out more?

Just click.



Genspect Training

As part of our mission to improve understanding of sex and gender issues, Genspect offers comprehensive training for schools, colleges and universities.

With sensitivity, compassion and factual information, we cover topics such as gender and gender identity exploration, sexuality and sexual orientation, mental health, bullying, bias, the rights of the child, the role and responsibilities of parents, and the role of the educator and the school community.

To find out more, drop us a line via the email link above.