

A JOURNEY WITHOUT A MAP:

BEING A PARENT
OF A TRANS CHILD



INTRODUCTION

Sara's Group was founded by Sara Taverner as recognition of the fact that parents need support, information, and friendship when a child/young person is questioning their gender. It is often referred to as a journey where the child is in the driving seat with their parents as passengers. Often the trans or gender questioning person knows exactly where their destination is but may be unsure of the route. This publication is designed to aid that journey, to explain, to educate, and hopefully to make the journey smoother.

ASSIGNED SEX? GENDER IDENTITY? GENDER EXPRESSION? SEXUAL ORIENTATION?

What does it all mean?

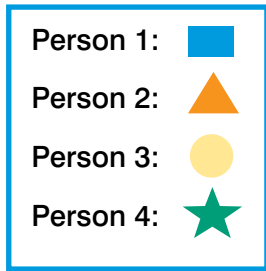
We talk about each of these individual topics as separate from each other and as spectrums. We are assigned a sex at birth: male or female. The majority of the population will find that their gender will correlate with their assigned sex. For example, someone assigned male at birth will identify as a man. We call this cisgender, 'cis' meaning 'same'.

A better way to look at assigned sex and gender is that the word 'sex', refers to the primary sex characteristics of a human body, i.e. the genitals, and that gender can be understood as a person's internal sense of self (whether they feel like a man, woman, both, neither). A person's gender is assigned to them at birth in accordance to what their physical sex characteristics are as perceived by the doctor. This is poignant for trans people particularly because the first words that they may hear are most likely 'it's a boy' or 'it's a girl' and this may not be the case.

Gender is best described as being a sliding scale, rather like a colour spectrum, with woman at one end and man at the other. For transgender people, their gender does not match with their assigned sex and so they may experience their gender in a completely different area to their assigned sex.

Gender expression, is again different, with its own spectrum. Perhaps each end represents an absolute extreme of masculine and feminine. All people sit somewhere on that spectrum in terms of their gender expression, regardless of what their assigned sex and gender might be. So it can be seen that there are masculine men, masculine women, feminine men and feminine women and all kinds of people in between. Gender can be expressed in various ways, usually very visually. Femininity may be expressed through hair, makeup and clothing and masculinity may be expressed in a similar way but each gives off very different representations.

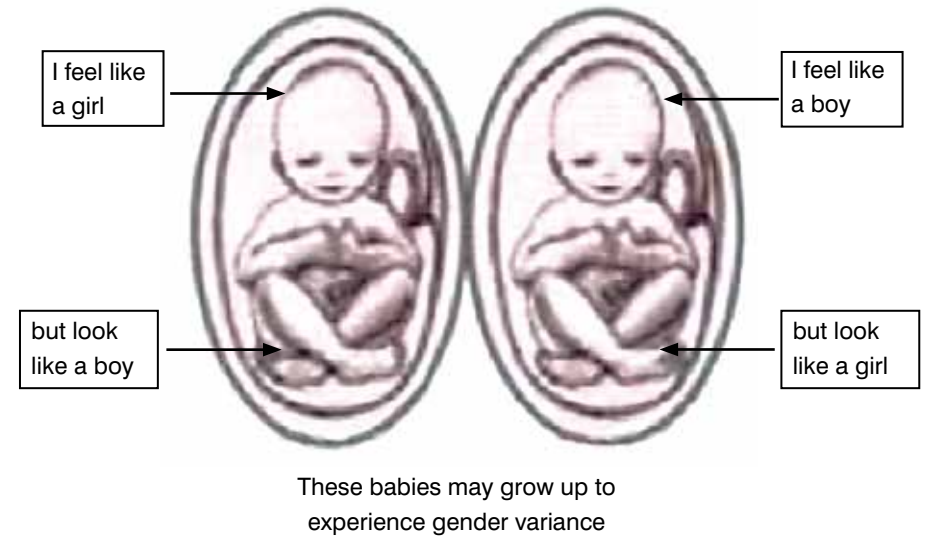
Sexual orientation has no relation to assigned sex, gender identity or gender expression. It is purely who you are attracted to and want to form romantic/sexual relationships with. Anyone, whether cisgender or transgender, can have any sexual orientation.



WHAT IS TRANS?

The term trans is used to describe a person who's gender identity does not match their sex assigned at birth.

Common language used to date suggests that trans people wish to be the 'opposite sex' and although this can be true for many people, this way of looking at sex and gender can be harmful as it suggests that there are only two ways of being (man or woman), and as we have just learned, that is not true, there are infinite ways of understanding one's gender and existing in the world.



This feeling of belonging to a sex which is different from the one that you were assigned at birth is known as gender dysphoria and often manifests itself in the form of disassociating with one's body and its sex characteristics. Many trans people describe it as having a mental image of themselves that their body doesn't match and as a result, will often seek out medical treatment (usually in the form of hormones and / or surgeries) to correct this feeling.

We will talk more about social and medical transition later.

If you have never questioned your gender identity or had to think about your sex being a separate thing from your gender, then all of this might be quite a lot to take on board, but for transgender people, this feeling of being out of sync or off kilter with themselves and / or the world, is one with which they are very familiar. If you don't understand what your child is trying to describe to you please try and bare this in mind, your experiences are yours and theirs are theirs. To help you understand them, you can ask them questions and give them time to articulate themselves. There is no correct way to feel, there are only feelings themselves.

PARENTS STORIES

When we become parents, few of us are prepared for what lies ahead: the unexpected changes and challenges that test us every step of the way and the deep joy and unconditional love we feel for another human being. It is that love that keeps us going when faced with extraordinary challenges in our children's lives.

EXPECTING TWINS

Our story starts during my second pregnancy, which was planned to produce a sibling for my then 4-year-old son. At a regular check up about 12 weeks in, it was confirmed I was carrying twins. Six months later I gave birth to two beautiful (and big!) twin girls. They both arrived accompanied with individual medical conditions, involving years of hospital visits, operations and medication - but nothing that could not be treated. I mention this here purely because I remember thinking how out of control we are with many aspects of our lives.

First signs of a tomboy

I had never heard of Gender Identity Disorder (GID) in 1992. I doubt I would have distinguished or even considered the difference between a transsexual and a transvestite, and my perception of both would have been of a 'middle-aged man in a frock'. I would not have been aware of female to male (F2M) transsexuals either. I am now.

The first sign was when the girls were about 5 and starting to assert their preferences. Izzy started to reject dresses and anything remotely gender-specific to female. Their infant school allowed girls to wear trackies in bad weather, and somehow Izzy got away with this year round. I wasn't duly concerned and accepted that I had a tomboy for a daughter, who revelled in wearing her brother's hand-me-downs. Having an older brother, she had instant access to stereotypical boys' stuff, and this is what she chose. The bedroom the girls shared would have looked, to an outsider, the room of boy/girl siblings, with Barbie and Action Man sharing the same space.

Around age 6 I got the first sign this was perhaps more than being a tomboy. One night I found a note on my bed, which read: "Mum, I want to be a boy...". These little notes became her way of communicating important and difficult messages to me over the following years. Sometime during the same year, a documentary was aired about the plight of a British family who were taking their adolescent child to Holland in order to receive treatment for GID. I put the note and documentary together in a compartment in my brain, hoping I would never have to open it up again.

Gender variant adolescence

Middle school proved more difficult, as my child struggled to find her place. She didn't 'get' the girls or share their pre-adolescent interests, and wasn't particularly macho or sporty so wasn't accepted by the boys. She wasn't a typical tomboy either.

Towards the end of Middle School, I finally gave in to the pressure and let my daughter have her long locks cut off. The image I have of her when she emerged from the hairdressers is of someone who had a great weight lifted.

I had resisted her requests for a short hair-cut, partly because her hair was the last indication she was a girl; I also suspected that once her hair was short she would be mistaken for a boy, and I wanted to protect her from ridicule. Of course, I was right, and from this point on strangers often assumed Izzy was a boy - which made using ladies' loos and changing-rooms interesting!

The following few years were horrendous. Adolescent angst mixed with gender dysphoria must be the worst torment a young person can experience. She confided in a classmate that she wanted to be a boy, but this 'friend' decided to share the news, and Izzy was rejected and bullied. This is when the depression, self-harm and bad behaviour began.

We began weekly appointments at CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services). Unlike many families, we were blessed with the most wonderful family counsellor - but at 13 the GID was still not being addressed: my daughter had decided (we discovered later) that the only way to fit in was to conform by wearing feminine clothes, and experimenting with make-up.

To be honest, I breathed a sigh of relief: I knew puberty was the crucial time when children with GID are most distressed and either stay dysphoric, settle into their born gender and/or perhaps identify as gay. My daughter declared in one of her little notes she fancied a girl in her class. Hurrah I thought, I have a gay daughter, I can deal with that.

"Mum, I know who I am . . ."

Then one dark November evening, I received a call from 15-year-old Izzy, who was in her bedroom, asking me to come quickly. I found a very distressed child with a bloodied wrist. While we waited for the ambulance, I held my child and tightly wrapped the wound. It was thankfully a superficial cut: an expression of her unhappiness.

We spent the night alone in the corridor of the children's ward, eventually being allowed home on the proviso we went back to CAMHS the next day. That was a dark night - I don't think I have ever felt so alone; but knew I had to protect and help my child no matter what.

Over the next month or so Izzy started to open up at CAMHS. I didn't know what was being discussed, but I did know I was witnessing a positive change in my child. No notes were needed this time. Izzy had something to tell me: **"Mum I finally know who I am. I'm a boy, born in a girl's body."** From this point on 'she' became 'he' - and I had a son called Matt.

Those who doubt GID as a valid condition will often be heard asking how someone so young can know they are born in the wrong body. Extensive studies of older transsexual people show 80% knew something was not right before the age of 12, the most common age is 7.

Seeking support and coming out

The impact of having a transgender child reverberates in every area of your life. How do you tell friends or family, not to mention acquaintances who enquire how 'the girls' are? First of all, you have to get used to using the correct pronouns, as slip-ups are very distressing for the trans person. To avoid repetitive explanations I emailed those that mattered in our lives with the news, attaching a useful NHS link that explains GID, and left it up to them to educate themselves.

I went in to robotic mode for about 6 months. I wrote off my car and had another minor accident, because my mind was elsewhere. I went to work, did what was needed to hold the family together. I was grieving and I was terrified. I found out who my real friends were - and in turn made fantastic new ones. I have my son to thank for these friendships.

Four months into this journey we went with trepidation to a gathering of families from the support group Mermaids. Meeting other people whose experiences mirrored our own was a turning point for us both.

During the last four years we have relentlessly battled the system to get the treatment he needs to feel more comfortable in his own body. Reversible hormone blocking treatment is now available at the start of puberty to delay the onset of unwanted physical characteristics, but by the age of 15 it is usually too late as development has taken place. There is a gap in treatment available before a young person is referred to Adult services and prescribed hormones that will produce characteristics of the desired gender. If Matt had taken blockers at 16 he would have effectively been in a menopausal state for a year before being considered for testosterone. We turned to private care for a brief period so he could begin hormone treatment and move forward in his life. If we hadn't, he would likely have become an Internet recluse.

Matt waited until the school prom to reveal his new identity, and attended in a suit and tie - for which I was full of admiration. He then went on to attend College in another borough where no one knew his past and, despite all the disruptions to his education, is now at University.

Next month, aged 20 years and 8 months, Matt will finally be having the surgery he has been waiting for. Next year I hope to take my family somewhere sunny, where Matt can take his shirt off and swim in the sea with the rest of us. Such a small pleasure, which many take for granted - but one that will mean so much to us.

INTERNATIONAL WOMENS DAY 2010

Life hadn't been easy for the previous 3 years, diagnosed with a rare joint condition, my healthy and active daughter was now in constant pain and becoming more and more disabled and on top of all that she was understandably depressed. Having given up work to care for her as well as to attend a variety of hospital appointments and emergency admissions we had become very close. I knew my daughter completely and totally or so I believed.

So the day that she texted me to go to her bedroom when I was only downstairs did seem a little odd I agree. When I entered the room she was sobbing and barely able to speak. I heard the words "I need to tell you something" between sobs and due to the level of distress I started to panic and think that the very worst thing had happened and that my daughter was about to tell me she had been abused. It seemed the only possible explanation for something so terrible and upsetting and of course it would have explained why she appeared to hate her body, hide her body . . . It all made perfect sense . . . until she said "I'm trans-gender, I'm really male" And at that moment my first thought was 'thank god she hasn't been abused'.

I held her tight, hugged her, told her it would be ok, cried, laughed, hugged some more, "it will be fine" I told her.

And for 2 weeks I told no-one, I could barely bring myself to think it let alone say it out loud, my daughter was a boy. And do you know what? Deep down I knew it was true, I didn't ever question it. My tomboy, footballing, forever climbing trees, rough and tumble and very anti-pink daughter of course was a boy, it all suddenly fell into place. But how was I going to tell people? Elderly parents?

Another 'modern' phase so sensationalised in the media was now part of their lives, how would they deal with it? I felt like a tigress protecting her cub, I didn't want to tell anyone because of how it made me feel as a parent and yet my child was desperate to finally be the person she really was. I was being rushed as a parent, led on a journey that I had no map for.

Fast forward 4 years and I have an incredible, amazing son. I never look at him and think 'you were once a she', I realise that he was always there, that I have always known him. I am in awe of his strength in being true to himself, no longer living a lie but I also feel sad that for the sake of one chromosome a life of pain could have been avoided. The journey has been a very tough one for our family and so we've have had to leave some people (including family) behind, they just did not want to support us on our journey. Surprisingly all of the grandparents have truly embraced their grandson and have almost all managed the pronoun and name change.

We've left our home town, gladly leaving behind our history and created our new history where we have 1 daughter and 2 sons and no questions asked, where we can just be ourselves. The journey is ongoing, there is still no map but we have been enriched by the people who have stood by us and by the people that we have met along the way, some in similar positions. We have discovered an amazing and supportive community and feel proud to be a part of that. We have also learnt the true meaning of 'I just want my child to be happy' because ultimately that is really the only thing in life that is important.

And the title? That turned out to be the day that my son told me he was trans!!

YOUNG TRANS WOMAN'S STORY

At 16, I was introverted and distant, slipping into compulsive habits, harming myself, and going out wandering the streets at night without telling anyone where I was going; I didn't really know where myself. I was breaking under fear of the future I saw before me, as a lonely, misunderstood freak. My mum asked me what was wrong, but I couldn't tell her; I thought the truth of it would break her. My sister had spent months in hospital fighting a life-threatening illness, and I felt there was no room for more stress in mum's life. But a time came when I knew if I didn't share my feelings of dysphoria, then it would kill me.

I wrote a letter, left it on her bed and then walked to my Dad's house. In the envelope were E-mails I'd sent to Allsorts, explaining the way I felt; the nights I'd dressed in her clothes in secret, my desperation to be female. She phoned me after I arrived at my Dad's, and, through tears, told me she loved me and that she would support me. Though she was obviously upset at first, she tried, in spite of pronoun mishaps and the occasional argument about the way I'd been raised, to help me live as the woman I really am, this she now never questions. She even made special padded bras for me.

My siblings, too, have been very supportive. My relationship with my father is bad - we've never really understood each other, and although he's ok with my transition, I still feel a distance between us. I told my grandparents through a letter. They surprised me in their support. My hormone treatment is making me a happier more fulfilled person.

Without my family's support, I'd be in a very different place - still depressed or, perhaps, no longer here at all. They've taught me to have faith in people and love myself. For this I am grateful.

Becca - Transformers Young Person

NON-BINARY IDENTITIES

So far we have spoken about young people feeling that their gender is the opposite to the one that they were assigned at birth. ie, trans boys were assigned female at birth and trans girls were assigned male at birth.

This way of identifying gender as two distinct categories of male and female is referred to as a 'binary gender system'. For a lot of people, this way of understanding gender works quite well. For many trans people, they feel comfortable identifying as either male or female.

For some people however, this gender system does not work. They do not feel that they are either male or female but perhaps a mix of both, somewhere in between or maybe neither at all.

These people may identify as having a 'non-binary' gender, a gender which flows between two points or even outside of the spectrum.

Let's think about it in terms of colours again. So if boys are blue and girls are pink then non binary people are various shades of all the colours in between.

NON-BINARY EXPERIENCES

"I identify as genderfluid which essentially means my gender is in constant flux, for me that's between neutrois (without gender or gender neutral) and genderqueer. People define gender fluidity in different ways but personally I don't see my identity on a fixed spectrum so much as I see it moving freely around and sometimes, but rarely, landing on a definite label. For a long while I used two names depending on how I was feeling gender-wise, I used Thom when I was leaning more towards genderqueer and Jay when it was more neutrois. Lately I've dropped Thom and I'm just going by Jay but my identity is still just as fluid as ever. I look in the mirror someday and think "Christ, I'm gender-queer today!" and others I have no idea how to define myself and that's what I love about my identity, I'm always guessing!."

Jay - Transformers Young Person

“My identity as a non-binary person is still relatively new - I only started going by gender-neutral pronouns (they, their, etc. see glossary) just under a year ago, and even then only a select few knew and used them. I feel a twinge when I get a “she” directed my way, like a jab in the gut. I thought long and hard about a name change, because I have always felt very disconnected to my birth name. I often think about adopting a more androgynous or even male-sounding name, but it’s something I can’t bring myself to do just yet. I’ve taken to wearing a badge with my pronouns on, but even then it’s much more likely I’ll get misgendered even by people who know. Every time I see separate signs for male or female changing rooms or toilets, my identity is invalidated. Nowadays I enjoy wearing make-up and “female” clothing, but I have what I like to call “boy days”, when my desire to not get misgendered is so strong that I feel like I need to give an outward sign that my gender is not what you might first think. Coming out to new people is tricky, because I’m never sure how it’s going to be taken when I try and explain my pronouns and how they work. I hope for “Okay, no problem, thanks for telling me”, but I often get personal questions such as “What toilet do you use?”, “What were you born as?” and “So what do you have down there?”

Niko - Transformers Young Person

SOCIAL TRANSITION

Before starting the medical transition, trans people must first go through a social transition.

Social transition usually involves coming out to anyone of relevance in your child’s life - this may include friends, family, medical professionals, and teachers - and making them aware of the change in your child’s name and pronouns.

Your child may also want to change their gender expression if they haven’t already. Gender expression is how people present themselves to society at large, and often relies on clothing and hairstyles. Generally, clothes and hairstyles are labelled as belonging to either males or females, and for your transgender child this may be the first step to presenting as the gender to which they identify.

For example, a trans girl (male-to-female) may want to wear clothes from the girls’ section and grow her hair out in order to present herself to wider society as female. However, this is not always the case and not all trans people conform to stereotypes of gender presentation; allowing your child freedom of expression, regardless of their gender, is always important.

MEDICAL TRANSITION

A medical transition can be different for every trans person. Some may have hormone blockers (blocking the natural puberty), some may have hormones (Testosterone or Oestrogen) and some may have surgery.

A person's need to medically transition may fluctuate over time. For example, a child just reaching puberty may have a strong desire to access hormone treatment in order to avoid a puberty of their assigned sex happening. Alternatively, some trans people who have hormone treatment may feel that this is enough for them and do not want to access surgery.

In England, children under the age of 16 are not able to access full hormone treatment (pure Testosterone or Oestrogen) and are only able to access hormone blockers. Once a young person reaches 16, post diagnosis of gender dysphoria, post hormone blockers and having been under the Tavistock clinic, they may be able to access hormone treatment if they feel this is right for them.

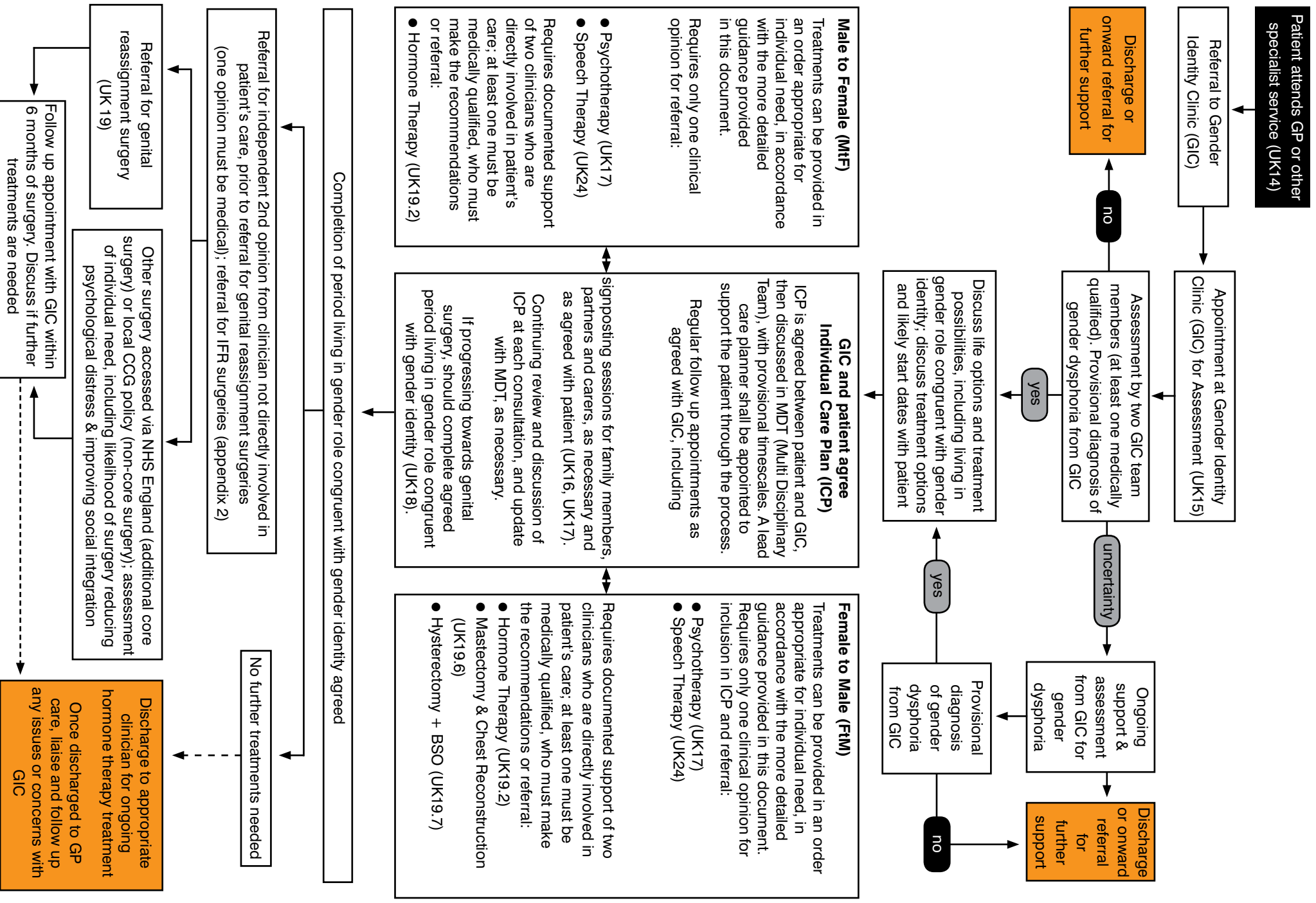
Once a young person reaches 18 they will begin accessing the adult clinic where they can discuss surgery if they feel this is appropriate.

In England, a person under the age of 18 is not able to access gender reassignment surgery. Thinking about your child going through these changes can be daunting. It is important to keep conversations open about your child's needs and intentions around a medical transition so that you can work through the journey together.

A medical transition is a very visual part of a person and when your child begins to change, it can almost become more of a reality that they are trans. Sometimes these changes can be difficult to get used to and quite challenging and although it may look like your child is changing, they are still the same person, they are just the person they were meant to be. What is important is that you also have support during this time as well as your child.

Overleaf is a flow chart of the pathway through the medical side of transitioning for someone 18 or over. There are seven adult Gender Identity Clinics in England, but only one clinic for children and adolescents. The name of this clinic is the Tavistock and Portman¹ and it is situated in North London (with two satellite clinics elsewhere in the country). A referral form can be found on the website if you or your GP are uncertain about how to refer your child.

¹ <http://bit.ly/tavi-port>



TIPS FOR PARENTS

Having a transgender child or young person can be a very tough and confusing time for parents; it can be hard getting used to seeing your child as a different gender to what you are used to, changing name and pronouns, telling other people about this change, and - for many - just not knowing how you can help your child on this journey.

The aim of this booklet is to give parents a starting point in providing their child with the support and understanding they need, so here are a few ideas to help manage the challenges that can come with having a trans child or teenager.

COMING OUT

Coming out can be one of the hardest points in a person's transition due to the fear of not knowing how people will respond. Your child will come out to you in their own way, showing that they trust you enough to tell you about this important part of themselves. You may want to inform people of your child's transition by yourself in order to protect your child (particularly if they are younger) from any possible negative reactions. It is important to note that a person's negative response to this news does not necessarily mean they are unaccepting; for many it is a shock response and once they've had time to process the information or educate themselves/be educated on the topic, they may, in time, come to understand and accept. One way of hopefully avoiding this immediate negativity would be to write letters to family and friends by way of coming out. This will allow you to say everything you want to say without being interrupted, and will give the person time to think it through before contacting you.

NAME CHANGE

How you go about choosing a new name should be between you and your child, but eventually you will have to start referring to your child as this name in everyday life. This can be particularly hard, if only for the fact

that you are breaking a habit of a lifetime. In the time between your child coming out and you feeling ready to use their new name, you could try referring to them by their first initial or a gender-neutral nickname, making your transition in to the new name easier without inducing any dysphoria or discomfort in your child. Accept that you will occasionally make mistakes and assure your child that when this happens, you are not doing so deliberately. When you do use the wrong name (or pronouns), just correct yourself and carry on.

A legal name change can be completed online, by phone, by post, or in person, using a Deed Poll², which will come with details about how to notify authorities (e.g. schools, medical professionals, etc.) of this name change. This will also allow you to change your child's title from Mr. to Miss or vice versa. If your child is over the age of 16, you do not have parental responsibility for the Deed Poll, meaning they can complete it themselves.

MENTAL HEALTH

Unfortunately, transgender people are more likely to experience depression, anxiety and low self-esteem, most likely as a result of dysphoria, but it could also come about as a result of stress, stigma, or discrimination. Recognising changes in your child's mental health is key to helping your child through this difficult period; symptoms may include; lethargy, appetite changes, sleep changes, isolation, anger or irritability, a loss of interest in previously enjoyed activities, and - at its worst - self harm and/or suicidal ideation. If you do notice these symptoms - particularly the last two - in your child, contacting a doctor immediately is the best option. The doctor will be able to refer your child to the appropriate services (most likely CAMHS). If your child is not wanting to engage with CAMHS or GPs, there are youth services who may be able to offer some 121 support, such as Allsorts in Brighton.

If your child has self-harmed or expressed suicidal thoughts, taking them to Accident & Emergency would be the safest course of action.

SCHOOL

Brighton-based LGBT charity Allsorts have created a trans toolkit for schools and parents, designed to make your child's school life as easy as possible throughout their transition. It covers general information about the topic of transgender, as well as the legal rights belonging to your child regarding name change, uniform, bathrooms, etc. This toolkit can be printed off and shared with members of staff at your child's school.

To download, go to: <http://bit.ly/allsortsschool>

PERSONAL CARE

Washing and bathing is an often-overlooked challenge for trans people; it can be confusing and distressing for a trans person to have to view their own body as something so drastically at odds with their gender. To make this an easier experience for your child, consider allowing them to bathe in swimwear, or even shorts and a t-shirt, if you find that their gender dysphoria is worsening at these times. Other suggestions include using bubble bath, so your child does not have to view their own body whilst in the bath, or finding distractions for them while they bathe; for younger children this may mean using bath toys, and for older children you could try books or magazines to read in the bath. This may help reduce your child's dysphoria, thus making a regular difficulty easier for both you and your child.



Stephen Whittle OBE is a prominent activist for trans rights and a professor of Equalities Law. He is a married father of four, who started his transition from female to male in the 1970s, and has proved essential in the advancement of rights for transgender people.



Laverne Cox is an actress who is becoming an increasingly popular advocate for transgender people, being a trans woman herself. She has produced and starred in various TV shows, providing visibility for trans women in the media.

² <http://www.deedpoll.org.uk/HowToApply.html>

TERMINOLOGY

Assigned sex - The sex you were assigned at birth and raised as.

Binding - Wearing a compression vest (often called a binder) to push the breasts down and give the appearance of a flat chest.

Breast forms - Prosthesis that can be worn to give the impression of having breasts.

Cisgender - A match between your assigned sex and your gender. A term for non-transgender people.

Coming out - A process by which a trans person will tell friends/family/co-workers etc about their trans status.

Cross dresser - A person who dresses in the clothing of the 'opposite sex' as defined by socially accepted norms. They enjoy wearing the clothes of the 'opposite sex' occasionally but they do not want to transition and therefore do not seek hormone therapy or surgery. Cross dressers are also referred to by some as transvestites but this is increasingly being seen as offensive and cross dresser is the preferred term. While some people initially cross dress on the path to gender reassignment, many cross dressers do not consider themselves transgender.

Deed Poll/Statutory Declaration - The means by which a person can legally change their name.

E - Shortened/slang term for oestrogen

Electrolysis - Hair removal procedure

Endocrinologist - A doctor who specialises in hormonal issues

FTM (Female to Male)/trans man/a transsexual man - Someone assigned female at birth but who identifies as male.

Gender - How a person feels in regards to male/female/neither/both. A cognitive process of recognising one's identity.

Genderqueer/Gender fluid/Gender neutral - A gender diverse person whose gender identity is neither male nor female, is between or beyond genders, or a combination of male and female.

Gender dysphoria - A medical term which refers to the physical/emotional/social discomfort of being perceived and living as one's assigned sex.

GIC - Gender Identity Clinic

Hormone blockers - Medication used to suppress puberty.

HRT - Hormone Replacement Therapy

LGBT - Stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender

Lower/bottom surgery - Reconstructive genital surgery

MTF (Male to Female/trans woman/a transsexual woman) - Someone assigned as male at birth who identifies as a woman.

Non binary - To not identify within the binary male or female gender norms

Outed - When a trans person's gender status is made public knowledge without their consent. This can happen either by people deliberately talking about this person being trans or by careless violation of confidentiality.

Oestrogen - Primary female sex hormone

Packing - Wearing a prosthesis that can be worn to give the impression of having a penis.

Post-op - After surgery

Pre-op - Before surgery

Passing - Being seen or read as the gender you present yourself as e.g. a male identifying person being read as male.

Pronouns - He, him, his, she, her, they, them, their, hir, sie, ey, zie (gender neutral)

Sex - Assigned at birth in relation to one's genitals, chromosomes etc

Sexual Orientation - Attraction to people i.e. gay, straight, bisexual, pansexual etc

Stealth - Living in one's acquired gender without anyone knowing about one's trans status. A person may be stealth in some areas of their lives but not others.

To gender - To assign someone else a gender by noticing behaviour and body presentation.

T - Shortened/slang term for testosterone

Testosterone - Primary male sex hormone

Top surgery - Surgery performed on the chest, either to enhance or remove breasts.

RESOURCES

Allsorts (Brighton based)

Youth project aimed at LGBTU youth (25 and under), with weekly drop-ins, activities and one-to-one support, as well as Sara's Group for parents of trans youth.

www.allsorts.org.uk

01273 721211

LGBT Switchboard (Brighton based)

Provides support for LGBT people and their families through counselling and their helpline.

www.switchboard.org.uk

01273 204050

GIRES

Thorough source of information about trans issues, aimed at trans people, their families, and medical professionals.

www.gires.org.uk

01372 801554

Mermaids

Family and individual support for teenagers and children with gender identity issues.

www.mermaidsuk.org.uk

0208 1234819

Trans



Formers

Trans* Youth Group

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