

Myths and Misconceptions

All kids who are gender creative will stay transgender as adults!

- FALSE! Many children who are trans will end up identifying with their sex assigned at birth post puberty. However, there is no way to predict which children will persist or desist as adults.

Being gender creative means something is wrong with my child!

I did something wrong as a parent to make my child be gender non-conforming!

- FALSE! Many pre-pubertal children engage in gender play and exploration. It is a part of normal childhood development that all children go through to some degree!

It's just a phase so I should force my child to act their normal gender!

- NO! Many studies have shown that children who receive parental support experience fewer episodes of depression, higher life satisfaction, and improved academic success.

Our family is the only one having these issues, so we should just deal with it.

- NO! You are not alone! There are tons of resources online and here in Vermont to meet other families with similar experiences!

I should feel bad for being sad or afraid for my child who's gender creative.

- NO! It's perfectly okay to feel sad or loss for how you pictured your child's future and there is always support available!

Resources and Citations:

Outright VT, outrightvt.org

- Based in Burlington VT, Outright hosts and sponsors trans and gender creative kids and parent groups. They are dedicated to building safe, healthy, and supportive environments for LGBTQ youth.

Green Mountain Crossroads,
greenmountaincrossroads.org

- Rural Vermont oriented LGBT resource and advocacy group based in Brattleboro VT.

Gender Spectrum, genderspectrum.org

- National organization that helps create gender sensitive and inclusive environment for all children and teens.

Rosenthal SM. Transgender youth: current concepts. *Annals of Pediatric Endocrinology & Metabolism*. 2016;21(4):185-192. doi:10.6065/apem.2016.21.4.185.

Kaltiala-Heino R, Bergman H, Työlajärvi M, Frisén L. Gender dysphoria in adolescence: current perspectives. *Adolescent Health, Medicine and Therapeutics*. 2018;9:31-41. doi:10.2147/AHMT.S135432.

Ehrensaft D. Gender nonconforming youth: current perspectives. *Adolescent Health, Medicine and Therapeutics*. 2017;8:57-67. doi:10.2147/AHMT.S110859.

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Why is my kid wearing different clothes and using new pronouns?

A guide for Vermont parents of Gender Creative/Non-binary children.



What does gender creative and related terminology mean?

Gender identity: every individual's internal sense of self as male, female, something in between, or something else entirely.

- Ex: "I am a man" or "I am transgender"

Gender expression: outward expression of gender identity

- Ex: "I like to wear skirts" or "You can use they/them pronouns to refer to me"

Sex assigned at birth: typically refers to sex given by external genitalia at birth and more recently chromosomal sex, with some variation due to congenital processes.

- Ex: "I was born with a vagina, so doctors decided I am female" or "I have X and Y chromosomes, but my body cannot sense testosterone, so I have breasts and a vagina"

Sexual identity: who an individual is or is not attracted to, physically, romantically, emotionally, or otherwise.

- Ex: "I am a woman attracted to men so I am straight" or "I am attracted to both men and women so I am bisexual" or "I am attracted to people regardless of expression of gender so I am pansexual."

Transgender: An umbrella term for anyone whose personal gender identity does not match their sex assigned at birth.

- Ex: "I have two X chromosomes, but I identify as a man" or "I was born with a penis, but I am genderfluid"

Gender creative/nonbinary/nonconforming: anyone whose gender expression does not fit within the typical roles of male or female. Sometimes considered a subset of transgender.

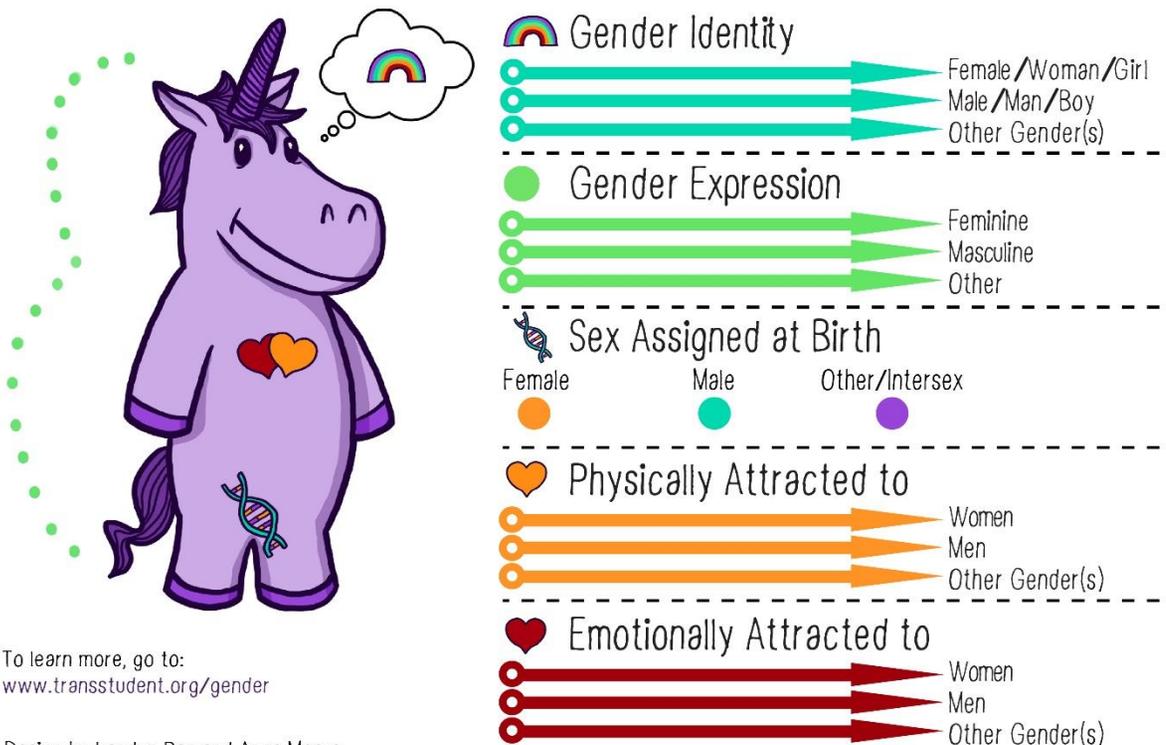
- Ex: "I'm a boy and I like to wear dresses" or "I'm a girl and I love monster truck rallies"

How can I explain gender creative to other family members?

The Gender Unicorn, developed by TSER, is a great starting place. It shows how components of our identity are just sliding scales. This is a great tool for starting a conversation with anybody.

The Gender Unicorn

Graphic by:
TSER
Trans Student Educational Resources



To learn more, go to:
www.transstudent.org/gender

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