

## GENDER IDENTITY

### A BIT ABOUT GENDER IDENTITY AND SEX

How someone feels about themselves is known as gender identity.

When someone is born, they are recorded as male or female depending on what their genitals look like. This is known as someone's assigned sex at birth.



### DIFFERENT GENDER IDENTITIES

There are lots of different gender identities and ways people identify. Some of these are:

#### Transgender

"trans" as an umbrella term to describe people whose current gender identity or way of expressing their gender differs from the sex they were registered with at birth. Some, but not all, trans people want to transition (change) socially or medically or both.

#### Non-binary

Non binary is a term used to relate to someone who doesn't identify as either male or female. There are many ways in which people identify or present in a non-binary way. This may be a combination of both or neither.

#### Agender

Someone who identifies as having no gender or being without a gender identity (also called genderless, non-gendered or ungendered).

#### Fluid

A term often used by people whose feelings or sense of self in relation to their gender identity or sexuality are not fixed and can change over time; most commonly paired with another term, e.g. gender fluid or sexually fluid.

Some people find labels important and feel supported knowing others share their identity. Others may choose not to use labels, and just identify as themselves.

### WHEN SEX AND GENDER IDENTITY DON'T MATCH

Sometimes someone's gender identity doesn't match the sex they were assigned at birth. Just because someone is assigned a certain sex at birth doesn't mean they need to live as that gender if it doesn't feel right.



When someone's gender identity and sex at birth don't match it can cause a sense of unease and and this could result in gender dysphoria.

Gender dysphoria is not a mental illness, but it can affect someone's mental health, by making them feel uncomfortable, unhappy, or anxious.

For more information visit Gender Identity Development Service:

[www.gids.nhs.uk](http://www.gids.nhs.uk)



## INFORMATION AND ADVICE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

For more information and advice visit:

[www.lgbtstoke.co.uk](http://www.lgbtstoke.co.uk)

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## GENDER IDENTITY AND PUBERTY

Puberty and the physical changes that it brings can be distressing for some young people. This can be upsetting for people who feel like they're growing into a gender they don't want to live as.



Further information and advice can be sought from your GP and/or CAMHS worker about a referral to a specialist Gender Identity Development Service (GIDS). GIDS services do not accept direct referrals from young people or their parents/carers

## 5 TOP TIPS FROM OUR TEAM

1. Ask your child what name and pronouns they would like you and others to use.
2. Support your child in expressing their gender identity.
3. Check out useful websites like GIDS and Mermaids ([www.gids.nhs.uk](http://www.gids.nhs.uk) or [www.mermaidsuk.org.uk](http://www.mermaidsuk.org.uk)).
4. If your child is transitioning in school arrange a face to face meeting and write down your questions / concerns beforehand
5. Listen and let them know that you're there to support them.

## THE EQUALITY ACT

The Equality Act 2010 protects the rights of individuals from being discriminated against because of any protected characteristics.

Sexual orientation and gender reassignment are two of the nine protected characteristics included in the Equality Act.

Discrimination is where people are treated differently because of a protected characteristic they have or are thought to have. There are 4 main types of discrimination:

- Direct
- Indirect
- Harassment
- Victimisation

To find out more about your child's rights and the Equality Act (2010) visit the Equality and Human Rights Commission at:

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act/know-your-rights>

If you feel they are being discriminated against you can seek support from their school or college's safeguarding team.

## LOCAL YOUTH SUPPORT

Our Galaxy youth group is for people aged 13-18 who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender, or people questioning their sexuality or gender identity. It is a safe place for young people to get information and advice on any LGBT+ issues. Please visit: [www.lgbtsoke.co.uk](http://www.lgbtsoke.co.uk)

## HOW DO I SUPPORT MY CHILD

Telling you is a brave step towards living the life your child wants to live to be happy. It's important that as a parent or carer you listen to your child and that they feel supported by you.

There is lots to learn about gender identity, which can be confusing, but there is support available for you and your child.

Mermaids are a UK-based charity who provide information and support for gender-diverse young people and their families.

Visit their website for more information: [www.mermaidsuk.org.uk](http://www.mermaidsuk.org.uk)

Gender Dysphoria is a clinical diagnosis for someone who doesn't feel comfortable with the gender they were assigned at birth.

Gender dysphoria is not a mental illness, but it can affect someone's mental health, by making them feel uncomfortable, unhappy, anxious and like they are struggling to cope.

Some signs of gender dysphoria include; low self-esteem, becoming withdrawn or socially isolated, depression or anxiety, taking unnecessary risks, neglecting themselves.

if you notice your child is experiencing these symptoms you can seek help from your GP.



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