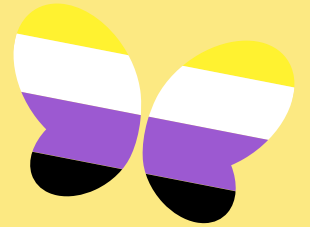
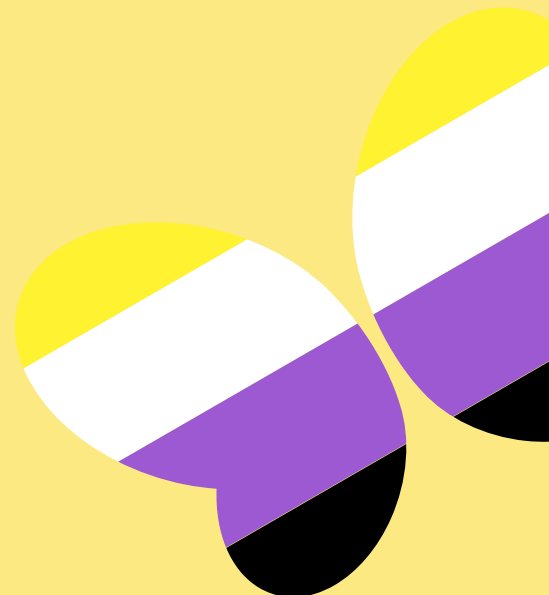


**TRANSCEND**  
AUSTRALIA



# Healthy Relationships Resource



# A brief guide to healthy relationships for Trans, gender diverse & nonbinary young people



Relationships should be fun, and exciting. They should affirm you and make you feel good about yourself. In a healthy relationship, you should feel safe to talk about the topics covered in this guide.

This resource is just a starting point for you as you start to learn the tools and skills to navigate relationships and intimacy. It should be noted, though, that this is a lifelong journey; every relationship is different and will teach you something new about yourself.

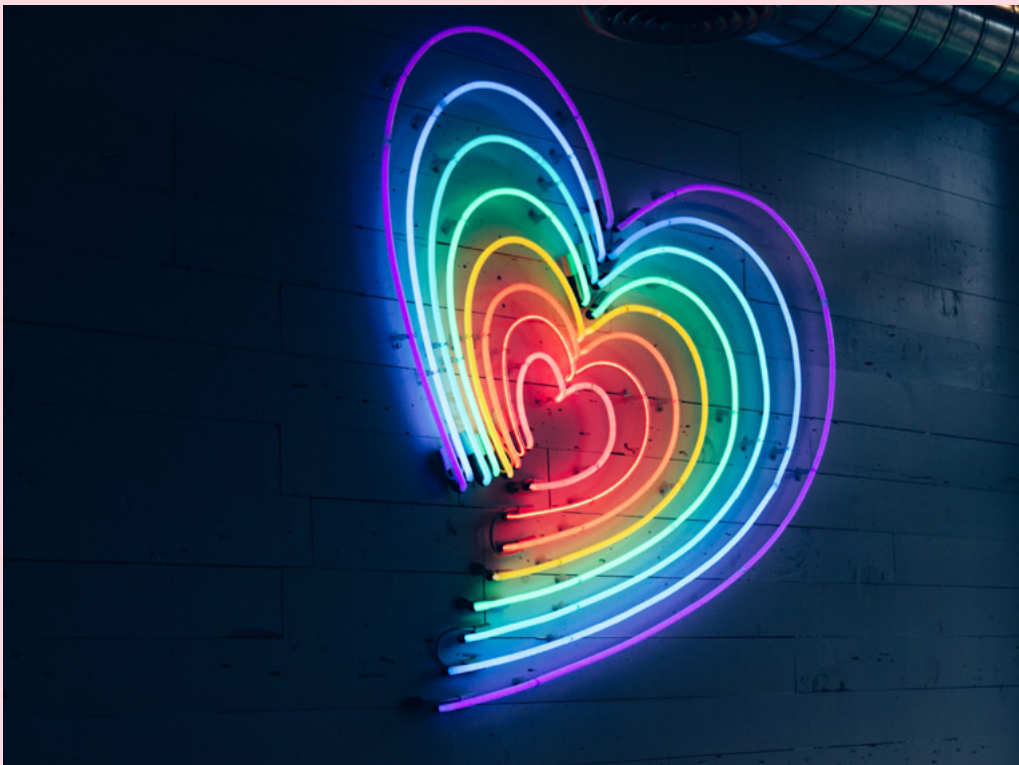


Image: Jiroe



## Questions you might have:

How do I find out if they like me?

How do I tell them I'm trans/gender diverse?

How should I ask them out?

What if they don't like me like that?

What if they do like me?

What about when someone asks me out?

What if someone I like is not supportive of trans, gender diverse and non-binary people...

When do I tell them?

Should I tell them?

These questions might make you feel nervous, but they can be exciting, too. Please take your time to read through this resource, put together based on information provided by other trans, gender diverse and nonbinary young people, and decide what is right for you.

## What you have the right to expect

You always have the right to feel safe and to be respected in any relationship you have – whether it is an intimate relationship or a friendship. If you don't feel safe or respected, you can tell the person or end the relationship.

Just make sure you have support and find someone to talk to.

You can have HIGH expectations for how people treat you and boundaries about the questions they ask you and what they do with the information you share with them.

You have the right to expect others to respect your confidentiality, just as you should respect theirs.

You deserve to be treated with respect all the time.

*With rights come responsibilities.*



*Respect in  
relationship goes  
both ways.*

## Your Body



As a trans, gender diverse or non-binary person, you might struggle with some parts of your body. You might not want people asking about, looking at or touching these body parts. Or there might be different ways you want people to talk about them. This is totally fine. Remember: it is your body, so it is your choice.

Talk to people you are intimate with about what you are comfortable or not comfortable with. It is okay to ask for the right language to show you respect. It is also okay to say no to answering a question about your body – you might not have the answer yourself yet, or you might not feel safe or comfortable. It is your choice. These might feel like awkward conversations. But it is better to feel awkward in the conversation than uncomfortable and unsafe in an intimate situation.

Listen to what your partner feels comfortable and safe to do, and how they want to be treated. Their body and feelings should also be treated with respect.

Questions about your body are not okay... unless you have given the person permission for people to ask. And even then, the questions must be respectful and, if at any time you feel uncomfortable or you don't want to answer a question, you have the right to pass.

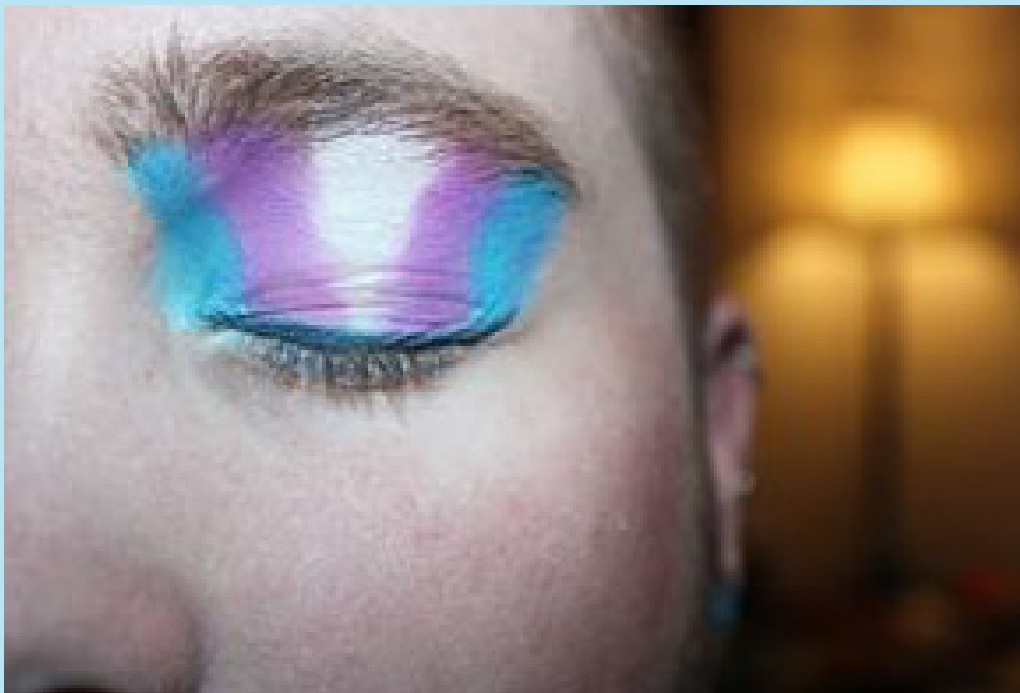


Image: Kyle

## Relationships and intimacy



Some trans and gender diverse people choose to keep their trans history and experience private whilst others choose to share this information with their partners. It is a personal choice, there's no right or wrong answer, but it is important to do what feels right for you and your safety.

If you do choose to disclose, it can be challenging to know when to share your trans status. Some people choose to do this upfront so there are no misunderstandings whilst others choose to wait until they get to know someone.

You may want to think about how to share this information safely and ensure that you have support if your partner reacts poorly.

This is your story to tell when you are safe and ready to tell it. If someone gets upset that you didn't tell them earlier, that's their issue, not yours.

Confidentiality is so important in relationships. When you do share your story and personal or intimate things in a relationship – these are between you and the person you share it with.

BUT confidentiality should not be confused with keeping secrets. If someone tells you to keep something in your relationship a secret and this makes you feel unsafe or even a little bit uncomfortable, or if you are being harmed or someone else is being harmed, then you should tell someone, like a safe adult.

Some people objectify trans and gender diverse people and our bodies. Whilst it's okay for them to be attracted to people who are transgender or gender diverse, they should respect you as a whole person. If you feel someone is treating you like a fetish, or disrespecting you or your body, you have the right to walk away or demand behaviour that is more respectful. This is especially important for trans women who may experience objectification from cisgender men.

*All the things you  
want in a relationship  
to feel safe, you  
should also bring to  
the relationship.*



Relationship endings can be hard. It can be useful and important to talk about how it feels when a relationship ends. Talking can help you to bounce back over time.

Relationships do not have to be all about sex and physical intimacy. If you're not comfortable, don't feel safe, don't feel like it and especially if you're feeling pressured – then you do not have to do anything.

Sure – you might feel a bit nervous about sex or intimacy – that's pretty normal. But, if those nerves are also combined with feeling unsafe or unsure, then tell the person; “No, I don't want to”. You don't have to give an explanation. Your body, your choice.

Relationships (with or without sex or physical intimacy) can be the most awesome thing ever. Being trans, gender diverse or non-binary can make it feel a little more complicated, but not always. In every relationship, there will be things to negotiate along the way.

Remember: you deserve the best in all of your relationships. You should always feel safe and respected and try to make sure others in your relationships feel the same way too.



Image: The Gender Spectrum Collection

## Do you need some help or need to report abuse, assault or harassment?



**1800 Respect** is a 24-hour telephone and online service for people who have experienced sexual, domestic or family violence. They will work with you to help you identify what you can do and to find the right services or support for you. Everyone's situation is different, and no one knows your situation better than you.

WEBSITE [1800respect.org.au](https://1800respect.org.au)

PHONE **1800 737 732**

**QLife** provides anonymous and free LGBTI peer support and referral for people in Australia wanting to talk about sexuality, identity, gender, bodies, feelings or relationships.

HOURS **3pm to midnight everyday**

PHONE **1800 184 527**

WEBCHAT [qlife.org.au](https://qlife.org.au)

**The Rainbow Door** is a free specialist LGBTIQ+ helpline providing information, support and referral to all LGBTIQ+ Victorians.

PHONE **1800 729 367**

TEXT **0480 017 246**

EMAIL [support@rainbowdoor.org.au](mailto:support@rainbowdoor.org.au)

**WithRespect** provides resources, tips and advice for LGBTIQ+ people on having and maintaining healthy relationships. We also provide support for LGBTIQ+ people of all ages and their families experiencing difficulty in their relationships, including family violence.

PHONE **1800 542 847**

## If you are in immediate danger call 000



# Resources for young people and for teachers, parents and guardians



Relationships should be fun, and exciting. They should affirm you and make you feel good about yourself. In a healthy relationship, you should feel safe to talk about the topics covered in this guide.

This resource is just a starting point for you as you start to learn the tools and skills to navigate relationships and intimacy. It should be noted, though, that this is a lifelong journey; every relationship is different and will teach you something new about yourself.

## TransHub/ACON (NSW)

Information specific to trans and gender diverse people about body image, unhealthy relationships, sexual health, sexual assault and coercion, STIs, HIV, cervical screenings, menstruation, contraception and pregnancy.

[transhub.org.au/health](https://transhub.org.au/health)

## Body Safety Victoria (VIC)

Professional development and student workshops for early childhood settings, primary and secondary schools, teachers and parents. Online training or face-to-face courses, workshops and webinars.

[bodysafetyaustralia.com.au](https://bodysafetyaustralia.com.au)

## Transcend Australia

Information for parents and carers.

[transcendaus.org](https://transcendaus.org)

## Thank you

We would like to thank the many trans and gender diverse young people who gave up their time during the school holidays to participate in focus groups and interviews for this resource.

Transcend would also like to thank those who provided advice and editing in the development of this resource.

This resource was made with the support of the GLOBE community grants.



## Mermaids (UK)

Information for teachers, GPs and social workers.

[mermaidsuk.org.uk/professionals](https://mermaidsuk.org.uk/professionals)

## Information for parents

[mermaidsuk.org.uk/parents](https://mermaidsuk.org.uk/parents)

## Thorne Harbour (VIC)

Information about sexual health, safe-sex products and STI testing for LGBTIQ+ people (not trans-specific).

[thorneharbour.org/sexual-health](https://thorneharbour.org/sexual-health)

## Acknowledgment of Country

Transcend Australia Ltd acknowledges the Traditional Owners and ongoing custodians of the land – the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We honour and pay our respects to their elders past, present and emerging. We recognise that sovereignty was never voluntarily ceded. Always was, always will be.