

Tip Sheet: What is transgender, non-binary and gender diverse?

Most children see themselves as a girl or boy and don't question their gender. However, in every culture, some children and teenagers identify as a gender different from what was assumed for them when they were born.

Your child's gender identity is how they see themselves, which can grow and change over time. It is different from sex. Sex is about your body, for example, genitals and hormones.

There are lots of different genders, for example, transgender (trans), non-binary, genderqueer, gender fluid, female and male.

A transgender, non-binary or gender diverse person does not fully identify with the sex they were assigned at birth or may have a gender identity that is not fixed and does not fit within the male-female binary.

Being transgender, non-binary or gender-diverse is not "just a phase." Saying that can hurt them. They might use pronouns like "they/them" and feel respected when you use them.

Being transgender non-binary or gender-diverse is not a problem—it's a natural part of human diversity and has always existed.

Your support matters a lot. Having parent and carer support makes a big difference in how easy or hard their life will be in the future. The best way parents and carers can help their child is by accepting their gender identity, not trying to change it.

* in this guide, 'non-binary' also means 'transgender' and 'gender diverse'.

Definitions

Transgender (trans) – your child's gender identity is different from the gender they were thought to be at birth.

Non-binary – your child's gender is not just a boy or just a girl; it could be a mix of both.

Agender – your child doesn't identify with any gender.

Gender fluid – your child moves between genders.

Cisgender – your child's gender is the same as the one they were assigned at birth.

Sistergirl or Brotherboy – some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people use "sistergirl" or "brotherboy" to express their identity.

Find information:

Visit transcend.org.au for a chat, guides, tools for parents, and support groups to connect with families like yours.