

Gender Affirmation: An Introduction

For transgender (trans), gender diverse and non-binary (TGDNB) people, gender affirmation (sometimes referred to as gender transition) is a term used to describe the range of actions and decisions people make to live their authentic gender.

Gender affirmation is unique to each individual and can be influenced by many factors, including a person's family and social circumstances, availability of services, and the supports they have available and accessible to them.

There are many ways that trans, gender diverse and non-binary people can affirm and be supported to affirm their gender, including social, medical and legal affirmation. However, each journey is unique and gender affirmation can look different for everyone.

By the time TGDNB young people express feelings about their gender identity and experience to family and other people in their lives, they have likely already formed a strong sense of who they are.

Parents, families, friends, peers and professionals all have an important role to play in supporting young people to live and express their authentic gender.

Everybody affirms their gender, gender affirmation is a term that describes the range of actions and decisions a person makes to express their gender identity. For example, wearing earrings, make up, tattoos, working out at the gym, etc.

Gender Affirmation: Overview and Possible Paths

Unique to each person and shaped by: family & social context, acceptance, availability and accessibility of services and supports.



Social Affirmation

- Using chosen name and pronouns.
- Coming out or inviting in at own pace.
- Choice of clothes, hair style, accessories.
- Participating as their true self in school, work, sport, community.



Legal Affirmation

- Updating name and gender markers in everyday documents or birth certificate.
- Updating government records (e.g. Medicare, Centrelink).
- Be affirmed when engaging with health, justice, immigration systems.



Medical Affirmation

- Working with GPs, clinicians, and multidisciplinary teams.
- Reversible puberty blockers.
- Choosing individual gender affirming hormone treatment options.
- Gender affirming surgeries where appropriate.

Gender Affirmation An Introduction

Who are some of the professionals and services that can support gender affirmation?



MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS

- GPs & paediatricians
- Psychologists & psychiatrists
- Mental health professionals
- Endocrinologists
- Multidisciplinary teams
- Specialists & surgeons



ALLIED HEALTH

- Voice & communication therapists
- Physiotherapists & osteopaths
- Community health services
- Dietitians & nutritionists
- Physical activity coaches



COMMUNITY SERVICES

- Peer & support groups
- Family services
- LGBTIQ+ organisations
- Advocacy & legal services
- Legal Aid
- Community events, education & workshops



LEGAL AFFIRMATION

- Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages (BDM)
- Medicare
- Department of Education – for support around school policies and expectations

Things to Keep In Mind

1. Everybody wants to be heard, seen and validated.
2. Gender affirmation and identity affirmation is something we all do, all the time.
3. Gender affirmation is not a linear journey, it is different for everybody.
4. Rejection at home, school or in the community harms young people's wellbeing and mental health.
5. Trans, gender diverse and non-binary people have always existed and been part of many cultures around the world.



There is no right or wrong way to be trans, and there are no obligations for a trans person to affirm their gender in any specific way.