The Child Comes First

LISTEN • SUPPORT • LEARN • WORK TOGETHER

Parent and Family Guide | wendyliverseed.com | Guidance and resources on page 2

My Child Told Me They're Transgender. What Do I Do Next?

A practical guide for parents and families

Your child trusted you with something important.
First, say: "I love you. I'll always love you.
Thank you for trusting me and telling me."
Just listen. You don't need to have the answers in that moment.

First, check safety: Is your child safe right now?
If your child is in immediate danger or may harm themselves, stay with them and seek urgent help.
Otherwise, continue calmly. Follow the pathways below; more than one may apply.

I want to LEARN MORE

Next Step

- Learn the basics about gender identity and development.
- Use trusted, evidence-based resources (see below).
- Ask respectful questions and keep listening to your child.

I want to SUPPORT MY CHILD

Next Step

- Use your child's chosen name and pronouns.
- Create a safe, supportive environment at home, school, and in activities.
- Talk with your child about who knows and who they feel comfortable telling. Ask for professional guidance if privacy or safety concerns arise.
- Ask: "What would help you feel supported right now?"

The other parent DISAGREES

Next Step

- Keep disagreements between adults. Do not ask your child to defend their identity, carry messages, or choose sides.
- Agree on no ridicule or threats, protection from bullying, and respectful communication.
- Seek qualified support for unresolved parenting, legal, or clinical questions.

I have questions about MEDICAL CARE

Next Step

- Talk with your child's pediatrician or a qualified gender health provider.
- Start with information and exploration. Medical decisions are individualized and based on careful assessment.
- Get information from reputable sources (see below).

2 Keep the Conversation Going

Your child's needs may evolve. Stay informed, ask questions, and surround your family with support.
Children do best when parents remain focused on their well-being.
Your child's identity is not a problem to negotiate. Love, dignity, privacy, and safety are not bargaining chips.
Ask: "What is one thing I can do that would help?" Revisit the conversation without pressure.

Key Facts

- Being transgender is not a mental illness.
- Gender identity can develop at different ages and looks different for each child.
- Family support is linked to better youth mental health and well-being.
- Decisions about medical care are best made with qualified healthcare professionals.

Trusted Resources

Children's Minnesota Gender Health
childrensmn.org/genderhealth
AAP - HealthyChildren.org
Gender-diverse & transgender children
The Trevor Project - education
thetrevorproject.org/resources
Family Acceptance Project
familyproject.sfsu.edu

Scan Children's MN

Wendy Liverseed NEUTRAL FAMILY SERVICES
Helping Families Move Forward Through Conflict
MEDIATION • PARENTING CONSULTATION • EDUCATION • PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS

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Additional guidance and resources | wendyliverseed.com

Take self harm and suicide concerns seriously

Immediate danger: call 911 or seek emergency care. This includes an attempt, serious injury, or overdose. Stay with the child; secure dangerous items if safe.

Crisis support: call or text 988 (U.S.). Ask calmly, "Are you thinking about suicide?" Asking does not increase suicidal thoughts. Listen; do not promise secrecy.

Follow through: Seek prompt assessment for self-harm, even without suicidal intent. Make a safety plan with a clinician and follow up. [1]

Counseling for children and parents

- **For your child:** Seek a licensed therapist experienced in gender diversity for distress, safety, and open exploration without forcing or suppressing identity. [3]
- **For you:** Take fear, sadness, or grief about expectations to your own counselor or parent group.
- Your child should not have to comfort you or earn your love.

Recognize psychological harm

- Ridicule, deliberate repeated misgendering, forced disclosure, threats of rejection, or choosing sides can cause shame, fear, isolation, or lost trust.
- Stop hurtful behavior; repair it through apology and changed behavior.
- Keep arguments between adults. Seek qualified help; use mediation only when safe.

Work thoughtfully with school

Plan with the child and school staff: bullying, names, pronouns, privacy, records, disclosure, and safe routines. Ask what is recorded or shared. **Check current law, school policy, consent, and orders;** duties vary. Get advice when privacy and safety conflict.

Use survey figures accurately

Trevor Project's **2024 U.S. online survey**: among transgender and nonbinary respondents, **46% reported seriously considering a suicide attempt; 14% reported an attempt** in the past year. These are **not death rates**. The survey included 18,663 LGBTQ+ people ages 13-24, recruited in 2023. The self-report sample was not nationally representative and cannot show cause and effect or predict a child's risk. [2]

Gender Identity & Family Support

Crisis support

988 Lifeline
Call or text 988 (U.S.).
988lifeline.org

The Trevor Project
LGBTQ+ youth crisis support.
thetrevorproject.org
Choose Reach a Counselor

Family support

Transforming Families Minnesota
Youth and family peer support.
tffmn.org

PFLAG
Family education and support.
pflag.org

Reading and perspectives

The Ripple
Ellie Krug's newsletter.
elliekrug.com/newslettersmedia/

Erin in the Morning
Reporting and commentary.
erininthemorning.com

Blogs and peer groups are not crisis care or individualized advice; listing does not imply endorsement.
Sources: [1] NIMH prevention steps and FAQ; [2] Trevor Project 2024 survey; [3] AACAP policy (2018). Checked Nov. 2, 2026.