

THE
YOU
INSIDE
PROJECT

STOPPING TRANSPHOBIA
BEFORE IT STARTS

**READ THE BOOKLET.
WATCH THE FILM.
PLAY WITH THE TOY.**



Play-based learning is an effective way to engage your children in an open discussion about gender identity. Our hope is that by watching the short film *Sam's Story*, playing with Sam, or going through the booklet with an adult, children will become more accepting of anyone who identifies as transgender.

OUR MISSION

To educate people, especially children and their families, about gender identity issues. With education comes understanding, empathy and ultimately, acceptance.



MEET SAM

Sam illustrates the emotions felt by many children struggling with their gender identity.

Sam does not represent the path taken by every person, however. Every person's story is unique. Each stage of Sam's story should be seen as an opportunity to talk to a child about what they think Sam is feeling. And why.

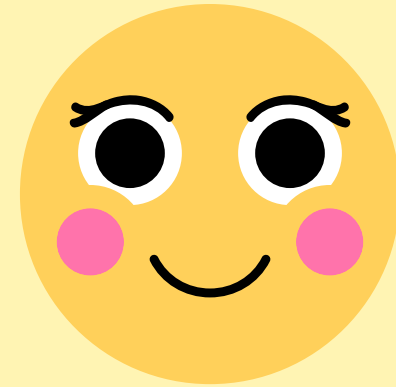
WHAT IS
SAM
FEELING?



THE YOU INSIDE



The heart inside
represents Sam's
true self, regardless
of gender.

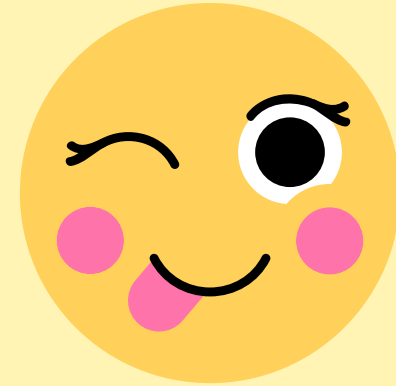


HAPPY



Most children are not even aware of their own gender identity until two or three years old. They know they are a “boy” or a “girl” but not what that implies in a broader cultural context. It is therefore rare for children this young to feel any conflict over their gender identity.¹

1. Ehrensaft, 2014.

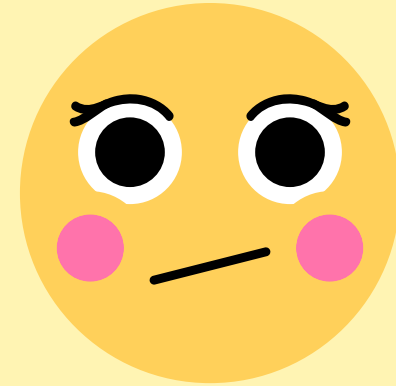


EXPLORING

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Children may begin to explore their gender identity between the ages of 3 and 7.² This is part of a natural process of self-determination and gender affirmation.

2. Ehrensaft, 2014.



QUESTIONING

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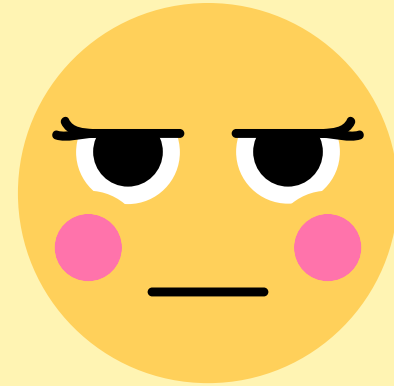
This is the stage when children may first question why their gender assigned at birth differs from the gender identity they feel. They may feel ashamed of these feelings and try to hide or ignore them.



CONFLICTED

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Unfortunately, almost any child struggling with their gender identity will encounter moments when the society they live in forces them to question and even mistrust what they are feeling inside. The impact of this struggle will largely be determined by the reactions of their family, friends and authority figures around them, such as teachers or coaches.

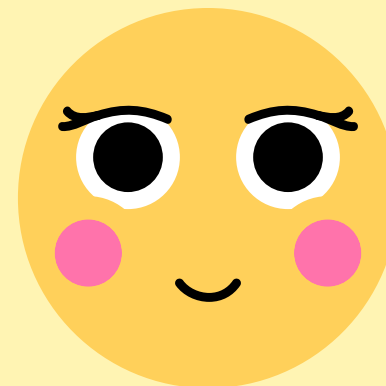


ISOLATED

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Without emotional support and understanding, gender-questioning children feel isolated and alone with their struggle.

This can lead to depression. Or worse. It is vital that these children feel supported, understood and accepted.



SUPPORTED



Every child that questions their gender identity should be allowed to do so free of prejudice, pressure or judgment. Everybody has the right to express their gender in the way that makes them feel comfortable.

It is critical to the happiness of gender-questioning children that they feel supported by their family, friends and authority figures.

YOUR QUESTIONS

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**We don't have all the answers.
Or all the questions. But here
are some common things
questions people ask about
being transgender.**

**IS THERE
SOMETHING WRONG?**

NO

**Questioning your gender
identity is as normal and natural
as questioning any other aspect
of your identity.**

IS IT RARE?

NO

It may feel rare because until very recently it wasn't something that was talked about in the media very often, but there are likely millions of children around the world asking themselves similar questions.³ The latest research from 2017 estimates that 0.7% of young people aged 13–17 living in the United States identify as trans.⁴

3. Möller, Schreier, Li & Romer, 2009. 4. Williams Institute, UCLA, 2017.

DO YOU NEED
AN OPERATION TO LIVE
YOUR TRUE GENDER?

NO

There are three main ways to transition from one gender to another. The question of whether or not to transition, in any of these three ways, is entirely up to the individual. The first way is *social*. This might involve an external expression of your gender identity, anything from how you wear your hair or what clothes you wear to how you ask people to address you. The second is *medical*. This can involve puberty-blocking medication (also known as puberty suppression). As the person gets older, options may include hormone therapy and/or surgery, though this is by no means necessary. There is now an increasingly wide range of medical options available to help people feel more comfortable, though many people decide not to follow any form of medical transition. The third is *legal*. This involves legally changing your gender marker and/or your name on ID papers and is now possible in some places in the world.

IS IT POSSIBLE THAT IT'S JUST A PHASE?

Many parents understandably want to ensure that their child is not just going through “a phase” before they support any kind of transition. We believe you should follow the child’s lead and remember that only they can affirm their gender identity. Don’t be afraid to ask for help.



A FEW RESOURCES



There are a growing number
of places you can go for more
information and support.

IN CANADA

GENDER CREATIVE KIDS gendercreativekids.ca

FONDATION ÉMERGENCE fondationemergence.org

MERAKI HEALTH CENTRE centremeraki.com

L'ASTÉRISK lasterisk.com

CENTER FOR GENDER ADVOCACY genderadvocacy.org

OK2BME ok2bme.ca

TRANS STUDENT transstudent.org

EGALE CANADA HUMAN RIGHTS TRUST egale.ca

MADE IN MONTRÉAL

OPEN TO
THE WORLD



The You Inside Project is an initiative of Gender Creative Kids Canada, a non-profit community organization based in Montréal, Québec, Canada. The goal of this project is to help as many people as possible around the world.

THE YOU INSIDE PROJECT
WAS BROUGHT TO LIFE WITH
HELP FROM OUR PARTNERS

QUÉBEC MINISTRY OF JUSTICE

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