GET THE FACTS ABOUT TRANS YOUTH

Who is transgender?
Transgender people are those who know themselves to be one gender, but who were labeled a different gender at birth. For example, a child who was thought to be a girl but knows himself to be a boy might call himself transgender.

How many kids are transgender?
According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), almost 2% of high school students identify as transgender. Applied to all youth, this means there are at least:

1.3 million+ trans youth (ages 0-17)

Why is family acceptance so important?
Research shows that trans youth with supportive families experience:
- 52% decrease in recent suicidal thoughts
- 46% decrease in suicide attempts

Significant increases in self-esteem and general health

But only 27% of trans youth say their families are very supportive.

Fewer than half (43%) say they have an adult in their family they could turn to if they felt sad or worried.

How can families support their trans child?
Expressing love and support for trans youth, including:
- respecting their chosen name and correct pronouns.
- allowing them to choose their clothes and hair style.
- allowing them to choose their toys and activities.

This helps children know there are adults who love and support them—especially important for when they experience negative reactions outside the family.

Preventing trans youth from seeing other trans youth or participating in related activities can increase isolation and risk factors. Therefore, this should be avoided.

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MANY TRANS YOUTH EXPERIENCE DISCRIMINATION IN THEIR SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES

- Only 9% of trans youth say their communities are very accepting.
- Only 8% of trans youth say their place of worship is very accepting.
- 80% of transgender students said they’d avoided bathrooms because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable.
- 64% of transgender students avoided gym class because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable.
- 59% of transgender students had been required to use a bathroom that did not match the gender they live every day.
- Only 12% of trans youth say their school or district has official policies support trans students.
- Only 9% of trans youth say their communities are very accepting.
- Only 8% of trans youth say their place of worship is very accepting.
- 67% of trans youth have heard negative comments about their gender identity.
- 59% of trans youth have experienced verbal harassment and teasing because of their gender identity.
- 52% of trans youth have experienced physical harassment because of their gender identity.
- 50% of trans youth have been excluded or left out of activities because of their gender identity.
- 48% of trans youth have been threatened or bullied because of their gender identity.
- 45% of trans youth have been called names because of their gender identity.
- 42% of trans youth have been stared at or glared at because of their gender identity.
- 39% of trans youth have been physically attacked or beaten because of their gender identity.
- 35% of trans youth have been threatened with a weapon because of their gender identity.

HOW CAN SCHOOLS & COMMUNITIES SUPPORT TRANS YOUTH?

- Teachers and staff should model inclusive behavior, including respecting chosen names and correct pronouns, as well as incorporating age-appropriate representation of LGBT people and history into curriculum.
- Schools should ensure trans kids can participate in school activities and teams consistent with their gender identity.
- Gender and sexualities alliances (GSAs, also called gay-straight alliances) and similar community organizations can support LGBTQ youth and even reduce the harmful impacts of bullying.
- Libraries should include books and resources for all ages that represent trans and gender diverse youth and people.
- Faith communities should make their support of trans and LGB youth clear, use inclusive language, and work alongside local trans advocates and youth to create affirming communities.
- Service providers, such as health care professionals and child welfare workers, should educate themselves on best practices for supporting and advocating for trans youth and their needs.

Inclusive Policies Make a Difference for Transgender Students

Transgender students in schools with supportive policies are less likely to miss school due to feeling unsafe, and they are more likely to feel greater belonging to their school communities. Yet only 12% of transgender and gender diverse students reported that their school or district had official policies or guidelines supporting transgender or gender diverse students.

Sources: