

Supporting trans or gender diverse children and their families with gender affirmation: A guide for GPs and paediatricians

This resource is designed to guide you through a conversation with a family and their child who is exploring their gender identity and who might be trans or gender diverse. It is both a checklist for you to use in your organisation, and a conversation guide. For more information about trans and gender diversity, please see the resource [Supporting Trans and Gender Diverse Children and their Families](#).

This checklist should be worked through in conversation with the child and their family. This will help to alleviate any concerns that they have about returning to your service. Practitioners should print a copy for the child and their family, so that they may go away and think about things they would like to add or change. It can/should act as a positive affirming document that gives the child and their family some sense of control and agency over their life. The child should be at the centre of this discussion.

For referral options, download a copy of the [Referral Matrix](#).

Areas to discuss	Discussion points/questions to ask	Comments/Actions
Affirming name	<p>Questions for the child: Do you want to change your name? Have you already changed your name?</p> <p>Note: Medicare requires a person's Medicare-registered name for billing purposes, so make sure there are internal processes in place to ensure everyone uses the child's affirmed name.</p>	
Affirming pronouns	<p>Considerations: Not all children will understand the term 'pronoun'.</p> <p>Questions for the child: Make sure your questions are age appropriate. For example: "Would you like me to call you a boy or a girl or neither of those?" or "Would you like to use the words he/she/they or none of those?"</p>	

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Family cohesiveness	<p>Considerations: Are all parent/s or carer/s aware and supportive? What extra support might the child need?</p> <p>Questions fo the child: What is happening at home? Is there anything else you would like to do at home that would support your affirmation?</p> <p>Note: Asking these questions with both the child and the parents present might give the child the chance to ask for something they haven't felt comfortable requesting previously.</p>	
Support for parent/carer	<p>Considerations: What extra support might the parent/carers need? Do they need one-on-one support?</p> <p>Are the parents aware of and connected into any peer support groups? See the Referral Matrix for a list of parent peer support groups in each state/territory.</p>	
Siblings	<p>Considerations: Are they aware? Are they supportive? Do the siblings need further support?</p>	
Other family/friends support	<p>Considerations: Use this as an opportunity to help the child think about other supportive adults and friends that they can speak to and get support from.</p> <p>Question for the child: Are there other trusted adults that you would like to talk to about this?</p>	

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Mental health support	<p>Considerations: Are there any mental health issues being experienced by the child? How are these being managed at the moment? Do they require further support? Have they thought about self-harming? Do you need to consider a safety plan?</p> <p>Questions for the child: How are you feeling? What has helped so far? What would help you to feel better?</p>	<p><i>Referral options made/discussed:</i></p>
Safety plan	<p>See Beyond Blue's Beyond Now App for a Safety Plan</p>	
Social affirmation (See the <i>Supporting trans and gender diverse children and their families</i> resource for an explanation of these)	<p>Talk through some of the aspects of social affirmation. Find out what they have been doing and what they would like to achieve. Talk about timelines for these things.</p> <p>Question for the child: Is there anything that you would like more support with?</p>	
Medical affirmation (See the <i>Australian Standards of Care and Treatment Guidelines</i> for more information)	<p>Considerations: How old is the child? Is this child nearing puberty? Do they want to delay their puberty? Do they know what puberty blockers are? Is this something they are considering? Do you need to refer to a paediatrician or gender specialist? (See the Referral Matrix for a list of referral options in your state/territory)</p> <p>Note: Remember waiting lists can be up to 12 months for these services, so it is good practice to make early referrals – for example when the child is 8 or 9 years old)</p>	<p>Referral made to:</p> <p>On this date:</p>

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<p>Documentation</p>	<p>Considerations: What documentation needs to be changed in your organisation? How will you ensure that the child is not misgendered or misnamed?</p> <p>Note: The family may have been unable to change some key forms of identification such as birth certificates or Medicare cards by the time you see them.</p>	<p><i>List documents/records that need changing and who will be responsible for these changes.</i></p>
<p>Cross-agency referral</p>	<p>Considerations: Is your practice connected to other health providers that this family is accessing services from? How can you support the family to have this information communicated to these agencies? It would be helpful to include the Allied Health Checklist as part of your referral.</p>	
<p>School</p> <p>Some things that the child and family will need to consider are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School documents and records • Toilets and changing rooms • School uniform and policy • School sports and physical education • School camps, events & extra-curricular activities 	<p>How is the child feeling about attending school?</p> <p>Questions for parents/caregivers: Have you or your child told their school yet? Is there a supportive person at their school? What school records would your child like changed? E.g. Name, gender identity and gender marker? Does the school have a policy on supporting your child (that you're aware of)?</p> <p>Questions for the child: What uniform items do you feel comfortable to wear? Are you experiencing any bullying? Have you told your teachers about your affirmation? Have they been supportive?</p> <p>Consideration: Education department policy can be helpful if a school is not being supportive of the child. It might be worth the parent contacting their state education department to find out what policy support is available.</p>	<p>See Referral Matrix for school support in each state.</p>

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Support from other services	<p>Questions for the child/parent/caregiver: Are you seeking support from other services? What is it that they are helping you with? Are there other services that you would like support to access or need a referral to?</p>	
Other hobbies	<p>Questions for the child: What other activities are you involved in? Is there anything that needs to be done to make sure you can continue to participate in these activities?</p>	
Other considerations		
<p>Privacy and Confidentiality</p> <p>Not everyone in this service needs to know about this child's affirmation. However, there will be some key people, like admin staff who will need to know in order to ensure future visits are safe.</p> <p>Think about how you will safely share this information with these staff.</p>	<p>This is an opportunity to ensure the child and their family feel safe to continue to access your service. By discussing with them how they would like their information to be shared within the service, you are giving them agency over their life and helping to make them feel safe.</p> <p>Questions for the parents/caregivers: Who else is aware that this child is affirming/gender questioning? Who in the organisation needs to know? (Don't forget to include administration staff, as they are often the first point of call for people using the service)</p> <p>Question for practitioners (to answer in conversation with parents/caregivers and the child): How will you ensure that the child is not misgendered, or does not have to explain themselves?</p>	
Next visit	<p>You may not have gotten through this whole plan in one session. You may also need to revisit elements of this plan regularly to check in with the child and their family on their progress.</p>	