



**OMG I'M
TRANS**

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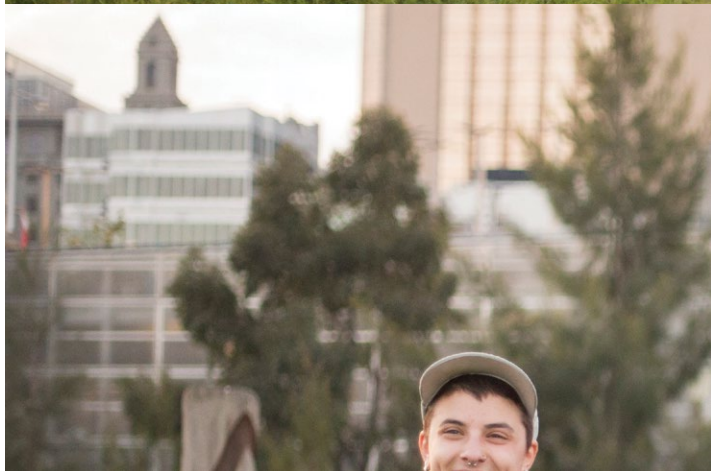
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WE'RE TRANS YOUTH AND WE MADE THIS 





A person is sitting on a grassy field at night. They are wearing a red top, black boots, and purple patterned tights. The background shows a city street with trees and buildings, some of which are lit up. The text is overlaid on the image in a bold, white, italicized font.

***COMING OUT
AS TRANS OR
GENDER DIVERSE
DOESN'T HAVE
TO BE AN
OMG THING.***



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what is gender?

Margot Fink

Gender is everywhere. E-v-e-r-y-w-h-e-r-e.

In class you're divided into 'girls' and 'boys' groups. At a restaurant you're called 'sir' or 'ma'am'. You click a drop-down option when you sign up for a website. You can't even go to the toilet without opening a gendered door.

Living in Australia, you tend to get these completely full-on, pre-defined ideas about what you're supposed to 'be' based on your gender; boys play sport – girls play house. Boys are rough – girls are soft. The thing is, as we get older, and start thinking for ourselves, it becomes pretty clear that it's all a bit bullshit. There's no predefined way for someone to act based on their gender and there's this massive area that goes beyond just these two roles.

When we're born we're assigned a sex, it's written on our birth certificate and then all these things – the tv shows we watch, our schools, the toilets we use – shape how we feel and how we're supposed to act. But that little piece of paper doesn't always align with how we feel about our own gender.

There are a whole range of words to describe that experience – 'transgender' and 'gender diverse' are the two most common ones.

For a lot of people gender might not be strictly male or female. It could be somewhere in between, or something else entirely! I have friends who experience gender more fluidly, it can shift and change over time.

An important thing to understand is gender isn't about the physical stuff. It's much more about how you identify and feel most comfortable, not your body, not the sex you were assigned at birth, and definitely not what anyone else thinks!

Not everyone knows straight away, and those who are questioning their gender might not be ready to talk about it, and that's totally okay. Everyone goes at a different pace, so do what's best for you! There might not be any need for you to figure it out at all, it could be more a

matter of helping others understand how you identify.

A big mistake people make is confusing gender with sexuality. They definitely can relate, but they're not the same thing. Gender is all about your internal sense of self.

Sexuality is who you're attracted to – that can be people of the same gender, a different one, or multiple genders. Gender identity often comes first and is then used to create a definition around sexuality. Someone who identifies as a boy (gender identity) and is attracted to other boys might identify as 'gay' (sexuality).

Basically being transgender isn't 'mega gay' or some sort of 'extreme'. Trans people can be lesbian, gay, bi, pan, straight or any other sexuality.

For me personally I identify as a bisexual girl, but was assigned male at birth. What that means is I strongly identify as female, and can be attracted to other people of multiple genders the same or different from my own. I've always felt female on some level, and I actually tried really hard to convince myself I was a guy for ages, but guess what? Turns out I'm most definitely a girl!

There's also social aspects to gender. Words like 'she/daughter/sister/girlfriend' or 'he/son/brother/boyfriend' are all pretty obviously gendered, and the words a person feels comfortable with can change with time.

Letting people know how you'd like to be treated is super empowering!

Basically what exactly 'gender' means varies from person to person. It comes down to how you're most comfortable describing yourself. There's no one feature that defines your gender for you.

It's also important not to treat what I'm writing here as gospel, or the be all end all. This is a general overview of gender so some people might feel different. Always try to respect the way someone else might feel and identify, and don't be afraid to look for more info!





social transition.

Brooklyn Rosner

Social transitioning or affirming your gender is the way to 'come out' and express your gender to other people. This could be through your appearance, using certain pronouns or name, your mannerisms, or simply letting people know the gender you identify as. Transitioning is a pretty personal process, and can be as minor or as extensive as you want it to be. When you 'come out' as trans or gender diverse there's no rulebook that you need to follow. The main thing is that you're taking steps to truly feel yourself, and there're a stack of different ways to do that.

Pronouns

For me, no matter what I physically look like, someone using my correct pronouns makes a big difference. Pronouns you've probably heard before are 'he', 'she', 'they'. There are also gender neutral pronouns like 'ze' or 'fae' some people use. Personally, I feel most happy and comfortable using they/them pronouns, but I'm also okay with he/him. There are a stack of different types of pronouns that people use, and the most important thing is that you voice and use the ones that you feel are the best fit. Testing out different pronouns and seeing what makes you feel most at home is a great way to start.

If you decide you want to change your pronouns, you can ask others to use those when addressing or referring to you. People will catch on at different paces, and showing a bit of patience at first will go a long way. But when they do get it right, it's an amazing feeling, and being comfortable in social situations has a big benefit.

Name

Likewise, a lot of people also change their name to complement their change of pronouns. Completely up to you, it can feel like a fresh start and a way to leave your old identity behind. Whenever I hear someone call me by my correct name it's really validating. Having a new name to mark coming out and embracing your gender identity can be hugely empowering, but don't feel pressured to change your name either! Many trans people choose to keep the same name, or slightly tweak their old one; just do what feels best for you. There's no reason you can't change your name later on either.

Appearance

Changing your appearance is another way you can express your gender. Things like makeup, the clothes or school uniform you wear, binding your chest, tucking/packing your pants, or the way you do your hair can all help you better express yourself. We live in a pretty gender stereotype focused world and there's no shame in sometimes using that to your advantage in order to help people recognise you as the gender you identify with. Although, if these don't work for you, then you totally don't have to adhere to gender binaries or stereotypes. Everything is totally up to you, your appearance doesn't equal your gender. Ideally your appearance should just be whatever makes you comfortable.

Using Gendered Facilities

Using the dressing rooms, toilets and change rooms that you feel comfortable in can sometimes be a bit tricky to navigate. Using the facilities you feel most comfortable and safe with is a good place to start. For toilets and change rooms at school, getting the support of a trusted teacher, wellbeing coordinator or principal is usually needed, and makes the process easier. Safe Schools Coalition Victoria can help you and your school with this process.

Support and Networks

Probably the best way to feel more comfortable with your identity is gaining support and talking to likeminded people. Don't feel embarrassed to ask for support, and don't feel like you have to go through it in silence. Online networks like Tumblr and Minus18 are two places I found incredibly useful. There's this very big, lovely queer community online that I learned lots of things about transitioning and coming out from. Seeing others come out is also really motivating and inspiring.

It's a Process

Transitioning is a process, meaning it's personal and it can take some time. Go at it at your own pace – it's not an all or nothing event. You may decide to express yourself differently in certain social groups, and that's totally up to you. Nothing will truly validate your identity except for you – not being out, not passing, not hormones, not what anyone says. Ultimately these things are just tools that can help you feel more comfortable and truly yourself. When and whether you need them is for you to decide.



Keeping Track

Documenting your transition can be a pretty empowering thing that some people decide to do. Since changes can occur over a long period of time, taking photos or recording a vlog gives you the opportunity to watch your progress back. Seeing how far you've come is a great way to keep motivated, and sharing your progress with others can help them better understand the process.

medical transition.

Margot Fink

Medical transitioning is when a trans person makes the decision to access medical options, such as hormones, surgery or behaviour training to feel more comfortable in their own skin. These options can have a big impact on the way a person expresses their gender.

Medical transitioning isn't about 'fitting in'. Sure, that can be part of it, but it's really about doing what helps you feel most comfortable personally. Keep in mind that it's not for everyone - lots of trans and gender diverse people have no interest in or access to medically transitioning. Surgeries and other treatments are just tools to help achieve what feels right to you, and shouldn't ever be seen as essential to being a 'real' man, woman or anything else.

Getting Started

The first thing to do is talk to a GP to get a referral to a psychiatrist or other professional who specialises in gender therapy. This can be your family doctor, or someone at an LGBTI health clinic like Northside Clinic or Prahran Market Clinic. If you're under 18 the Royal Children's Hospital and Monash Gender Clinic both have support services available for trans young people. If you can't find a local service, but have a supportive GP, they can contact Northside Clinic to access advice on how to better support you.

Seeing a psychiatrist may seem like a big step, and your experience may be varied, but it's important to remember that at no stage are you locked in. If you're not happy with your sessions or don't feel they're right for you, you're absolutely able to seek support elsewhere.

When under 18, the first medical option available to you is to you is puberty blockers. They're most effective for people in the early stages of puberty, if you're younger it's definitely worth discussing with your doctor. Accessing puberty blockers requires psychiatrist approval, parental consent from both parents, and an endocrinologist. Puberty blockers can stop your body developing things like breasts or an 'adam's apple', and basically give you a bit more time to figure things out. It's also a reversible treatment.

If you're interested, once you're 18 you can start hormone replacement therapy (HRT). This is when you adjust hormone levels in your body to

better reflect your identity. Beginning HRT under 18 years of age is tricky, and requires a ruling from the Family Court.

Surgery

Surgery is something you might consider too, and while it isn't for everyone, for some it can be hugely beneficial. For chest and genital surgeries you will need additional approvals from your psychiatrist. At present, both top surgery (surgery on your chest) and genital surgery can't actually be performed on anyone under 18 years of age in Victoria. Cosmetic surgeries such as nose or chin reconstructions are not subject to special restrictions.

Speech Pathology

Another option that might not seem apparent is speech pathology. For me, my voice sometimes made me uncomfortable, and my doctor recommended checking it out and seeing how I felt. Speech Pathology is vocal training to help change the pitch of your voice and speech patterns to something you're more comfortable with. The best thing about this one is there's no restrictions around age or who can access it. La Trobe University has a speech pathology clinic that specialises in voice training for trans people.

Accessing Services

If you're under 18 and don't have the support of your parents/guardians medical transition can be a challenge. Under the law parental consent and support is critical to any medical treatment. Access to services in regional areas can also be limited or not available. In these cases there are still ways to get support online through communities like Minus18 and Ygender, as well as counselling chat services like Switchboard and QLife. Connecting with other people and talking about what you're going through can be a great source of support.

Take all the time you need until you're ready before undergoing any treatments, but keep in mind that starting the conversations early helps you get better informed and means you don't have to wait as long once you're sure.

The treatments available are constantly improving, and while we still have a way to go, there's a lot of great options and support out there.

why passing is bullshit.

David Zeleznikow-Johnston

People often see transitioning as 'you were one gender, and now you're passing as another' but that's not really how it works.

'Passing' is a term to describe when a trans person is recognised by people around them as the gender they identify as. In theory it's a pretty good thing, but the idea of 'passing' also has a few big downsides.

It sort of reinforces the idea that there's a 'right' way to be male, female, or any other gender, and that's actually a bad thing.

Consider a young trans girl who's just come out as an example. Anyone, absolutely anyone can "look like a girl", regardless of what you wear and how you style yourself.

Being a girl doesn't mean having long hair, wearing skirts and eating fruity yogurt while rocking out to Taylor Swift and it certainly doesn't mean having a vagina. Gender is an identity not a physicality. There's no one true way to be a girl, boy or anything else.

When a person comes out as trans, it often means that now that they're out they can finally express themselves however they want. The choices in hair, makeup, clothes and anything else external are all types of expression, and often can be a tool to help project to people around you an expression of your gender identity. This is what's known as 'gender expression'.

What's important to note is there're no strict rules here. Wearing certain clothes that traditionally signal 'boy' or 'girl' is okay, but it's not something you should feel pressured to do unless you want to.

Some trans and gender diverse people might feel most comfortable meeting expectations, while others might prefer to break out of the boxes, and both are totally valid.

Skirts, suits, hair, makeup, and any other form of gender expression won't necessarily reflect

a person's gender, but some people use them to better project 'girl' or 'boy'. This is because we still live in a society with expectations around those identities.

Not everyone is ready or able to break down gender norms, and not everyone should have to either. Your only responsibility is to wear what you want, express how you want, and be yourself in the way you feel most comfortable.

Let's be real though – there can be times where it feels tough to present how you want, especially in a society so fixed on rigid ideas of 'boy' and 'girl'. When I was younger I felt like I needed to act more masculine. I remember trying to deepen my voice and sound more 'like a boy' even though the way I talked was perfectly natural. Later when I started to express myself in a more typically feminine way I felt guilty that I wasn't shaving my legs or wearing enough makeup.

But as I saw friends dressing and acting how they wanted without care if they were 'passing' or conforming to expectations, I grew more confident and felt more able to express myself the way I wanted.

In the end I learned that I'm happiest when I'm presenting myself to the world in a way that best reflects how I act naturally, not necessarily how others want me to act.

You can be non-binary and refuse to ever put on a dress. You can be a girl obsessed with everything pink or a boy who spends all his time playing soccer and baking. Your identity might not give an indication of how you act or dress yourself, but all of those aspects of yourself are significant and real.

Whether you strongly identify male, female, non-binary, or don't have a need for labels at all, the most important thing is to do what feels best for you.







people who inspire us.

Andreja Pejic

Kai Clancy

David Zeleznikow-Johnston



**MODEL &
TRANS WOMAN**



andreja pejic.

As told to Margot Fink

When I was really young I was growing up in Serbia in a refugee camp, and we didn't have a lot of material things. It was a pretty open environment, you're a kid and you're kind of allowed to do 'opposite gender' things and you play around with dolls and it's okay 'cause you're a kid. I was pretty happy. I came to Australia in 2000. That was a period of 'having to go from childhood to... 'manhood' I guess? That was a difficult stage, and there was pressure to 'grow up and be a boy'.

After I came out to my parents in highschool, I kind of had the confidence to express my feminine side - so I dyed my hair and wore skinny jeans and was kind of an emo for a little while haha. That's when I developed more, and my look became more and more feminine. I was seen as a boy, but as an androgynous boy. I was lucky, but I couldn't be myself 100%. I felt like I couldn't tell my friends I was trans, I felt like they wouldn't understand the difference between sexuality and gender. I think it's a pretty common experience, especially when you're young and transitioning.

Well, y'know when I was younger I knew there was something different about me, I would always fantasize about being a girl and what that would be like, but I didn't quite know what was going on with me. The only thing society was telling me was 'you can either be a straight boy, or maybe a gay boy, but that's it', nobody tells you you could be trans. Through Google, I found words to describe what I was feeling, I found a whole international community and support, and that definitely helped me feel more normal and that I wasn't the only one.

I gained a lot of support from my Mum. She was always quite protective when I was younger. My older brother and grandmother were kind of disapproving of my 'girly ways', but mum used to stick up for me. I came out to her at 13, she wasn't really very familiar with all of it, but she really loved her children no matter what and nothing could deter her away from that. She took a while to understand what it all means, but she really came around and was amazing support, and I think that's been pretty crucial for me.

The process of coming out to Mum though was really scary! I planned my whole speech, I was waiting till the right time for months. She also had a lot going on personally, and I didn't want to add to that. I was really worried about making her sad or being a disappointment. I actually sat her down and cried a lot, and was like "No I can't do it", but she was like "well now you have to tell me what's going on". It was probably one of the hardest things I've ever had to do I think.

When I came out publicly it made international headlines, haha. For me it's always been a very personal thing, and something I had to do myself, and not for anyone else. I so didn't imagine doing it in a public way, I always thought like 'Oh I guess I'll model, and then I'll get out and live my life' I never thought I'd do it in the public eye. But then I had a few really good people around me, and they were all saying 'it's important you get your story out to the world, so many people could be helped by it'. And then I did it. It was very relieving, in a split second the whole world knew, and I didn't have to filter myself any more, it was really freeing.

I've been lucky to have some great people from all around the world supporting me and sending me love, and in coming out you fear being ostracised or rejection, I think everyone still goes through that. So I think it's important to be careful, but don't let fear consume you in being who you are.

I'm kind of learning that people view me as a role model the more I meet them - it's a pretty new thing for me too. Growing up, the only time I ever saw trans people was on TV was like on Jerry Springer having fights and NCIS as a murder victim. There was never good examples, there was never success associated with being trans. I felt like I was basically, by coming out, saying I was never going to make it in life because there were no good examples. So If I can be that positive example, then that would be great.

Overall, I would like the natural differences between people to stop being barriers, and hopefully people can just be lesbian, gay, bi, trans or intersex and it's not a big drama or a negative thing a young person has to worry about.

kai clancy.

As told to Spencer Gorman

Kai is a 19 year old Aboriginal Brotherboy from Wakka Wakka and Wullli Wullli nations. Kai came out as transgender when he was 17 years old. I was excited to sit down with another trans guy, and find out more about how his cultural background influences his identity.

"Growing up was pretty decent. I grew up with my Mum, my Dad and my sister in Townsville and we had a pretty – um - alright life. Dad worked in a mine, and Mum stayed at home. We did a lot of cultural stuff together, which meant I was always taught to do woman's dance and woman's song. I guess I felt a little bit uncomfortable doing all of that given that I'm transgender."

"It was fine until I hit puberty; that's when things started to go downhill. I started to not be myself and tried to conform to society's expectations of a female. At 17, at the end of high school I just came out as transgender and things looked up."

"Coming out was pretty subtle, I have to say, because 'Kai' is just a shortened version of my birth name, so people thought I just did a big typo on Facebook when I changed it. I had to actually say 'yeah, look I'm tryna' come out to you guys' but they didn't get it. I'd put up statuses like 'I wanna be a boy' but people would write stuff like 'You're drunk. Go home.'"

Kai chuckled to himself and smiled. So when I started testosterone people were like 'oh you're actually serious.'"

"They're all good with it y'know, you just get a few haters here and there, but that's fine. Who cares about them?"

"Overall my community reacted pretty well, because they've known me for a long time. My friends know me pretty well and I guess they saw it coming to be honest. For the wider community, especially the Aboriginal community, surprisingly being in an urban setting (just like the city Aboriginal setting) they've been pretty like, accepting of me, I hear in other Aboriginal communities it can be quite tough and um – 'difficult' to come out as transgender."

"One of my biggest supports would have to be my Dad. He's an Aboriginal man and I seriously thought 'Wow! Like my dad, is he going to accept me or not?' That was my biggest fear just - Dad, like how will he take it?."

"He cried when he found out, he was really, really happy for me. He was just like crying tears of joy. So, yeah. he's been really good, promising to take me boxing and training and stuff. Typical father-son things."

"I'd just started testosterone when I told him, and I guess the imbalance of hormones made me feel pretty, err, emotional. Ah! I bawled my eyes out as well. Haha."

Kai seemed to have a pretty awesome view on his coming out. As a white guy, I was interested to find out more about his cultural influences and how they shaped his identity.

"There's definitely differences for indigenous transgender people. For me in my transition there's a big focus on my cultural identity and being Aboriginal. Traditionally Aboriginal culture surround the man and the woman, and you're pretty much tied down to that for your whole life. Growing up, y'know, I was taught 'the woman' and there's a big focus on being a woman, and to transition to male is culturally like the polar opposite of what I knew."

"Being Aboriginal I cop a bit of flack 'cause some people just don't get Aboriginal people and they'll just ask inappropriate, somewhat racist questions about my identity."

"I think tolerance and, y'know, acceptance of transgender people Australia wide would be great. Less transphobia obviously, and more awareness and visibility of transgender people within the queer community and mainstream Australia. I think that there needs to be adequate health care for transgender people, especially with regard to mental health services. The monopoly on transgender health care is really wrong and people shouldn't be capitalising and making a lot of money off our hardship."

"To other young trans people, look, stay strong. I can't really speak for other people, it can just be hard sometimes. I don't have the right answers, but if you're ever going through struggles with your gender identity and you need someone to talk to just look out online, at your local health centre and most importantly talk to someone about it. Talk to a professional, talk to a friend get support networks and get help through your journey now, no matter what."



**ACTIVIST &
BROTHERBOY**



**MINUS18 CREW
& NON-BINARY**

david zeleznikow-johnston.

As told to Alex Cameron

I'm David and I use they/them pronouns. I guess I would say I don't have a strict gender identity. I don't have a strong sense that I'm male or female, or really anything. But I think those terms can really be broken up.

For me, the terms 'boy' and 'girl' have always been kind of arbitrary. And there might be aspects of 'boy' that I identify with, and there are a lot of aspects of 'girl' that I identify with. But really, neither of them encapsulate me as a person. People can use whatever pronouns for me. I think I like 'they' because it doesn't assume anything. When people use 'they' for me they acknowledge that I'm not cis and they acknowledge that there's more to me.

The way I would say my own identity differs is that I think binary 'trans guys', 'trans girls' and even 'cisgender' people all seem to have a very strong sense of their gender and how it relates to them personally. That's not really the case for me, it's much more fluid than that.

The way I express this is through trying to dress, act, and look in a way that is outside what you might expect from any particular gender. If I walked down the street in a dress people would stare at me, which is pretty common. People I know tend to expect that from me now, and I think I enjoy that.

It can be challenging at times. There seems to be this constant question of "is my gender identity valid?"

There's not that many visible non-binary people in the media to look up to, and it's certainly not something talked about all that often. It can make things challenging, especially when trying to figure it all out on your own.

I can tell you one story. This is before I was wearing dresses or makeup around the house. I was wearing a dress that I had recently bought in my room and my brother came home. And he had just come from the bathroom, and he didn't knock on my door but he just like opened up my door. And I was kind of shocked but I was like "hi" and he was like "hi... you look really good in that dress! Like it fits you really well!" and then he kind of like did a double take and he said "like it really fits you well!" I suppose that is the best story I have had, I was just kinda like "thank you?" Haha. It was pretty encouraging actually.

Overall, I really hope that I can express myself as legitimately and as freely without having to worry, or without even considering if I'm fitting into what society expects of me. I hope I can live a life that I can follow as much as I want and I can look exactly how I want without ever having to worry about fitting in to how other people think I should look or act. But I'm sure a lot of people have that same aspiration.

It's funny, because I don't think I've ever really 'come out'. You only really need to come out when people assume something of you, and I'm pretty confident in how I express my identity to others already. I guess it also comes down to the fact that I don't like labels and being boxed in, y'know? While I prefer 'they' pronouns, at the end of the day it doesn't really phase me. I don't mind being called brother and I don't mind being called 'he' or 'she', because to me they all really form a part of who I am.

school uniforms.

Erik Lock

I loved my school uniform; it helped me feel a sense of belonging and pride. Back when I moved to Australia from Vietnam, I didn't have much clothes in my wardrobe, my school uniform was the best clothes I had. I loved wearing it. However, after year 6 things changed, I wasn't allowed to wear pants to school like other boys. I kept on wishing that one day, I would be able to wear the pants to school again so I could truly express myself.

When I was in year 9, I had to move to a Christian school and they made me wear a skirt or a dress to school rather than pants. I didn't understand why others could wear pants but I couldn't. So I didn't listen to them and continued to wear pants because that's what makes me feel most comfortable. Toward the end of my first week at school, I got into big trouble with the Principal. As punishment, he put me in a room isolating me from everyone else, I was not allowed to go to any classes and was locked in that tiny room for the whole day. Everyone who walked past in the hallway knew that I was in serious trouble. It made me feel like I was a bad person. That was the worst punishment I ever received in my life; just for wanting to wear pants.

It sounds extreme, but I'm not the only student who has been treated like this by their school.

At another school I moved to the next year, I had a principal that insisted I needed a psychiatrist's letter so they could let me wear pants instead of a skirt. I later found out there's actually no legal requirement to have a psychiatrist's letter, but even after I'd gone to the Royal Children's to get it, they still wouldn't let me without the support of my parents. It was really alienating, and without the school's support, people would continue to misgender me, calling me a girl, and refuse to recognise who I am.

During this time, I was also in touch with Safe School Coalition Victoria. They helped me and spoke to the school on my behalf regarding how they should allow me to wear what I feel

comfortable wearing to school. They offer information and training for staff who want to be trans and gender diverse inclusive, but don't know where to start.

They also have a really cool resource called Gender Is Not Uniform that's all about making school uniforms less gender focused and more inclusive for gender diverse students. It has research as well to help show teachers why inclusive uniforms are really good.

Your student wellbeing teacher or counsellor at school might be able to help you and help speak to the school on your behalf. While it's not an option for everyone, if you have your parents support it can have a big impact. Schools tend to take formal parental complaints more seriously than complaints from students alone. Going to speak to a school with a parent or guardian about why this is important can be very helpful not only for you, but can help pave the way to a precedent for other gender diverse students.

Joining or starting a Stand Out group is also a really good thing. Being part of a queer support group means you have fellow students who can relate and better represent the needs of gender diverse people in your school.

In Victoria, no documentation is needed to 'prove' a student's gender identity by law. Victorian schools have an obligation under the Department of Education and Training policy to support transgender students and can even do so without parental consent.

Now I'm going to a school where no uniform is required and everyone can wear anything they like, as long as it's sun-smart and with close-toe shoes. It feels really wonderful and amazing to finally be able to wear what I feel most comfortable wearing and that I can freely express who I am without being stopped or judged by anyone. Believe it or not I miss school uniform though, because I really like formal clothes and being part of the school like everyone else. Everyone deserves to be able to go to school and feel comfortable and proud of the clothes they wear.



navigating relationships.

Eleanor McMurtry

Navigating relationships, sex and (OMG) crushes is complicated enough already. God, I remember my first crush. For me, it was complicated enough without adding into the mix my own gender identity. But the reality is, gender and body parts and 'names of things' might affect a relationship but it doesn't need to be complicated.

Sexuality

It can be confusing exploring how sexuality comes into the mix when someone's trans or gender diverse. Spoiler alert, it's a total lie that all guys have dicks, that all girls have vaginas, and that's what makes a relationship 'straight' or 'gay'.

The problem with linking genitals and gender is it doesn't work for everyone. It's a pretty all-or-nothing way of looking at things, and doesn't take into account the whole entire spectrum of other genders.

'Gay' and 'lesbian' just mean a guy who's only into other guys or a girl who's only into other girls – it doesn't matter what they have downstairs. Genitals don't define gender; only the person themselves can. So a straight guy who's attracted to a trans woman who has a penis? Guess what – still straight!

Identities like 'bisexual', 'pansexual' and 'queer' can all reflect being attracted to a range of genders. Trans people are generally more across the idea that gender isn't binary, so these identities tend to be a bit more familiar, and that's a pretty cool thing.

Other people can sometimes try to draw a link between gender identity and sexuality, confusing the two. I've heard before that being trans is just being 'super level 10 gay'. Trans lesbians, trans straights and trans queers all exist – so if someone ever tries to tell you otherwise, you can give them a dose of reality.

Getting Down to It

Navigating sex and relationships can be intimidating, but also really exciting. If you're not currently in a relationship, but you're out as trans, then you're already half way there. A lot of people will be a lot more accepting than you might think, and to be in a happy, healthy relationship you want to be with someone who can see you for who you really are.

When people don't know you're trans, things can be a little more tricky. Deciding when to come out as trans, or to disclose that you are trans, is a really personal thing. Sometimes, you might not even want to! Being open before getting involved in anything sexual is a good idea, just so your partner knows what to expect, but it's totally up to you how early you tell them, or if you even want the relationship to get to that point (and by point I mean 'sex').

Coming out to someone who's already your partner can be daunting, but being open, and having acceptance are important aspects of all relationships. The process of coming out to your partner is a unique experience, but as with all coming out experiences, the process is personal, and it's important to disclose when you feel comfortable and safe doing so. If you're out to family or friends or have access to online networks, they can also be a massive support – for you as well as your partner.

Names of Body Parts

Trans young people sometimes have personal names for their body parts and it's important to be aware and respectful of what those are.

I guess I've referred to mine as a 'girl-penis' before. It's just what feels most natural to you. Some people might prefer other words, or may prefer not to refer to their genitals at all.

It's really important to respect the way a trans person feels comfortable talking about their body. People may surprise you with the words they use, but following their lead is respectful and shows your partner they can trust you. Like pronouns, it's OK to ask, and very important to respect them.

Bringing it up and being upfront is important. Sure it can feel a little awkward, but your best bet is to be direct and be clear on what you feel comfortable with. I remember the first time I said the words 'girl-dick' out loud, I couldn't stop giggling, but it's come to be what feels best for me.

Safe Sex

Being trans doesn't exclude you from safe sex kiddo! Pregnancy and STIs are still a thing, and using protection (on your body and your toys) is still super important. Regular sexual health check ups at your local GP or sexual health centre will let you stay on top of things.





Brooklyn They, 18

I decided to come out in stages. I made sure that when I came out it was right and comfortable for me. The first people I came out to were the kind earthlings on the internet. This was very simple because typing away your feelings to a screen is a lot easier than doing anything else, especially when you're typing it to a bunch of very open-minded people on Tumblr. After getting really positive feedback from those on Tumblr, I decided to make a big announcement on Facebook. The support I received from friends and people I hardly knew was really amazing, although not everyone was on board with using my name and pronouns, the overall results were very worth it. Last but not least was the big one. Coming out to my family. This was a lot more difficult than anything else. I had to get my partner to speak to them and then write a big letter. I didn't receive the best reaction from them, but I'm still in their hearts and still have a home.

Since coming out my overall wellbeing has improved. I am much happier and

comfortable. I feel good being able to express myself in a way that I've wanted to express myself for a long time. Coming out was nothing like I expected at all. It's been a big roller coaster. Although some people aren't supportive in my transitioning, it was very important for me to be open about myself. I never thought that I would have the guts to come out, I thought I would have to live my whole life keeping in a big secret but here I am now, happy and as comfortable as one can be while still struggling with gender issues, and I'm excited for what the future holds.

Jasper He, 16

I came out to my parents around March to April in 2014. My dad took it pretty well, and had sort of picked up on hints beforehand. But it later progressed with him crying, telling me that he didn't want me to have any surgical procedures. My mum cried when I told her, obviously feeling like she'd lost her daughter. It's been over 6 months and there's been no major improvement with my mum.



COMING OUT CAN SEEM SCARY.

LUCKY YOU'RE NOT ALONE, AY?

Prior to coming out to them, I'd already told a few friends that I was gender questioning back in 2013, and one friend in particular helped a lot by educating and giving the support I needed and really helped me express my gender in a safe space.

I had thought my parents would've taken my coming out better since I'd seen lots of videos on YouTube of people coming out to their parents and having them being very supportive. After a session with my psychologist and my parents, my dad has improved significantly, by calling me his son and using the right pronouns, which has meant I was able to come home after having left for about 3 weeks.

My brothers, who I told after my parents and after some close friends, were more confused than anyone else. When I told my oldest brother that I was gonna go into the male bathroom, he just looked at me and said "Seriously?". Having support from your family is incredibly important, especially for someone as young as myself, and I would never have gotten the support if I'd never come out to my family. You gotta take that first step if you want progress.

Eleanor She, 17

My coming out was a pretty slow process. I came out to some close friends online first, and a while later I sat down with my mum to talk about it. She didn't really get it, but eventually she started to come to terms with what I was saying, and I asked her to help me come out to my dad.

She went and talked to him, which was a huge help for me! After that, I felt ready to tell everyone at school. One of my teachers actually found out before I told people, when she listened to Joy 94.9 while I was speaking on-air. She was really excited to have a trans kid at her school, and it was actually really cute!

All in all, I'd say people reacted pretty well. I noticed my family took a lot longer than my friends and classmates to adjust and really understand, which was interesting - I guess because they thought they knew me a lot better than they did. Now that I've come out, I feel a lot more comfortable around people, and I feel like I can finally start living the life I want to lead.

Alex They, 17

For me coming out has been more of a journey than a single event, as I'm sure it is for many other people. It started with me noticing that I didn't feel comfortable every time I was referred to as 'a girl' or when people used she/her pronouns for me. I didn't really think anything of it because I didn't feel like 'a boy', until I found out about non-binary genders!

I started thinking about asking people to start using they/them pronouns for me and around October 2013 I asked my closest friends at school if they could start. Of course it was hard for them to get the hang of, as they were used to me being 'Ali the girl' but eventually a few came around and I felt a lot happier. But then I moved schools and had to repeat that process and the second time was harder. I faced more judgment and ignorance, and had people calling me horrible names and telling me what I am does not exist. Almost everyone knew and even the people that I was closest to didn't treat me very well.

The main thing that kept me grounded throughout was Minus18 and the support I got from my friends and fellow Minus18 volunteers. Shortly after asking people to use they/them pronouns for me, I too asked to be called Alex instead of Ali or Alexandra. This was easier as a lot of people already did call me that and I felt like things were moving on and people were starting to recognise me as who I really am.

My dad has been the worst one to take it. He has different views about gender and does not agree with me, but I am doing what I feel necessary to make me more comfortable and happy in who I am. I still struggle with dysphoria and when people misgender me, but so much is changing and things are getting so much better.

Hunter They, 16

Initially, I considered being agender. I kept this part of my identity quiet and it didn't fuss me very much. However between January and June of 2014, I felt far more motivated to use 'they' pronouns and changed my label to non-binary along with my name.

I guess my first experience in coming out to the wider world was putting

my preferred name and pronouns on my personal social media accounts such as Tumblr, Twitter and Facebook. In August, I then came out to my parents by sitting them down and following a script I had written and printed out for myself so I didn't miss or forget anything. Firstly I talked them through my sexuality and then my gender. Then I told them some people call me Hunter, although I was happy for them not to.. My dad said he didn't mind and that he would try to use the right pronouns and inclusive language with me, even though he didn't follow through. My mum on the other hand didn't talk to me for hours and cried about my name. She eventually came around and respects my choices by using inclusive language, however not my preferred pronouns. It's all baby steps in the coming out process, and I hope that in the near future things will change for the better with my parents. In 2015 I will be moving to Swinburne College and signing up with Hunter as my preferred name which is really, really cool!

My coming out process was easier than I expected it to be, however I'm still not out to everyone. I couldn't imagine the process to be any other way than it was and I'm so glad for it. After coming out, I feel much more comfortable at home, because I don't have to hide such a big part of my identity.

Ariel She, 17

For most of my life, presenting masculinely felt odd. Never wrong, but never right either. I was stuck in a limbo of feeling alienated from my body, but never knowing why. I'd spent 16 years feeling wrong, and it wasn't until 2013 when I realised; I wasn't your stereotypical cis, gay male.

Shortly after discovering skirts and coming out as bigendered in an attempt to solve my gender crisis, I made the next best discovery: Bras. Two days before New Year's Eve I was in a lingerie shop with my best friend and I took a chance and tried on a bra. It's often said time stops when something important is realised, and well, they're certainly not wrong. It had all clicked, I was a woman. Trans, but a woman nonetheless.

I came out to my mother, after gaining some confidence from Facebook. She took it well and adjusted quickly. School was notified, but had a vastly different reaction. Teachers and students were

subjecting me to misogynistic double standards and constantly misgendering me. It was horrid, and plain scary. A place I'd called home was now hell. With a little help from my guidance counsellor, however, things got better. I now stand where I am today proud to be trans and happy I came out.

Mikey Fae, 20

When I was first questioning my gender, I was terrified of coming out. I found some people I could talk to online but I was absolutely certain that all my friends and family would think I'm a freak.

It started to bother me more and more, until one day at school I just had to tell someone and at least know for sure how they'd react. I was sitting with one of my friends and it just kind of slipped out. I stared at him. And the first thing he said to me was, "I'm so not counting you as my first kiss anymore then!". It was a huge relief to tell someone, and the fact that he was so supportive meant the world to me.

He immediately started correcting himself on pronouns and spent the next three months testing different names for me while I worked out what I liked. He was by my side as I started to slowly come out to everyone else, correcting other people when they got things wrong. But I think what made me most comfortable was that he cracked a joke straight away. It's the same way he would have reacted to anything else. And I think that's the most important when someone comes out to you, is to let them know you'll be supportive, but not to make too big a deal out of it.

David They, 19

I've never really had one big coming out moment. If anything, my coming out has been a very slow discussion, taking place over the last few years.

When I think about it I was never the one to conform to gender norms, even as a child. But I can't say I really questioned my place in society until I learned that gender was a conscious identity. Knowing that being a boy meant feeling like a boy confused me. Do I feel like a boy? What even is a boy? So when I started asking friends if they strongly

identified with the gender they were assigned I was pretty shocked to learn that they were so sure of themselves.

In these long conversations with friends, dissecting gender and what it means to identify - I was coming out in my own way. I talked about my confusion with my lack of identity. I talked about what felt contradictory for me; I didn't think I was a woman but I wanted to be a mother, I didn't mind 'he' pronouns but I didn't feel particularly tied to them either.

For me, coming out really has been a process of discovering myself in a social context, of finding a place in the world that better reflects how I feel. I'm really the same person as I always have been but I worry less about people being uncomfortable with how I present myself, from the way I talk about myself to how I dress - and I've become infinitely happier as a result.

Erik He, 17

Coming out was adventurous and scary. The first person that I came out to was my best friend from martial arts training and it was when I was in year 9. She was really supportive. She said that there's nothing wrong with me and that she understood what I was going through. I felt safe to be myself and I felt more comfortable expressing myself more when she was around.

I didn't feel safe enough to come out to my parents until at the start of year 11. I was hoping for the best, but at the same time I knew that my family has always been very homophobic and transphobic, especially since I started to express myself in a more masculine way. So I tried my best to create a strong support network around me by going to my local queer support group, creating accounts in different queer youth support forums, and developing a 'coming out plan' with my psychiatrist.

When I came out to Mum, she was crying and said that I had to be "cured" because this is "bad". She didn't accept me being a trans person at all. My support network really helped me and gave me hope that this is only temporary and that things will work out for me, and that gave me strength and made a world of difference.

playing with your look.

Brooklyn Rosner and Ariel Ginger

The cool thing about gender is that there are no rules! There is absolutely nothing you have to abide by. There is no such thing as 'boy things' and 'girl things'. Here's a handy starting place for some things to experiment with while you're figuring out your identity.

Makeup

For many trans people, wearing makeup can be like wearing a second skin and a great way to better express yourself. Concealer and foundation can be used together to help make stubble or light facial hair less obvious. Foundation is often used to even out the skin tone, while concealer is used to hide any blemishes on the face.

Highlighting and contouring can be used to create or take away shadows from areas in your face, providing you with a look of a softer, more petite face, or a more rugged, rougher face depending on your preferred look. Youtube is a great place for detailed tutorials.

Play around and roll with what you think works. Makeup is a tool for you to have fun with.

Bras and Inserts

Chest dysphoria is pretty common for trans young people, but there are ways to overcome it! Both people with a larger bust and people with flat chests have options.

For flat chested people you have bras and padding. Talking about bras can be a new, awkward and sometimes funny experience. It can be hugely rewarding and feel amazing to rock boobs for the first time.

You can either buy padding like silicone 'chicken fillets', or get bras with padding built in. Just double check that your inserts don't irritate your skin as some materials can cause minor allergic reactions. Make sure to wash your inserts with slightly warm soapy water from time to time as well to keep them in good condition, clean and help them last.

Binding

Binding is a great way to temporarily and non-surgically reduce the size of your chest. A binder is used to compress your chest to make it appear flat/smaller. There are many ways to bind, but it's important to do it right. Binding improperly can

cause injury as you're putting a decent amount of pressure on your chest and ribs. If you notice any pain in your chest, give yourself a breather and try to restrict yourself to no more than 8 hours of binding at a time. There are some really great retailers online, such as Underworks.

If you can't get a professional binder you still have other options. Sports compression wear, neoprene back braces, and even layering tight sports bras can all work as budget binders. Just remember to be careful, and if you feel strong discomfort stop, take a break, and try something different.

Absolutely do not use bandages or duct tape. You see it a lot in movies but they are used to apply pressure and usually tighten with movement, so they're not safe for binding.

Tucking

Tucking is used to create a flat front in the pants, and reduce the visibility of a penis. It's often done when wearing tight skirts and/or dresses, or just for personal comfort. Just like binding it's important to take care, tucking can cause injury if done improperly. Don't tuck for more than 4-6 hours at a time, and taking a break is a must.

Tucking sometimes involves a technique of placing the testicles back inside the pockets inside your abdomen that lie on either side of the penis. If it feels too weird, a tuck can still work without it. The next step is to pull the penis backwards, in-between your legs. Secure everything and make sure it stays in place. Wearing a pair of slightly-too-tight underwear and a pair of tights can be a way of securing your tuck.

Packing

A packer can be a big help for bottom dysphoria. A packer is pretty much a penis to pack downstairs. Put it down your pants and hey presto!

You may need a harness to make sure it stays in place, but tight underwear will generally do the job. A good tip starting out is don't buy too big, make sure it's secure and you're good to go!

All in all it's important to remember that these are just tips! You can use all of them, none of them, or some of them! What matters is that you do what feels right for you.





my coming out party.

Ivy McGowan

Being unsure or even anxious about how friends and family will react is a pretty common aspect of coming out; and it's something Ivy certainly experienced. One thing she didn't expect though was for her Mum to throw a party to celebrate.

Ivy

Before coming out I was really quite scared about how everybody would all react. I have a really open minded family and friends, but the fear came from everyone not seeing me as who I am – that they'd see me as a different person.

In fact, what I was telling everybody was about who I really am, rather than changing.

I wasn't quite too sure when it came to how my parents in particular would react. I knew they were progressive people, and love me no matter what. But even knowing all that, I still had this really strong fear that something bad might happen.

I had a lot of resources available to me through the process. Minus18 gave me an amazing supportive space of other gender diverse people, and having the huge network behind me just gave me an incredible amount of strength. People there to help me made a world of difference.

I made a pretty big Facebook post one night, and that's how it happened. I basically said "Hey guys! I'm a woman, and while I wasn't assigned that at birth, it's who I am." The post received a lot of love, and people said a lot of encouraging things to me, especially those who I hadn't spoken to for years, to the point where it was a bit overwhelming.

After I told Ruth, my mother, she was just so happy that she wanted to throw a big party for me and celebrate it. At first I was a bit apprehensive. I didn't want to be special or singled out. I wanted to be like every other girl, and every other girl doesn't get a party for being who they are. But I eventually came around to it, realising it would be a bit of fun, and a way to celebrate with my family and friends.

We called it 'Ivy-Fest' haha, and I think the most important thing about it was more than just celebrating me; it was about showing my

family and friends that I hadn't changed at all. It was full of positive vibes. A lot of my family in particular told me how great it was for them to get an understanding of what being trans meant, and to feel free to have a really open conversation about it all.

I wanted to shatter that preconception that coming out is always a negative experience, and use it as a chance to celebrate that core part of who I am. Everyone totally got on board.

Ruth - Ivy's Mum

Ah 'Ivy-Fest'! What we really wanted to show was how much we celebrated and loved Ivy – not just accepted – and really get into the spirit of what she was doing with her life.

The party itself was fantastic. We had about 60 or 70 people there in the park with us, all celebrating our daughter.

Initially, as with all coming out, there's a bit of shock. I had become educated on what sexuality was; the gay, bisexual and all of that. I noticed that Ivy began to dress differently and thought "hrm, maybe there's something else going on."

She told me though that I had a daughter, and really it was a beautiful occasion. I think I gave a few tears. Part of me was quite sad, because Ivy had had to carry that for so long in her heart and that it had been a really big thing for her to work up to telling everyone. I guess what I felt though, was that I was just so happy and proud of her for making that decision to let others know.

So how are things different now? Well basically, Ivy is the same person that I've loved ever since she was a little baby. I'm proud of her, but I've been proud of her throughout her whole life, and proud of all that she's done. As a parent you have unconditional love for your child, and this is just one way of demonstrating that.

At the end of the day, all any parent wants is for their child to be happy and engaged with life. With Ivy coming out as a trans woman, she is now living a really authentic life.

What more could a parent want?

A photograph of two young people playing catch on a grassy field at sunset. The person in the foreground is a young man with short dark hair, wearing a dark blue t-shirt, leaning forward with his hands outstretched. Behind him is a young woman with red hair, wearing a light-colored t-shirt and colorful bracelets, also leaning forward with her hands outstretched. The background is a grassy field with a fence and trees, and the sky is a warm, golden color from the setting sun. The text "SOME THINGS THAT MIGHT BE USEFUL TO KNOW" is overlaid in the center in a bold, white, sans-serif font, with a white underline under the word "KNOW".

***SOME THINGS
THAT MIGHT BE
USEFUL TO
KNOW***

new words.

If you're new to all this, some of the words are probably new too. Stress less, though! Here are some of the descriptions we have for you.

Gender Diverse

Describes a person who feels that their gender identity does not fit into the "categories" associated with their assigned sex. For example, someone who is raised as a girl may feel as though the categories of female/feminine are restrictive or don't apply to them. Questioning how gender stereotypes relate to you is normal - and some people identify as genders other than male or female.

Transgender

Sometimes gender diverse people feel that their gender doesn't match the sex they were assigned at birth, ie - someone born with a penis might identify as a girl - this is referred to as being transgender. Sometimes trans people change their name, their clothes, or even make change to their bodies. Sometimes they don't.

Non-Binary

An umbrella term people use to describe gender that doesn't fit squarely into male or female. This can be a mix of both, fluid, or something else entirely.

Cisgender

Someone who is not transgender or gender diverse, and who identifies with the sex they were assigned by doctors at birth. Sometimes written as 'cis' for short, the term comes from Latin meaning 'on the same side as' and is used in contrast with 'trans' meaning 'on the other side of'.

Sexuality

Sexuality describes who you are attracted to physically and romantically. It's totally different to your gender identity, although sometimes people are confused about this.

Heteronormativity & Cissexism

The assumption that everyone is straight and cisgender. It's pretty easy to do, especially when you don't know many same sex attracted or gender diverse people. It's also the assumption that you have to act a certain way because of your gender.

Intersex

People are born with different kinds of bodies. Intersex is an umbrella term, often associated with a medical diagnosis of a difference or disorder or sex development (DSD), that describes people who have natural variations that differ from conventional ideas about 'female' or 'male' bodies, including genital, chromosomal and a range of other physical characteristics.

Queer

Some people identify as queer to mean different, or not aligned to stereotypes. For some, queer means same sex attracted, for others, it means gender diverse. For some, it simply means not heterosexual.

Questioning/Unsure

Most people will question their sexual or gender identity at some point throughout their life. It can be confusing stuff, but it's also pretty normal.

Stereotyping

Generalising that all people belonging to a particular group have certain characteristics.

Transphobia

Used to describe a whole range of negative feelings or behaviours towards anyone who is gender diverse or transgender people, their desires and/or behaviours, that can lead to discriminatory actions or abuse.

Homophobia

Used to describe a whole range of negative feelings or behaviours towards anyone who is same sex attracted people and people who are attracted to more than one gender. Homophobia can lead to discrimination or abuse, like using the phrase "that's so gay."

Discrimination

Treating someone like crap, or less than equal because they have a certain characteristic, like a school not allowing you to wear the uniform that aligns with your gender identity. Discrimination due to sexuality or gender identity is nearly always illegal in Australia.

Brotherboy and Sistergirl

Terms used by some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to describe trans people. Brotherboy typically refers to masculine spirit people who may be assigned female at birth, Sistergirl typically refers to feminine spirit people who may be assigned male at birth.

your legal rights in victoria.

Michael McLeish

Medical Transition

Over the age of 18, there are no legal barriers to accessing hormone replacement therapy (HRT), but medical approvals are still required. See Medical Transitioning [pg 11] for more information. Accessing HRT is especially rare if you're under 18 years of age, and still requires a ruling from the family court, and support of your parents or guardians.

For puberty blockers the law requires psychiatrist approvals and parental consent.

Surgery of any kind related to chest reconstruction or genitals as part of affirming a transgender person's identity can't be performed on someone under the age of 18.

Legal Documents

Name Change: Changing your name is pretty straight forward, and something anyone can do. To do this you will need multiple forms of current identification (driver's license, passport, medicare card, etc). If you're under the age of 18 both parents must give consent to the name change. This is done through the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages in each state or territory. www.bdm.vic.gov.au

Birth Certificate: Changing your gender on a Victorian birth certificate requires that you have undergone 'sex affirmation surgery' (and therefore must be over 18). Only in Victoria, this is required to be genital surgery or a hysterectomy. In addition, a statutory declaration from 2 doctors and/or surgeons, as well as some original ID is required. Name changes must be done before changing your birth certificate.

Passports: to change your legal gender on an Australian passport, you only need a signed doctor's letter. This will allow you to change between a female, male or indeterminate (which appears as an 'x'). An indeterminate gender marker is not something many other countries have, and it's important to consider the impact it may have when traveling - particularly to conservative countries.

You'll need to change your name on your birth certificate before being allowed to change it on your passport, but if you have a letter from your doctor saying you are transitioning then the replacement passport will be free.

Other ID: The rest of your standard ID can usually be changed with your new passport or birth

certificate. Once you have changed your name on these, it's your new legal name and you have the legal right to have it recognised by all other institutions, including your bank and school.

Rights at School

Schools have to support and respect your identity, but the specifics will vary between schools. Your teachers and principal aren't allowed to out you to anyone, and when they're trying to work out how to support you they should invite you and someone from your family to be involved.

Schools may request a letter from a gender therapist as part of developing a support plan, which may cover things like providing extra welfare support, what bathroom facilities you will be using, and how to support other students.

Schools are expected to use your preferred name and pronouns even if they're not your legal ones. The Victorian Department of Education policy is that no documentation is needed in order for schools to update their database with your preferred gender, however, in practice this may again vary from school to school.

Bathrooms

Victoria has no explicit laws about using public bathrooms and you can use whichever ones you want. Private venues do have ability to ask you to leave at their discretion though.

Sex Discrimination Amendment (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Intersex Status) Act 2013

Gender identity is protected under federal law. Under the law it is unlawful to discriminate against a person on the basis of gender identity, sexual orientation and/or intersex status. This includes discrimination at school or university, as well as places of work and employment.

Seeking Support

If you feel your legal rights have been violated or are in need of support then Victoria Legal Aid has a team of lawyers who specialise in providing advice and assistance on discrimination, including claims on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity & intersex status.

Even if you don't qualify for legal aid, the VLA team can still assist with a free initial appointment and advice.

www.legallaid.vic.gov.au

some places to go in victoria.

support.

MINUS18

Australia's national organisation for LGBT youth. Jump on to the website, get to know other same sex attracted and gender diverse young people, access resources and advice, and events.

minus18.org.au

SAFE SCHOOLS COALITION VICTORIA

SSCV is a coalition of schools, staff and students dedicated to supporting gender and sexual diversity and challenging discrimination in all Victorian schools.

sccv.org.au

HEADSPACE

Headspace supports young people who need someone to talk to or who are going through a tough time.

headspace.org.au

QLIFE

QLife is a counselling and referral service for people who are LGBTI. QLife provides telephone and online chat support to people of all ages.

1800 184 527 qlife.org.au

YGENDER

A social peer based support group for trans and gender diverse young people in Melbourne.

ygender.org.au

GASP

Support and social group for LGBTI young people in and around the Geelong area.

gaspeelong.net.au

DIVERSITY

Support and social group for LGBTI young people in and around the Shepparton area.

facebook.com/diversitygroup

ZOE BELLE GENDER CENTER

Provides online support and resources to sex and gender diverse people in Victoria.

gendercentre.com

TRANSCEND

Transcend is an information hub for parents and families of transgender children.

transcendsupport.com.au

VICTORIA LEGAL AID

Support service who provide advice and assistance, especially around LGBTI discrimination.

legalaid.vic.gov.au

medical.

FINDING THE RIGHT MEDICAL PROVIDER CAN BE TRICKY. HERE ARE SOME WE RECOMMEND:

NORTHSIDE CLINIC

Located in Fitzroy, Victoria

northsideclinic.net.au

PRAHRAN MARKET CLINIC

Located in Prahran, Victoria

prahranmarketclinic.com

ROYAL CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Located in Melbourne, Victoria

rch.org.au

MONASH GENDER CLINIC

Located in Clayton, Victoria

monashhealth.org

standing out.

So you might be asking "what next?" If you're looking to take things another step, you might want to think about Standing Out against homophobia and transphobia.

Standing Out against transphobia and homophobia, especially at school and uni won't just be amazing for you, but goes a pretty long way to making sure everybody feels like they belong.

There're a bunch of different ways to Stand Out. In fact, we've got a whole magazine on them.

Find out where your friends can get support

Your friends *might* be too shy to talk to others about being trans or queer; it can sometimes be pretty intimidating. A lot of the time they might feel like they have to 'out' themselves, which they might not be ready to do. Finding out which teachers at school are supportive, or websites / places they can go to meet people is a pretty easy but awesome thing for you to do - especially since we've given you a head start at the back of this mag.

Don't let people get away with being jerks

Don't let people be jerks. It's pretty simple. Report people who bully, or harrass others, and when they make ignorant comments, call them out on it. Stopping words like *tranny*, *poof* or *dyke* or comments like *you're not a real man* is a good place to start.

Get people talking

Talking about sexuality and gender identity is a pretty decent way of getting other people to talk about it too. Think school assignments, putting posters up, guest speakers at school - that sort of thing. Get your student leaders / student council to run events that raise awareness for queer youth. Rainbow casual clothes days and recognising days like International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia - Just a few to get you started.

Help start, or join in a Stand Out group

Some schools/unis have Stand Out or diversity groups - places for trans, queer and straight students to hang out and chat about what's going through their mind, and to talk about what things they can do together to change things in the school. If your school doesn't have one, you could be the awesome person that starts it.

Be counted

Create change in your school and become a member of Safe Schools Coalition Australia. You'll need your principal to join - visit safeschoolscoalition.org.au to find out how.



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CREATED BY

MINUS18

Australia's national organisation for LGBT youth, Minus18 is young people leading change, building social inclusion and advocating for an Australia free of homophobia and transphobia. Jump online for support, chat, events and resources. WWW.MINUS18.ORG.AU

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TRANS**