

Common Questions

What does transgender mean?

Someone who is transgender has a different gender identity than the body that they were born with. This means that their gender identity- how they think and feel about their gender- is different than their physical body at birth.

Someone who is transgender may have been born and people thought that they were a girl because of the way their body looked, but as they grew up they realized that they felt like a boy on the inside.

The word 'transgender' is an adjective ("someone who is transgender," or "a transgender person"), not a noun or a verb. Saying "transgendered person," "a transgender," or that "someone is transgendering" would all be incorrect.

What does cisgender mean?

The opposite of transgender is cisgender. Someone who is cisgender is a person who was born with the body of the gender identity that they identify as. For example, someone that was born and raised as a boy still identifying as a boy would be a cisgender boy. The majority of the population is cisgender!

How do I talk about trans people in the past tense?

Names and pronouns do not time travel with stories! Even if you're talking about someone before they came out as transgender, you need to continue calling them their current name and pronouns. It's never okay to misgender or misname a trans person, no matter what the context is.

What's the difference between a trans man and a trans woman?

It's like how a cisgender boy can get rid of the word 'cisgender.' A trans man can too! The word that's left is the gender that they identify with. A trans man is someone who was assigned female at birth and identifies as a man, and a trans woman is someone who was assigned male at birth and identifies as a woman. Transgender is just an adjective, after all! A blond woman and a brunette woman are both still women.

Are there only trans men or trans women?

Nope! There are people that are nonbinary, which means that they don't identify fully as a man or fully as a woman. They may identify as both, neither, some combination of the two, or something completely different! There are many different labels that nonbinary people could use to describe themselves and nobody can decide how to describe them but themselves.

How do I know if I'm transgender?

You know you better than anyone else knows you! It's okay to question your gender identity and to change your name or pronouns as many times as you need to.

Do trans people need to do anything to be ‘officially’ trans?

Nope! Trans people don't have to take any of the transitioning steps mentioned before, not even coming out. As soon as someone realizes that they're not the gender people thought they were at birth, they're trans. They don't even have to tell anyone! Some people may do things to make themselves feel better about their gender identity. Some people may dress more masculine or feminine, or use "binders" to compress their chest, and some people may legally change their names or gender markers.

How old do you have to be to know you're trans?

Anyone can realize they're trans at any age. Children as young as 18 months old can identify themselves with gendered objects and have a feeling of what their gender identity is, even if it may be hard for them to describe. Some people figure it out at an early age, while others don't realize it until much later in life. Figuring it out at any age is completely okay!

Why do trans people choose a new name?

The name that someone is given at birth can sometimes be very gendered. A boy might not want to live his life with the name "Susie," and a girl might not want to live her life with the name "Hank." They may also just not want to keep the name that they lived with as the wrong gender growing up! It's never okay to ask a trans person what their 'old name' was. Their 'real name' is the name they choose to go by.

Any more questions?

It would be impossible to answer everything in one tiny brochure. The Youth Project is happy to answer any questions you may have. Give us a call, message our Facebook page, or send one of our awesome staff an email. We would be happy to set up a time to chat about what else you would like to learn! We can also provide a workshop to your classrooms, businesses & non-profits, youth groups & more!

People You May Know

Laverne Cox (She/her)	Actress, activist, trailblazer of "Firsts for Trans Women" in the entertainment industry.
Elliot Page (He/they)	Trans Masculine actor, producer, former Youth Project attendee born & raised in Nova Scotia!
Jonathan Van Ness (They/He/She)	Non-Binary & Genderqueer activist, actor, hair stylist most recognized from "Queer Eye."

About the Youth Project

The Cape Breton Youth Project is a non-profit charitable organization dedicated to providing support and services to youth, 25 and under, around issues of sexual orientation and gender identity. We have a provincial mandate and travel around the province to meet with youth in other communities.

We provide a variety of programs and services including support groups, referrals, supportive counselling, a resource library, educational workshops, social activities & a Gender Affirming Garment program.

We are a youth directed organization. Youth have decision making control over the direction and action of the Project. We promote and nurture an environment that is appreciative of youth from all races, ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations, abilities and socioeconomic backgrounds. We value the contribution and experiences of all youth. All activities and events run by the Youth Project are drug and alcohol free.

Contact

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