

Guidelines for Supporting Transgender, Non-Binary, Gender Variant, or Gender Fluid Students and / or Staff Members*

For Administrators and Counsellors

*Though this document was constructed with the intent to provide guidance to administrators and counsellors to support transgender, non-binary, gender variant or gender fluid students, these guidelines are also applicable to staff members who identify as transgender or non-binary.

Some guiding principles in applying this document:

1. Put the needs of the student first when other topics arise.
2. Everyone makes mistakes – this is part of the learning process for everyone involved.
3. Recognize mistakes and be open to correcting them. This will help the student (or staff member) to understand that you are trying your best.
4. Consult one of the District SOGI support teachers for additional support and assistance.

A. Meet with the Student and Family, or with the Staff Member

1. Do this early in the year (preferably before the start of the new school year).
2. Discuss support at home.
3. Provide student, or staff member with the name of the school's SOGI Lead to contact for additional support.
4. Provide family with resources (*See resource appendix at the end*)
5. Create a plan, with input from the student or staff member, about how information should be communicated and shared with teachers and other school staff.
6. Ongoing and/or periodic check-ins between the school, the student, and the family are encouraged.

Note: *Some trans students may not be "out" beyond the school community, and some gender-nonconforming students may choose to express their gender differently outside school. When communicating with a parent/guardian, use the student's legal name and gender identity unless you have permission by the student to do otherwise. This includes phone calls, letters, and forms sent home.*

B. Access to Washrooms and Change Room Facilities

1. The use of washrooms and change rooms by students shall be addressed by creating a collaborative plan with students, families, and school administration with the goals of maximizing the student's social integration, ensuring the student's safety and comfort, minimizing stigmatization, and providing equal opportunity to participate in physical education classes and sports. Prior to creating a plan, the student should be consulted about which spaces they feel safest and most comfortable using.
2. Students who request increased privacy will be provided with a reasonable alternative washroom and/or changing area. Any alternative arrangement will be provided in a way that protects the student's ability to keep their gender identity status confidential. Alternative options include, but are not limited to:
 - Designating a single-use washroom for use as a change room near P.E. facilities.
 - Identifying a private area within the change room (such as a bathroom stall with a door).

3. Single-use washrooms are available to students at all school sites and are for use by any student or staff member who desires increased privacy. Use of this washroom is a matter of choice, not a requirement, and it should not be the only option available to trans or gender variant students or staff members.
4. Considerations should be made well in advance of planning off-site fieldtrips. Staff should consult with their trans students and their parent/guardian to best meet the needs of the student on the fieldtrip. Awareness of the following things should be considered:
 - Washroom & changeroom facilities available
 - Sleeping accommodations

C. Pronouns & Usual Name Usage

1. **Students and staff have the right to self-identification**, and to decide the name(s) and pronoun(s) by which they are addressed. This includes students or staff who have not made official changes to their name and gender identity on MyEdBC and official records.
2. Clarify which pronouns will be used and in which contexts.
3. With the permission of the student, make it a priority to inform teachers about trans/gender variant/gender fluid students in their class. Counsellors, Admin and/or SSSW should schedule a meeting a couple of weeks into the first term to check in on how things are going (support, issues, etc.).
4. Teachers should take measures to ensure that all students' self-identified name and/or pronouns are respected in the event of an absence.
5. Deliberate and persistent refusal to acknowledge and respect a student's or staff member's gender identity by not using their correct name(s) and/or pronoun(s) **is a prohibited form of discrimination**.

D. Physical Health Education

1. Consideration should be given to how PHE classes are organized with the goal of accommodating all students.
 - a. Whenever possible, classes should be organized in inclusive ways (i.e. not separating students by gender).
2. Consideration should be given to enable all students to participate in team sports.
 - a. Discuss available options with the Athletic Director.

Appendix A: Resources & Online Support

Gender Clinic – BC Children’s Hospital

<http://www.bcchildrens.ca/our-services/clinics/gender>

* Need a referral from child’s doctor to visit this clinic

The Gender Clinic provides treatment with puberty blockers and/or gender-affirming hormones for transgender and gender-questioning youth up to the age of 18.

Vancouver School Board

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS for Parents and Caregivers of Transgender and Gender Diverse Youth
An extended resource, compiled in consultation with the Vancouver School Board, TransCareBC, and the ARC foundation, that address common questions and concerns related to supporting Gender Diverse youth.

https://www.vsb.bc.ca/Student_Support/Safe_Caring/Documents/QA-Trans-Booklet-English-2017.pdf

The resource is available in Chinese [Traditional], Filipino, Korean, Punjabi, and Vietnamese at:

https://www.vsb.bc.ca/Student_Support/Safe_Caring/SOGL/Pages/default.aspx

Trans Care BC – Provincial Health Services Authority

<http://www.phsa.ca/transcarebc>

Trans Care BC is a BC-wide information service and resource hub.

Search engine for accessible care, surgical planning, and peer and community support for trans people across the province. Offices located in downtown Vancouver, but information and consultation services are accessible to all residents of British Columbia by email and phone. Services are free.

BC Trans Parent - Support and information for LGBTQ families.

<https://www.transparentcanada.ca/?file=welcome>

PFLAG Vancouver - Support and information for LGBTQ families.

PFLAG Canada is a nation-wide organization that helps all Canadians with issues of sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression. PFLAG Canada supports, educates and provides resources to all individuals with questions or concerns, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

<http://www.pflagvancouver.com>

Trans Support Youth and Parent Group (Burnaby)

<https://www.plea.ca/youth-programs/peer-support/transsupport/>

This group for ages 25 and under is an opportunity for discussion, information sharing and support for trans youth and the parents and caregivers of trans youth. Runs concurrently with “Parents and Caregivers of Trans Youth” group on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month
7:00PM – 9:00PM

QMUNITY

<https://qmunity.ca/get-support/> QMUNITY offers support, training, consultation and resources. Through publications, multimedia materials, one-on-one consultations, and interactive workshops, Diversity and Inclusion Experts help individuals, families, businesses, schools, and service providers to identify and avoid discriminatory behaviours and to explore the complexity, fluidity, and potential of sexual and gender diversity.

QMUNITY Youth Drop-ins (Vancouver)

<https://qmunity.ca/get-support/youth/>

Drop in for youth 14-25, meets Wednesday 4-6PM and Fridays 6-8 PM.

Egale Canada Human Rights Trust

<https://egale.ca/tips-for-parents-of-trans-youths/>

Egale Canada: tips for parents of trans youth ^[17]_[SEP]

Gender Creative Kids

<https://gendercreativekids.ca>

Resources for families and youth ^[17]_[SEP]

Human Rights Campaign: Supporting & Caring for Transgender Children

<https://www.hrc.org/resources/supporting-caring-for-transgender-children>

Supporting and Caring for Transgender Children.

A collaborative publication by the Human Rights Campaign, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the American College of Osteopathic Pediatricians, this guide provides an accessible resource for community members and allies to ensure that transgender young people are affirmed, respected, and able to thrive. Provides helpful tables to summarize some of the complexities and perspectives on treatment and interventions. The document provides some context for what interventions are age appropriate, and what the implications of various interventions are with regard to affirming gender identity.

TYFA: Trans Youth Family Allies

<http://www.imatyfa.org/parents.html>

<http://www.imatyfa.org/recommended-reading.html>

Links to Trans Youth Family Allies with some helpful documents with information about Trans identities and advice for supporting Trans youth, as well as some suggested readings that range from picture books to novels with Trans identities, to resource and informational texts.

Gender Spectrum

Provides resources and information about LGBTQ+ identities, advocacy, and suggestions for creating safe and inclusive environments for them.

<https://www.genderspectrum.org>