EMBRACING GENDER IDENTITIES

Birth–Preschool (Ages 0-5)

Clive and His Babies
by Jessica Spanyol
First in a series of board books about a boy whose love for imaginative play includes dolls, hats, glitter, art, and a diverse group of friends.

I Am Jazz!
by Jessica Herthel and Jazz Jennings, illustrated by Shelagh McNicholas
This is the real-life story of Jazz Jennings, a transgender child who knew from a very early age that she had a girl's brain in a boy’s body.

Introducing Teddy
A Gentle Story about Gender and Friendship
by Jessica Walton, illustrated by Dougal MacPherson
Tilly the teddy bear is nervous to tell her human friend Errol that she doesn't want to be called Thomas anymore. The name that Errol has always called her. But all that matters to Errol is that Tilly is Errol’s friend.

Julián Is a Mermaid
by Jessica Love
Julián LOVES mermaids! A summer afternoon of dress-up fantasy is only improved by a surprise from Abuela.

Neither
by Airlie Anderson
The Land of This and That is too restrictive for the individualistic Neither. But a more colorful and open-minded home is waiting to embrace Neither.

Phoenix Goes to School
A Story to Support Transgender and Gender Diverse Children
by Michelle Finch and Phoenix Finch, illustrated by Sharon Davey
Phoenix, a transgender girl, is feeling nervous about her first day of school. With encouragement from her mom to be brave, Phoenix makes new friends and stands up for herself.

Pride Colors
by Robin Stevenson
A sweet board book for the youngest readers that celebrates inclusivity, acceptance, and love through all the colors of the rainbow flag.

Red: A Crayon’s Story
by Michael Hall
This heartwarming picture book follows the story of a blue crayon who is mistakenly labeled as “red,” until he discovers his true identity as a blue crayon and celebrates the strength he finds in being his true self.

Teddy’s Favorite Toy
by Christian Trimmer, illustrated by Madeline Valentine
Teddy’s mom accidentally throws out his favorite toy, a doll named Bren-Da, but then manages to rescue her through some epic moves. A great story that normalizes boys playing with dolls.

They, She, He, Me: Free to Be!
by Maya Christina Gonzalez and Matthew Smith-Gonzalez, illustrated by Maya Christina Gonzalez
In this simple picture book, illustrations of a variety of people show the range of what the pronouns me, she, he, and they can mean as they pertain to gender identity. An author’s note at the end explores using and claiming pronouns to express who you are.

Want to Play Trucks?
by Ann Stott, illustrated by Bob Graham
Jack likes trucks, but Alex likes dolls; the solution to their play dilemma offers a positive message about inclusiveness and compromise.
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K–Grade 5 (Ages 5–10)

Eleanor Wyatt, Princess and Pirate
by Rachael MacFarlane, illustrated by Spencer Laudiero

Whether they're sword fighting, sailing, or dancing, Eleanor and her friends know there's more than just one way to play!

It Feels Good to Be Yourself
A Book about Gender Identity
by Theresa Thorn, illustrated by Noah Grigni

Vibrant and cheerful illustrations introduce young readers to the concept of gender identity through straightforward vocabulary, child-friendly and intentional language, and lots of love.

Jack (not Jackie)
by Erica Silverman, illustrated by Holly Hatam

Big sister Susan loves her transgender brother just as he is: Jack's bright eyes and silly giggle will always make her smile.

Jacob's Room to Choose
by Sarah Hoffman and Ian Hoffman, illustrated by Chris Case

After Jacob and Sophie's classmates object to their bathroom choices, their teacher helps her students write new rules about who can use which bathroom.

Jamie Is Jamie
A Book about Being Yourself and Playing Your Way
by Afshan Moradian, illustrated by Maria Bogade

Is Jamie a boy or a girl? This book challenges gender stereotypes and shows readers that playing is fundamental to growing up and learning.

Morris Micklewhite and the Tangerine Dress
by Christine Baldacchino, illustrated by Isabelle Malenfant

Morris is bullied at school because he loves to wear a tangerine dress during playtime. Eventually, Morris teaches the bullies that it doesn't matter what he wears; all that matters is they can have fun playing together.

Ogilvy
by Deborah Underwood, illustrated by T. L. McBeth

Cheerful Ogilvy the bunny challenges stereotypes after moving to a town where there are strict rules about what clothes you wear and what you can do while wearing them.

One of a Kind like Me / Único como yo
by Laurin Mayeno, illustrated by Robert Liu-Trujillo

Danny and his mama visit a thrift store hoping to find the perfect purple dress for his princess costume.

Pink Is for Boys
by Robb Pearlman, illustrated by Eda Kaban

This beautiful picture book rethinks and reframes stereotypical gender roles and empowers children and their grown-ups to express acceptance in every color of the rainbow.

Sparkle Boy
by Lesléa Newman, illustrated by Maria Mola

Though his big sister has a hard time understanding, Casey's parents and his abuelita support him in his desire to wear a shimmery skirt, glittery nails, and sparkly bracelets.

When Aidan Became a Brother
by Kyle Lukoff, illustrated by Kaylani Juanita
Lee & Low, 2019, ISBN: 9781620148372

Aidan, a transgender boy whose parents have helped him build a life and identity that fits his true self, is expecting a new baby sibling. He sets out to discover the best ways to make the new baby feel welcome and loved.

Who Are You?
The Kid's Guide to Gender Identity
by Brook Pessin-Whedbee, illustrated by Naomi Bardoff

This informational picture book illuminates distinctions of sex, gender, and identity, providing grown-ups with guidance in talking about and allowing children to embrace and express themselves as they are.
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Grade 6–8 (Ages 11–14)

Being Jazz
My Life as a (Transgender) Teen
by Jazz Jennings

Much more than the autobiography of a girl who transitioned at age 5, it’s an uplifting story of acceptance, tolerance, and social justice.

George
by Alex Gino

George is a girl. When people see her, they see a boy, but George knows she’s a girl. This novel deftly shares George’s journey to find a place where she can confidently express her gender identity.

Gracefully Grayson
by Ami Polonsky

Grayson has a secret. Grayson is a girl on the inside, stuck in the wrong gender’s body. Can she set her true self free? In this moving story, Grayson finds strength in unexpected friendships and mentors who help her on her journey.

I Am Malala
How One Girl Stood Up for Education and Changed the World (Young Readers Edition)
by Malala Yousafzai

This is a young readers adaptation of the autobiography of Malala Yousafzai, the girl who stood up to the Taliban when they said girls couldn’t go to school. Malala defied gender norms in her country, becoming an outspoken, international activist for gender equality and girls’ right to an education.

Lily and Dunkin
by Donna Gephart

Eighth grade is tough for Lily, who is transgender, and Dunkin, who has bipolar disorder, but together, they just might survive the year.

My Seventh-Grade Life in Tights
by Brooks Benjamin

All Dillon wants is to be a real dancer, taking lessons at an actual dance studio. But his dad thinks he should play football, and his freestyle crew, the Dizzie Freekz, say dance studios are for sellouts. This hilarious novel celebrates following your dreams, while also confronting gender stereotypes.

A Quick & Easy Guide to Queer & Trans Identities
by Mady G and J. R. Zuckerberg

A winsome group of slugs, observing humans on a camping trip, have an entertaining and informative discussion of queer identities, gender identity and expression, asexuality, relationship basics, coming out, and more.

A Quick & Easy Guide to They/Them Pronouns
by Archie Bongiovanni and Tristan Jimerson, illustrated by Archie Bongiovanni

A fun and educational comic guide to gender-neutral pronouns and how to use them.

The Witch Boy
by Molly Knox Ostertag

Aster knows that he is meant to be a witch, but he is forbidden. In his family only girls are allowed to be witches, and the boys are supposed to be shapeshifters. When a vengeful force threatens his family, Aster must use his ability as a witch to help protect them.

Zenobia July
by Lisa Bunker

Zenobia July, middle-school hacker and amateur detective, is out to solve the mystery of who is posting hateful memes on her school’s website, all while wrestling with the challenges of a new school, a new family, and coming to grips with presenting her true gender for the first time.
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Resources for Parents and Caregivers

Articles

Transitioning in Elementary School Parent Advocacy and Teacher Allyship
By Tara Goldstein, Auesten Koecher, Pamela Baer, and Benjamin Lee Hicks
*Teaching Education* 29, no. 2 (2018): 165-77

This academic journal article discusses how parents and elementary school teachers worked together to support the gender transition of a six-year-old Ontario child.

Supporting Transgender and Gender-Expansive Children in School
By Melinda Mangin
*Phi Delta Kappan* 100, no. 2 (Oct. 2018): 16-21

Educators share success stories of revising school policies to be more welcoming to all students, as well as procedures for working closely with families to understand their needs.

More than a Safe Space
How Schools Can Enable LGBTQ Students to Thrive
Michael Sadowski
*American Educator* 40, no. 4 (Winter 2016-17): 4-9

Drawn from his book *Safe Is Not Enough: Better Schools for LGBTQ Students* (Harvard Education Press, 2016), Sadowski explores tools and techniques educators can use to support trans and nonbinary children and their families to create truly inclusive school communities.

Books

The Gender Creative Child
Pathways for Nurturing and Supporting Children Who Live Outside Gender Boxes
by Diane Ehrensaft
*The Experiment*, 2016. ISBN: 97816030666

Ehrensaft explains the interconnected effects of biology, nurture, and culture to explore why gender can be fluid, rather than binary. She encourages caregivers to listen to each child, learn their particular needs, and support their quest for a true gender self.

Rainbow Relatives
Real-World Stories and Advice on How to Talk to Kids about LGBTQ+ Families and Friends
by Sudi Karatas
*Skyhorse*, 2018. ISBN: 978157373738

Using a variety of real-life stories and interviews, this book helps families prepare for conversations with children about the issues and topics surrounding the LGBTQ+ community.

Raising the Transgender Child
A Complete Guide for Parents, Families, and Caregivers
by Michele Angello and Ali Bowman

Written by experts in the field, this book offers much-needed answers to all the questions parents and other adults ask about raising and caring for transgender and gender-diverse children.

Transgender Children and Youth
Cultivating Pride and Joy with Families in Transition
by Elijah C. Nealy

Author Nealy, a therapist and himself a transgender man, provides physical, social, and emotional best practices for supporting transgender kids.

The Transgender Teen
A Handbook for Parents and Professionals Supporting Transgender and Non-Binary Teens
by Stephanie A. Brill and Lisa Kenney

This readable, comprehensive handbook helps bridge the divide in gender misunderstanding by exploring the unique challenges families face as they raise a teenager who may be transgender, nonbinary, gender-fluid, or otherwise gender-expansive.

Websites

The Family Acceptance Project
familyproject.sfsu.edu

The Family Acceptance Project is a research, intervention, education, and policy initiative that works to prevent physical and mental health risks for LGBTQ children and youth.

Gender Spectrum
www.genderspectrum.org

Gender Spectrum’s mission is to create a gender-inclusive world for all children and youth. To accomplish this, they help families, organizations, and institutions increase understanding of gender and consider the implications that evolving views have for each of us.

Lambda Legal
www.lambdalegal.org

Lambda Legal is a national organization committed to achieving full recognition of the civil rights of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgender people, and everyone living with HIV, through impact litigation, education, and public policy work.

National Center for Transgender Equality
https://transequality.org

The National Center for Transgender Equality advocates to change policies and society to increase understanding and acceptance of transgender people.

PFLAG
pflag.org

PFLAG is the nation’s largest family and ally organization. Their mission is to build on a foundation of loving families united with LGBTQ people and allies who support one another.

Trans Lifeline
www.translifeline.org

Trans Lifeline is a national trans-led organization dedicated to improving the quality of trans lives by responding to the critical needs of the community with direct service, material support, advocacy, and education.

The Trans Youth Equality Foundation
www.transyouthequality.org

The Trans Youth Equality Foundation provides education, advocacy, and support for transgender and gender-nonconforming children and youth and their families.

Welcoming Schools
www.welcomingschools.org

The Human Rights Campaign’s Welcoming Schools website provides training and resources to elementary-school educators to embrace family diversity, create LGBTQ and gender-inclusive schools, prevent bias-based bullying, and support transgender and nonbinary students.