

Parenting Siblings of Transgender-Identified Children

When a child announces a transgender identity, the whole family is profoundly affected. It's easy and understandable for parents to spend significant time and energy coping with the child who is going through the identity crisis, but it's important to recognize that the other children in the family are likely to be suffering as well. They need special, individual support from their parents to navigate this unprecedented and painful experience.

Children whose brother or sister claims to be other than his or her birth sex may find themselves confused, frightened, hurt, and in need of both guidance and authoritative back-up with respect to interacting with their sibling.



All children need their parents to be anchors to truth and reality; siblings of transgender-identified children need this firm foundation from their parents in spades.

What Siblings May Experience

Depending on the age of your children and the birth order around the child who is claiming a transgender identity, emotional reactions to and the stress of interactions with their brother or sister may vary widely. Younger children may feel confused and frightened, while older or adult children's responses may run the gamut between anger and applause, and between severing the relationship with the sibling to severing the relationship with you if you do not capitulate to your child's newly announced identity change.

Siblings younger than the transgender-identified child may feel bewildered by the sudden loss of the older sibling as the familiar and perhaps admired brother or sister, and they may experience significant bullying from the transgender-identified sibling to participate in the sibling's new identity, "or else." Brothers and sisters who are older than the transgender-identified child may respond with derision or eye-rolling, and may also land anywhere on the spectrum between embarrassment over and pride in their sibling.

The Arlington Parent Coalition (APC) is a group of parents and community members in Arlington, Virginia, who are concerned with the health and well-being of children, teens, and young adults being indoctrinated via school curriculum and policy efforts into the belief that they are transgender. Since its inception in March 2019 APC has dedicated its efforts toward fighting for evidence-based school policies that treat all students fairly, and toward supporting parents with information about and support toward keeping their children safe in public schools, in Arlington as well as around the nation. For more information about APC and our initiatives, please visit our website at:

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Cognitive Dissonance

Children whose sibling claims to be transgender will experience some level of cognitive dissonance, which is the mental discomfort that arises from experiencing a conflict between two opposing worldviews or perceptions of reality. It is neither normal nor possible for a person to change sex. Children who understand that boys have a penis and girls have a vagina – the most basic of physiological categorizations grasped by the age of three or four years – will have their worldview upended by their sibling’s announcement that she or he is no longer she or he.

Transgender activists have spent an enormous amount of time, effort, and money to convince society that transgenderism is praiseworthy, pride-worthy, and normal, but no matter how many times one repeats a lie, the lie becomes no more true. Believing a lie only dislodges one from reality and requires one to accommodate ever more erroneous beliefs in order to support that lie, such as:

“Males have no physiological advantages over females in sports.”

(Yes, they do.)

“Girls who don’t want boys in their bathrooms are bigots and transphobes.”

(No, they’re not.)

“Some women have penises and some men have vaginas.”

(No, they don’t.)



All children need their parents to be anchors to truth and reality; siblings of transgender-identified children (and the transgender-identified children themselves) need this firm foundation from their parents in spades. Reiterate to your children what you believe to be true:

“I realize that your brother John thinks he’s actually a girl. He is confused right now and has been misled about what’s real and true. People cannot change sex, and no person was ever born in the wrong body. Your body is you, and there’s no research or data to support the idea that our brains can be a different ‘gender’ from our bodies. We are going to support John toward coming to this truth for himself, and we are not going to agree with something that simply isn’t true.”

Fear, Hurt, & Blame

Cognitive dissonance, if unresolved, can lead to fear, both about the specific situation and about life in general. The child may worry about his sibling’s health and well-being, as well as wonder what else in the world might not be as he believed it to be. As [Colin Wright](#) so aptly explained:

“I’m frequently asked why I focus so much on the nature of biological sex. It’s because in my view this may be reality’s last stand. If this undeniable fact can be denied en masse, then we become hostages to chaos. We simply cannot afford to lose our collective tether to reality.”

Although your child may not be able to articulate or even be fully conscious of this thought process, he recognizes deep down that if the basis of our most intimate sense of identity is not fixed, then nothing else in life is fixed either. There are no boundaries, no truths, no solid foundations on which to stand. This is a terrifying thought for anyone.

Additionally, when a person announces a transgender identity, the effect on family and friends is similar to experiencing the death of a loved one. Men and women are not interchangeable one for the other; they are entirely different beings. If a woman announced that she is no longer Louise Archer, but is now Michelle Pfeiffer, we would rightly recognize that she is rejecting herself and attempting to appropriate someone else's existence. This is no less true of transgender claims: the transgender-identified person is trying to kill who s/he has been, as evidenced by terms like "deadname" in reference to the now-rejected name that was given to a child by parents.

A sibling may also feel rejected by the transgender-identified child, and perhaps even more so if they are the same biological sex. It's possible the child may wonder if s/he is somehow to blame for the situation. Ruminating on past conflicts and words hurled in the heat of anger may lead the child to conclude that his or her anger, mistakes, or personality caused the sibling to want to change sex. Further, if parents focus solely on dealing with the transgender-identified child, the other children in the family may feel less important, less valuable, or simply neglected by comparison.

Always validate a child's feelings, but always correct flawed thinking:

"Yes, this is a very hurtful situation. John is rejecting himself right now, and he's also rejecting our family to a certain degree. But this is not your fault, nor is it Mom's or my fault. We're not a perfect family, but we love each other and we're doing our best. We love John very much, and we love you just as much. That will never change."



Dealing With Bullying

The transgender-identified child will likely try to bully everyone into submitting to preferred names, pronouns, and beliefs about identity and personhood. A younger child in the household is especially at risk of being manipulated and coerced into behaving according to the transgender-identified child's wishes:

"I'll turn off my music so you can go to sleep after you name five different genders."

"Watch this youtube video about misgendering, or I'll tell everyone at school about how you suck your thumb while you sleep."

"I'm not responding to my deadname anymore. If you call me that I'll not only ignore you, I'll hit you."

Much of this intimidation is likely to happen behind Mom's and Dad's backs, so you'll need to keep open ears, open eyes, and open lines of communication with all of your kids. Set boundaries, and communicate them clearly:

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“You are not to discuss gender or sexuality with your younger siblings.”

“There will be no use of the internet other than for schoolwork.”

“In this house you will be called by the name we gave you and by the appropriate pronouns.”



Supporting Siblings

One young lady told her parents in a note left on their bed, “I am no longer responding to the name ‘Jessica’ or to the pronouns ‘she/her’. If you use them, I will simply ignore you.” Her parents left a response on her bed: “Your legal name, given to you legally by your parents, is Jessica, and the grammatically correct pronouns for that feminine name are she/her. If you fail to respond when these are used to address you, there will be consequences.” That was the end of that discussion. (And, by the way, Jessica eventually accepted herself as female and gave up the transgender narrative.)

Transgenderism functions much like [cults](#) do: vulnerable people are drawn in with promises of nirvana and a community of supportive people who will escort them to that nirvana. They are brainwashed with lies, taught how to use a brand-new lexicon in order to be part of the group, and severed from those who love them the most. Remember that as painful as this experience is for you, it is equally traumatic for your other kids.

Talk to your kids about what’s going on as early as possible and as often as they wish. Soon after the

Other Publications You May Find Helpful

If Your Child Says S/he’s Transgender



More and more families are dealing with the issue of transgender identity. In cooperation with mental healthcare professionals the Arlington Parent Coalition has compiled a set of suggested guidelines for dealing with this difficult experience.

Disclaimer: Information presented here is not intended to replace evaluation by a mental professional. Please note: We have included links to additional material on certain topics. Some linked material may be posted on websites that promote transgender ideology and oppression with clinicians.

Increasing numbers of families are experiencing the nightmare of a child announcing that he or she is transgender, a gender, nonbinary, or some variation on that theme. It often happens suddenly, without much (or any) warning, and the child is usually adamant as well as extremely resistant to reasoning. The “coming-out” script typically contains a number of these elements:

- “I’ve felt this way for a long time (or my whole life) but was afraid to tell you.”
- “I hate myself (my body) and I’m depressed.”
- “I’ll run away if you don’t support my transition.”
- “I’ll commit suicide if I don’t transition.”
- “Everyone at school loves and supports me as I am. Why can’t you?”
- “I don’t enjoy doing (X,Y, Z) that other girls/boys like, so I’m transgender.” (Even if the child liked these things previously/recently.)
- “I’m angry at you for hiding from me the fact that transgender people exist.”



Every child is born in the right body.

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Finding a Gender-Critical Therapist

With more than 20 states having passed laws that prevent counselors and therapists from doing anything other than assisting a patient or client toward gender transition, finding a gender-critical therapist who will not send your child directly to hormones and surgery can be difficult.

Be assured, there are many mental health professionals who question the claims of the transgender industry and who will follow appropriate and time-tested approaches like investigating a child’s medical, psychological, and social history, rather than slapping on a flimsy label and assigning an unproven treatment protocol. But these ethical practitioners’ licenses are being threatened by the current political situation around gender identity issues in the United States, and therefore they are now flying under the radar accordingly.

So if your child announces a transgender identity, how do you find a therapist you can trust?

Whether or not you’re a person of religious faith, a church, temple, or mosque is a good place to start.

Religious freedom is under fire by those who would see all traditional values expunged in America, but religious freedom is still the law of the land and houses of faith still operate according to their consciences and scriptural mandates. If you know a house of worship that has not capitulated to the transgender narrative, start there. If you do not attend religious services, ask friends and colleagues about other local churches. Call the church secretary or administrator and ask about their doctrinal policy on the issue of transgressions. If you’re comfortable with the response, tell them you’re looking for a therapist and wondered if they can recommend someone.

A clinical psychologist or psychiatrist may be preferred to a social worker or licensed professional counselor, as the former are trained in performing diagnostic evaluations, and may have more experience and better understanding of complex neurobiological syndromes than do the latter.



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Keeping Your Child Safe in Public School

Public schools have taken on the role of social engineers and are increasingly slipping sex and gender messages into the curricula, and not just in family life education (FLE) units during health class. From inviting transgender adults to read transgender storybooks to kindergarten and gender unicorn diagrams and then quizzing high school students on them, public schools have proven over and over again that they are no longer institutions parents can trust with their children’s innocence, or even their sense of what’s true and real.

Following are some suggestions to help parents become more aware of what’s happening at school, and to let teachers and administrators know that parents are paying attention.

You may not have the time or energy to do everything on this list, and that’s okay. Do what you can. If nothing else, we recommend connecting with other parents in the schools who have similar concerns to yours, and then working together as a team.



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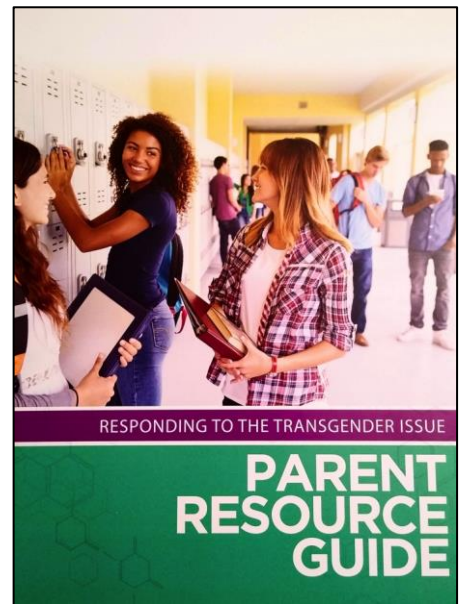


“The philosophy of the school room in one generation will be the philosophy of government in the next.”

Abraham Lincoln

For More Information & Assistance
Information on Parents’ Rights in Public School
Support for Parents re. Rapid Onset Gender Dysphoria
Parent Resource Guide on the Transgender Issue
Help for Dealing With a Trans-Identified Child
Help for Finding a Gender-Critical Therapist

www.arlingtonparentcoalition.org



“This exceptionally well thought out and professional guide serves to educate parents and guardians about the true medical and biological facts of the transgender identification trend that is sweeping the nation. Children and adolescents are being permanently damaged by hormones and surgery. Parents are being coerced to follow an unscientific “gender” paradigm which leads to this harm. Use this guide to educate yourself and others about the true medical facts of this dangerous social contagion.”

***Michael K. Laidlaw, MD
Board Certified in
Endocrinology, Diabetes, and
Metabolism***

The Arlington Parent Coalition developed this document in cooperation with several teachers, an educational psychologist, a psychiatrist, and an attorney. Information here is intended to be used as helpful suggestions, but not legal advice or guarantee of outcome.