



## IS USING DIFFERENT PRONOUNS FOR YOUR KID REALLY THAT BIG OF A DEAL?



### Figuring Out Your Kid's Identity



So your kid just told you they want to use different pronouns like he/him, she/her, they/them, or something else.

You might be feeling caught off guard, confused, or even worried. Maybe this does not line up with how you raised them. Maybe it clashes with your beliefs. Or maybe you are just wondering if this is a phase or if it means something bigger.



### LET'S TAKE A STEP BACK.

#### Remember Who Your Kid Is

Think back to when they were born. The first time you held them, their tiny hand wrapped around your finger, their first words, their first steps. Through all of those moments your love for them was undeniable. That has not changed.

When kids bring up big topics like gender, it is normal to have a lot of feelings. **Worry**, **confusion**, and maybe even **fear** about what this means for their future.

But here is the thing: **Your reaction right now is going to stick with them for a very long time.**



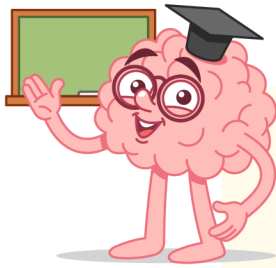
### COMMON QUESTIONS AND FEARS

#### Is my kid transgender?

- If so, what does that mean for them?
- Will this affect our faith?
- Will they still be welcome at church?
- Will they get bullied?
- Will this make life harder for them?
- Is this just a phase?
- If I go along with it, am I encouraging something temporary?
- What if their siblings start doing this too?

These are real concerns but **understanding what is going on** can help.





## ???

# WHY IS THIS HAPPENING?

Science says gender identity is not just a trend or a choice. **It starts in the womb.**

The brain and body develop at different stages during pregnancy and hormone levels can lead to a mismatch between someone's gender identity and the sex they were assigned at birth.

Brain scans of trans people even show that their **brain structure aligns more with their gender identity than their assigned sex.**

In other words, this is not something they are making up. It is literally how their brain is wired.



## HOW THIS AFFECTS YOUR KID



Teens and kids explore their identity. Some experiment with names and pronouns while others have felt this way forever and are finally saying it out loud. No matter what your support makes a huge difference in their mental health.

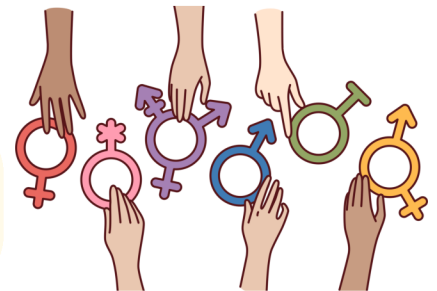
- Thirty percent of trans youth attempt suicide each year.
- Fifty percent think about it.
- Trans adults have a 3.5 times higher suicide rate than their peers.
- But when **parents are supportive** the suicide rate drops by 94 percent.

Your response can literally **save their life.**

## NEURODIVERGENCE AND GENDER IDENTITY

Autistic people are more likely to feel like gender norms do not fit them. They already experience the world differently with sounds, textures, and social cues so it makes sense that gender might feel different to them too.

**Ignoring that or forcing them to conform can make things worse.**



## WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU REJECT THEM?

A lot of LGBTQ people have been cut off from their families. Some never reconnect. Others miss out on years of their kid's life only realizing too late how much they lost.

Your kid will face challenges from the outside world like bullying, discrimination, and even laws that try to limit their rights.

**But you can be their safe place.  
Their support system.  
The person they know they can always turn to.**



## WHAT ABOUT THE RECENT GOVERNMENT CHANGES?



It is important to acknowledge that government policies can directly impact LGBTQIA+ youth. The Trump administration recently signed executive orders declaring that the U.S. government will only recognize two biological sexes and eliminating diversity programs in federal agencies. These changes could make it harder for transgender individuals to access legal recognition, medical care, and protections in workplaces and schools.

Your child might be feeling scared or uncertain about their future. They might be worried about losing legal protections, facing increased discrimination, or even struggling with basic identification documents. Policies like these reinforce the idea that their identity is not valid, which can take a serious toll on their mental health.

When the world around them is making it harder for them to exist safely, your support becomes even more crucial. Feeling accepted at home can help counteract the negative impact of these policies and give them the resilience they need to navigate a society that is not always accepting.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

- **Take a breath.** You do not have to have all the answers right now.
- **Listen.** Your kid is not asking for permission. They are asking for support.
- **Educate yourself.** Look into affirming faith leaders, therapists, or support groups.
- **Push past the fear.** Supporting your kid does not mean you have to abandon your beliefs.
- **Choose love.** At the end of the day this is your kid. They need you.

Using their **chosen name** and **pronouns** is a simple but powerful way to show them you care. Studies prove that it reduces suicide risk. Therapy and medication can help but nothing replaces a parent's love and support.

Change is scary but think about this. **What is the actual harm in calling your kid what they want to be called?**

## WHAT IS THE HARM IN NOT DOING IT?

It is okay to grieve, to be confused, and to feel overwhelmed.

But take the time to **learn**.

Find resources.

Hear from families who have been through this.

**Your love for your kid has not changed.**

**And if you let it, that love can be what helps them make it through.**

