

DID YOU KNOW?



Did you know that at a very young age, children often already know their gender? But what they know, doesn't always match how they feel. At a young age, it is very common for children to play with toys like dolls or trucks or dress in clothes that are typically

thought to be for the opposite gender.

Show your child you love them no matter what gender they express to you.

Talking about gender expression with your child can sometimes feel uncomfortable. As parents, we often have a picture in our mind of what and how our children will be when they grow up. When our image doesn't match what we see, it's easy to feel uncomfortable and we may not know what to do or what to say.

There are some easy things you can do to help your children learn who they are:

SHOW YOUR LOVE. Remember that above all, you love your child and it's important that they know it and you show it everyday, no matter how their gender is expressed.

ASK QUESTIONS. It's okay to ask questions like, "Who are you—a boy, girl, neither or you don't know?" OR "When you grow up, do you want to be a boy, girl, neither or you don't know?" If the answer is one you don't understand or if they answer that they don't know, it's okay. You don't have to push for another answer. Just remind them how much you love them no matter what and that part of your job is to help them be happy and healthy.

UNDERSTAND THAT KIDS CHANGE. For example, if a young child likes to wear his sister's dresses, but he says he is a boy, most kids in this case will stop wearing dresses when they start school.

CREATE A COMMUNITY. Do things to make your child's school, church and home feel as safe and comfortable as you can. You can talk to adults in your child's life about the name your child wants to use and whether they want to be called he, she or they. You can also find other families and children that can become your community.



When you see your child is happy with how they are expressing themselves and their gender identity, your first job is to **show that you love them**. The best thing you can do for your child is to help them be comfortable with who they are and **make sure their world is supportive**. It's okay if you don't have all the answers or don't completely understand. There are great resources for kids and parents to learn how to operate in this new world. Lean on caring friends and family.

IT IS OKAY TO NOT HAVE ALL THE ANSWERS. WHEN A CHILD IS RAISED IN A LOVING ENVIRONMENT, THEY WILL GROW UP TO BE HAPPY AND HEALTHY. IT IS IMPORTANT TO SHOW YOUR CHILD YOU LOVE THEM NO MATTER WHAT GENDER THEY IDENTIFY.

I LOVE YOU!



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GROWING MINDS
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