Be gentle with yourself, and also with your child

- **Your child's gender identity is not a decision or a result of something anyone did.** It's just who they are.
- **This may take time for your family to process.** Be patient with yourself and others as they work to understand.
- **You can always apologize.** If you have failed to respond with love or understanding. it is never too late to repair the relationship and learn how to positively support your child.

Show your child they are safe

- **Don't share your child's news with others without their permission.** Ask them who they are comfortable sharing their news with and whether they would like help sharing this news.
- **Listen to their experience with an open mind.**
- **Tell them you love them and thank them for sharing.** Acceptance and support are the most important gifts you can give to your child.
- **Celebrate their truth/identity in a special way.** Example: Go out for dinner or for ice cream.

Be receptive to learning new things

- **Be curious about your child's unique life experience.**
- **Research the science behind sex, gender and diversity.** Working to understand something you don't know about can help erase uncertainty and fear about the situation.
- **Help your child safely navigate information and find reliable facts.** While the internet has a lot of medical information and support, it also has dark and misleading corners, too.
- **Learn more about the spectrum of gender and sexuality:** TrevorProject.org and FamilyAcceptanceProject.org are two well respected resources and the Gender Unicorn https://www.transstudent.org/gender/ explains these spectrums through visual illustration.

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Create a supportive community

- **Find a trans role model for your child.** Seeing that trans adults can be happy and healthy will help them if they ever face transphobia or discrimination.
- **Practice resiliency.** As a parent, you will learn new risks that your child may experience, such as discrimination, and possibly trauma, as well as medical concerns. Learn how to mitigate such risks and help your child develop a supportive network.
- **Hearing from other families** who have similar stories may help you gain more understanding about the transgender/non-binary experience.
- **Search for support groups** in your area or on your social media networks who are knowledgeable and experienced.
- **Learn how to be an ally.** Consider getting involved in PRIDE groups through your child's school or local library.
- **Build a support network around you and your child, just like when your baby was first born.** Find and hold onto the people who can accept and celebrate with you. Be patient with those who are working to adjust to new pronouns and avoid the people who are not supportive and offer negative feedback.

Reminder: Parenting is about constant change.

You have been through so many life changes with your child already and you will be able to support them with this, too.

Learn more about who they are:

- **Ask if your child if they've started (or want to start) taking steps toward a social, medical, or other form of transition.** Follow their lead while making sure they stay safe.
- **Discuss what name and pronouns your child would like to use and under what situations.** Their pronouns may change over time as they continue to explore their gender identity. Be supportive and patient with their exploration.
- **Recognize your child for who they have always been.** You may realize that there were signs that your child is transgender that you hadn't understood before.

Consider your own growth:

- **A child's gender transition is a transition for parents as well.** Observe your thoughts and feelings without judgment— you may have a lot of different emotions as you adapt to this new reality. Therapy may be a great outlet to explore your own feelings, while continuing to support your child.
- **Think about your upbringing and experiences and how that may have shaped your feelings.** It may feel both confusing and exciting to adjust to a new perspective about gender.
- **Examine your own bias.** Take an implicit bias test around gender: https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html

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