

# WHAT DOES TRANSGENDER MEAN?

Transgender is a gender identity and an umbrella term, used by folks who do not identify with the gender they were assigned at birth. "Gender assigned at birth" refers to the gender the doctors told your parents you were when you were born. Transgender folks grow to realize over time that this gender assignment is incorrect. The transgender community is a huge part of the 2SLGBTQ+ umbrella, and encompasses many different trans identities.

## TRANS YOUTH:

Transgender youth face unique barriers in growing up that do not apply cisgender folks, and even transgender adults. These barriers take a toll on their physical and emotional health, and often lead them to be reluctant to seek help and services for their health. Creating positive trans youth care is integral to raising healthy and happy transgender youth.

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## ACCESS TO SERVICES:

Receiving gender affirming and inclusive care services, including health and mental health services, is often very difficult and many youth become reluctant to attempt to use or even attempt to use such health and mental health services altogether. Often, trans youth leave these services feeling dysphoric and humiliated, as most service providers do not take measures to be trans-inclusive, and staff are not trained to work with transgender youth. When they are trained in 2SLGBTQ inclusion, the training is insufficient and issues such as gender dysphoria, pronouns, and gender affirming care are not mentioned. Many service providers still use the disorder model when working with transgender youth, according to which being transgender is considered a psychiatric disorder, which leaves youth doubting themselves and their trans identity.

Source:

[https://ctys.org/wp-content/uploads/YGAP\\_Health-1.pdf](https://ctys.org/wp-content/uploads/YGAP_Health-1.pdf)

## FAMILY LIFE:

Coming out is never easy, especially for transgender youth. Many trans youth still living with family may risk having a strained or even severed relationship with their parents and family after coming out. Many transgender youth leave home, sometimes at the will of their parents, due to these strained relationships because of their identity.

## EDUCATION & INCLUSION:

Much like health and mental health services, many education systems are not equipped to train teachers and school staff to be inclusive of transgender youth. Academic institutions often do not accommodate transgender youth as they are not trained on using pronouns and other trans-inclusive language, and many schools still do not have gender inclusive bathrooms. Elementary and secondary school health curriculums do not cover 2SLGBTQ health, particularly sexual health. The education system perpetuates cisnormativity in children at a very young age, leaving transgender children and youth feeling like something is wrong with them from the beginning.

80%

of trans youth knew that their gender identity didn't match their sex by the age of 14.

Source:

<https://transpulseproject.ca>

58%

of trans youth in Ontario could not get academic transcripts with their correct name & pronouns.

Source:

<https://transpulseproject.ca>

25%

of trans youth in Canada are reported to have run away from home.

Source:

<https://www.the519.org/education-training/>

## HARASSMENT & VIOLENCE:

Transgender youth are at a significantly higher risk of various forms of harassment and violence than cisgender youth. According to the Canadian Human Rights Commission, 70% of trans youth in Canada have experienced discrimination because of their gender identity. According to a nation-wide survey by Trans Equality Canada, 74% of trans youth have reported experiencing verbal violence at school, 37% reported physical violence.

74%

of trans youth in Canada reported being verbally harassed about their gender identity.

Source:

<https://www.transequalitycanada.com/>

## MENTAL HEALTH:

The aforementioned issues faced by trans youth become factors in many mental health issues, such as depression and suicidality. According to a study by toronto.ca, 77% of transgender youth in Ontario seriously considered committing suicide; 43% unsuccessfully attempted suicide. According to the 519.org, 67% of transgender youth reported self harming. Pushing a transgender person to identify and present as a gender that they don't identify with can have lasting emotional, psychological, mental, and physical trauma, which can often lead to suicide.