

# MGSD Centre



The **South East Gender Initiative** provides help, advice, support and information to people questioning their gender identity. Through peer support group meetings and drop-in sessions held at the **Medway Gender & Sexual Diversity Centre 331 High Street, Rochester ME1 1DA.**

**Gender Dysphoria** is a term used to describe a person who's psychological gender is in conflict with their physical / genetic gender and that this causes them to feel unhappy with themselves. This can cover a wide range of psychological feelings about perceived feminine / masculine gender. It is not an illness in a physical or psychotic sense. Gender Dysphoria is now thought to be an intersex condition.

A **Transsexual** is a person with gender dysphoria who believes they are psychologically the opposite sex to their physical gender and has continued to believe this for a period of two years after reaching puberty. They usually have reduced their feelings of gender dysphoria by cross gender identification and in some cases decided to take treatment to change their physical gender to match their psychological gender.

Transsexualism is not a mental illness.

Transsexuals are not psychotic, they are not under a delusion that they are physically the opposite sex.

## Aims of South East Gender Initiative



**Support**- practical advice, counselling, information regarding the trans community, peer support, support for family members and their supporters.



**Education** – raising awareness and understanding among health and social care professionals, schools, employers and public service providers, consulting with HR teams.

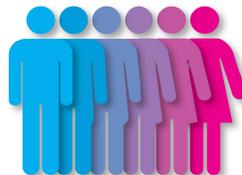


**Training** - working in partnership with other agencies, to provide a resource on Transsexual/Transgender issues.



**Information** - encouraging greater integration leading to a reduction of poverty, ill health, unemployment, mental suffering, isolation, risk of self-harm, reporting of transphobic crime, reduction of hate crime.

**Transsexual/Transgender Support Education Training Information**



**01634 408668**  
**info@mgsd-centre.org**  
**www.mgsd-centre.org**

# South East Gender Initiative

## Gender Identity!

### Gender Dysphoria



**Male Transgender Female**

## Information Support Advice

Our supporters



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## Our Mission

The South East Gender Initiative (SEGI) exists to promote and improve the health and wellbeing of Transsexual/Transgender people through **Support, Education, Training and Information**

### Gender Identity

Trans or transgender is an umbrella term for various people who feel that the sex that they were assigned at birth does not match or sit easily with their sense of self. The world in the west is generally divided into two categories - men and women The gender binary. Sometimes it is thought that trans is complicated because a trans person doesn't fit neatly into these two categories. Indeed the concept of 'trans' raises questions about what it even means to be a 'man' or a 'woman'. The trans spectrum encompasses Transsexuals, Transgender and Non Binary people and crossdressers, or anyone who challenges gender norms. It may be that a trans person feels more the "opposite" sex and so chooses to use medical intervention in order to align their body with their mind or their outside appearance with their internal feelings. Crossdressers may dress to express the more masculine or feminine side of themselves, or simply because those clothes feel more comfortable.

It is estimated that 10 in a 1000 people will be gender variant to some degree. Although the number who reveal this during childhood or adolescents is increasing many will remain hidden due to a perceived hostile environment or fear of reprisal and discrimination (GIRES). Like all communities, the trans community is diverse. There are trans people from all ethnic,

cultural and faith backgrounds. As a result of this trans people might have different self understandings of their trans identity. Trans people may identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, straight or asexual. Many trans people have histories from within the lesbian, gay and bisexual community or they may align with the LGB community after transitioning or identifying as trans. Others will feel themselves to be part of the heterosexual world and not have any affiliation to the lesbian, gay and bisexual community, regardless of their own or their partners' gender identity.

### Sexuality

People sometimes confuse gender identity with sexual orientation and as a result think that trans is another category of sexual orientation or sexuality LGB. Being Trans gender, however, relates to your gender identity and the sex assigned at birth. From that self-identification you may use another word to describe your sexual orientation or sexuality.

Those trans people who do not wish to define their sexual orientation in terms of the gender binary (male and female) may describe themselves as genderqueer.

Content taken from 2009 Equality & Human Rights Commission Report 27 Trans Research Review ©Equality and Human Rights Commission 2009

## What happens when your loved one tells you that she or he is trans?

It is often a difficult time when your loved one tells you that he or she is trans. At first you may have felt confused or shocked, in denial about it all, or even grief stricken. Some parents have equated their child's transition with the loss of a son or a daughter.

Here are some excerpts of other parents' experiences:

*"I was not particularly taken aback, but I was taken aback by my own physical reaction, because I just couldn't stop crying. It was uncontrollable. I tried to analyse why that was the case. I think it's wrapped up with a parental guilt. I wanted to have been able to help my child. The second thing is the realisation of the pain and confusion that my child must have gone through. But I'm very, very happy and positive for him."* (Parent)

*"Alex came out to me and I wasn't paying attention. It was a pretty intimate moment. We were talking about honesty. ... Alex told me that Alex was a member of the gay straight alliance and I thought that meant that Alex was gay. I thought no big deal. I didn't quite get that it was really about the gender. With my partner, I'm accepting but I'm confused... and with family and friends how do you balance that with the interests of Alex? For us we love Alex. I'm happy to have Alex and hope to have him go through this journey and come out with what Alex is looking for."* (Parent)

**It takes time for parents and family members to realise that being trans does not change the person deep inside, even though he or she may begin to look somewhat differently.**

*"I feel it's the same person... the person inside is exactly the same person that I've always loved."* (Parent)

*"It's not a different being. It's the same child."* (Parent)