



Transgender Child: A Handbook for Families and Professionals

Stephanie A. Brill , Rachel Pepper

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This comprehensive first of its kind guidebook explores the unique challenges that thousands of families face every day raising their children in every city and state. Through extensive research and interviews, as well as years of experience working in the field, the authors cover gender variance from birth through college. What do you do when your toddler daughter's first sentence is that she's a boy? What will happen when your preschool son insists on wearing a dress to school? Is this ever just a phase? How can you explain this to your neighbors and family? How can parents advocate for their children in elementary schools? What are the current laws on the rights of transgender children? What do doctors specializing in gender variant children recommend? What do the therapists say? What advice do other families who have trans kids have? What about hormone blockers and surgery? What issues should your college-bound trans child be thinking about when selecting a school? How can I best raise my gender variant or transgender child with love and compassion, even when I barely understand the issues ahead of us? And what is gender, anyway? These questions and more are answered in this book offering a deeper understanding of gender variant and transgender children and teens.

Transgender Child: A Handbook for Families and Professionals Details

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From Reader Review Transgender Child: A Handbook for Families and Professionals for online ebook

Joshua Lawson says

This book was my first formal reading in the field of transgender studies, and I honestly can't say whether it increased my understanding or just added to the confusion. Actually, that is not true. I did gain a better grasp of the various terms and core concepts related to gender identity as it is understood today. But as for understanding the nature of the struggle itself, I'm still not sure. I realize this is a sensitive issue for many people, though, so I won't venture to opine about things of which I know very little at this point.

Ahavah says

I'm giving this four stars though I personally lean towards 3-3.5. It seemed to me like the entire first half of the book aimed to teach parents not to bully and abuse their children. This section didn't really resonate with me and was very hard for me to read, but I recognize that it is sadly necessary in a book of this nature. I do appreciate that the authors come from a place of no judgment and meeting *all* parents wherever they may be. I hope many parents take their advice.

For me personally, it was drawn-out and repetitive. Maybe it's a lesson many parents need to hear more than once. I can be okay with that and rate it highly for what it aims to do for the market it's reaching out to.

The rest of the book was informative and pretty helpful. I especially appreciate the sections on dealing with schools and medical issues. The book answered many questions I had about medical procedures in a way that was easy for me to understand, and that's one of the things I was very much looking for.

Despite not particularly digging a large chunk, I may still invest in this book just to have or lend out. There are tons of great references shared throughout, and I would love to further educate myself. All in all, this is a great overview. I would definitely recommend it, especially for loved ones or professionals who are unfamiliar with transgender issues.

Bookphile says

This book is packed with useful information, which is a little problematic because I didn't think it touched on some topics in enough depth. It's an excellent guide for such things as dealing with problems at school, how to help a transgender child choose a college, etc., but there's not much information on how parents and other adults should appropriately respond to a child's assertions of their gender. The book notes some of what children will say that indicates they may be transgender or gender-variant, but it doesn't provide information as to how adults can respond in positive ways that will also help the adult to get a better feel for how the child looks at their gender identity. That's obviously a broad topic that can't be covered in a single book, but some tips for common situations would have been welcome.

Still, this book is a very handy reference with extensive lists of websites, fictional books depicting

transgender and gender-variant characters, and organizations to help parents, teachers, and family members navigate these waters.

Elevate Difference says

A much-needed addition to the contemporary parenting book selection, *The Transgender Child* is a comprehensive, informative resource. By combining research and personal stories, the authors present a text that will prove itself indispensable not only for parents and families of transgender children, but also for anyone who works with young people.

Many families today are facing the challenges and joys that come with raising a transgender child. This experience can be confusing, frustrating, and depressing, but also liberating, exhilarating, and empowering. *The Transgender Child* will give parents and caregivers a place to start as they seek to understand, support, and nurture their children.

Beginning with basic questions (e.g., “What is gender?” and “What makes a person transgender?”) and defining terms such as gender variance, cross gender, and gender fluidity, this an accessible resource for anyone, regardless of prior knowledge or understanding. A variety of approaches and attitudes toward transgender issues is represented and affirmed. Many parents will be relieved to find fears, frustrations, and negative feelings acknowledged and accepted. Resources, tools, and practical suggestions abound - all are anchored in the philosophy that there is no one right way to raise a child and remind readers that we are learning more about gender all the time.

Practical issues - such as gender-specific bathrooms and clothing choices - are covered, along with tougher subjects - including secrecy versus privacy, religion, and how to discuss a child’s transgender identity with family members, friends, and school personnel. Perhaps the most valuable part of this book is the inclusion of many personal stories from parents, family members, and transgender people themselves, telling of their transition and acceptance. This must-read is an extensive, frank, and honest exploration of an issue close to many parents’ hearts.

Review by Amanda Moss

Praxedes says

Full disclosure: my fifteen-year-old nephew is a trans-boy, so this was a way for me to understand his new life choice and what it means to those who are undergoing this transition. He is a great kid, a churchgoing straight A student, and an athlete...basically a boy like any other except that anatomically he was born a girl.

This book is a terrific introduction to a phenomenon that is sweeping the news media today. The authors' skill lies in explaining difficult concepts in an easy to understand way. The strong advocacy and protection of transgender rights is touching and consistent; one walks away from this book wanting to do something to increase awareness and acceptance of this small and relatively misunderstood segment of our society.

I will order this book for my Library's Professional Development section so that teachers, counselors, and administrators have a reference for any current/future students who are undergoing this transformation.

Becky Jo says

A large portion of what the author purports as truth and science are nothing more than anecdotal deductions based and the limited research there really is about this. I wish it had been more evidence based.

Laura Rueckert says

The Transgender Child is an excellent introductory book for parents and professionals! The version I bought is 52 pages longer than GoodReads says. Maybe a newer version with more added?

Dawn says

Very helpful at this stage of my parenting journey. Lots of relevant information. The version I read was a bit outdated and some medical advice/limitations didn't apply in Canada.

Mark Syron says

This is a book that is not heavily jargon based and what is jargon is explained in an easy to understand speech. I listened to this through audiobook and found the narrator gave a well-done performance. The pros of this book are that it is easy to understand. A Con is that it has goals that seem at this day in age impossible to achieve based on society today, like have kids being taught gender at a young age. Another pro of the book is that the focus is both on the parent and child. The parents are expressed to see that they are not blamed for the origin of somehow causing a trans kid and children who are trans are expressed to just themselves no matter what.

Chante Bagley says

This book is not incredibly informational for the a queer person, but for a cisgender/heterosexual parent this book would be fantastic. The terms used are easy to understand and the book does delve deeper than "gender and sex or not the same thing." I would recommend this as a tool for questioning parents and plan to do so as a teacher.

Suzy Waters says

I found this book to be very informative and interesting. It was not full of jargon and is appropriate for anyone who wants to develop a greater understanding of transgender issues.

Aaron says

Concerning gender identity and gender presentation, there are few all-encompassing publications whose primary currency is their accessibility. No matter how presumably new or modern the social consciousness of articulating the legal rights, medical privacies, or public spaces afforded to individuals who are gender-variant, the fact remains that educating the greater public while at the same time educating interconnected family members and professional clinicians is a daunting task. Fortunately, **THE TRANSGENDER CHILD** accepts this challenge, and in doing so, accomplishes much in the way of providing individuals a valuable resource as the world moves forward.

The question, therefore, is not wither the need for a handbook that aids families and professionals in guiding their gender-variant children; rather, the question regards whether such a feat is even possible. The dynamics are immense. And in today's social climate, ever-changing. How do parents navigate a young child's emotional response to adult indecision? How do doctors and physicians address topics for which they are not sufficiently trained? How do education professionals compartmentalize concerns for safety when their plates are already so incredibly full, each and every school day?

Brill and Pepper cover a lot of ground -- some of it superficially, some of it more dynamically -- but for those adults in a position to make a positive difference in the life of a queer kid, it's all worth reading in detail. Key sections include discussion of affirmative versus damaging parenting practices; navigating private and public disclosure; working to instill change within the local education system; and most critically, conversations about adult acceptance: "Most parents of gender-variant children and teens come to realize that what must really be overcome is their own fear and expectations, rather than something that is inherently wrong with their child" (p. 75).

THE TRANSGENDER CHILD doesn't touch too deeply on issues concerning religion, culture, and race, each of which significantly impact how families or communities react to the presence of a gender-variant child. Likewise, the book sidesteps forceful recommendations for challenging institutional authorities that rebuke the child, and instead casually conceives of a "do everything you can" mentality. The tone of the book is genial and warm, but there will surely be occasions in which one cannot help but find that asking nicely just won't cut it. If existing social paradigms don't care about the child's health, then parents need to get tough.

All in all, the book's emphasis on making patient, informed decisions is invaluable. So too are the authors' genuine acknowledgement of the "learning curve" necessary for parents or other authority figures to smartly and adequately fulfill the needs of the child in their care. Indeed, this is the book's most important lesson: love inspires action.

Nicole Vanderlinden says

great for anyone raising/working with children to read, regardless of identity

Jostalady says

A very well researched and gender positive resource! I have been looking at how to support a young person who is genderqueer and am very happy this book covered that area very well.

Thank you for writing this!

Some big take aways are to get everyone around on board and educated. If they can't, it is ok to distance ourselves from them. An example was a grandparent that was cut out of a child's life. To have someone important in our lives reject or make harmful comments toward or about our loved one, is tremendously damaging and the harm lasts a lifetime.

There are practical tips for using the correct pronouns, especially when recounting old memories before the change in pronouns and even about how to handle photos from before with sensitivity to the individual's preferences.

I highly recommend this book!

Amy Layton says

This book is about ten years old, but that doesn't make it any less useful. This book is jam packed with resources, anecdotes, and supportive words. This book is for trans knowledgeable families as well as those who have no idea what they're doing, and it shows with how the chapters are broken down. The first chapter is filled with vocabulary that will be used throughout the book and are useful to know in terms of your child. Then, from there, Brill and Pepper tackle the hard subjects of what to do in terms of your child's educational facility, neighbors, legal systems, and medical systems.

Everything the authors said boils down to a few things: Let your child take the lead. Do not vocalize your embarrassment or shame. Support your child. Set boundaries if you must, but make sure they are a reasonable compromise across all members of your family.

It had been a while since I'd read something under the "feminism" umbrella, and I was glad that this was the book I chose. It aided me in further deconstructing my perceived notions of trans and nonbinary folks, and I'm more than pleased to know that I have one more title in my "feminist toolbox" to reference.

Get the full review [here!](#)
