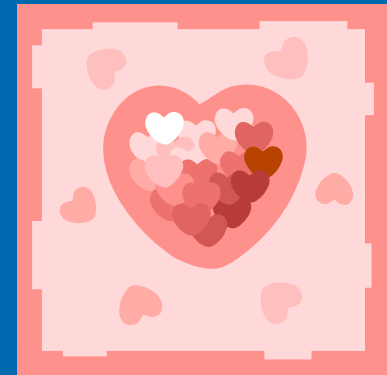


WORKING WITH FAMILIES WITH A GENDER NON-CONFORMING CHILD



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Agenda



- **Introductions & Overview**
 - **Issues for Family Members & Supportive Interventions**
 - **Q & A**
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Family Reactions


- Shock, denial
- Loss, depression, guilt
- Hurt, anger, sense of betrayal
- Revulsion, shame, embarrassment
- Fear, anxiety
- Confusion, ambivalence, conflict

Family Reactions: Support

- Actively listen to narratives
- Validate & normalize feelings
- Contain feelings of loss & grief
- Note: See family members without the child for some sessions

Beliefs & Values



- Etiology: Why, whose fault?
 - Pathology (e.g., science)
 - Morality (e.g., religion)
 - Culture, race, sex, gender, class & family of origin
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Beliefs & Values: Support & Challenge

- Information (e.g., uncertainty of long-range outcomes & caution in discussions w/ child)
- Develop “continuum consciousness”
- Challenge genderism, homophobia & transphobia
- Normalize & value “otherness”
- Help parents & siblings function as a team
- Keep focus on the child

“Continuum of Denial to Celebration”



Denial



Revulsion



Tolerance



Acceptance



Integration



Appreciation



Celebration

Degree of Gender Expression: Pros of Child Deciding





- Positive self-esteem
- Self-determination
- Fosters trust in parents
- Learning from experimentation

Degree of Gender Expression: Cons of Child Deciding

- Bullying (physical & emotional effects)
- Missing parental guidance & containment
- Feeling responsible for parents' feelings
- Lack of gender constancy before age 6
- False trans identity


Negotiating Gender Expression



- Find a balance: contract with child to set limits (esp. re: safety)
 - Teach survival strategies to the child & siblings
 - Keep options open re: gender identity, sexual orientation, degree of gender expression
 - Try, watch, change...
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Navigating the World



- Managing disclosure and visual presentation
 - Choose daycare and schools wisely
 - Advocacy & negotiation (with child, school, other parents, community, circle of support)
 - Playmates & role models for the child
 - Community & professional supports for the child & family members
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From Confusion to Clarity



- Ground families
- Generate hope (e.g., success stories, transformative metaphors)
- Reframe as growth opportunity for all family members



From Crisis to Potential for Positive Change

- Stronger family relationships
- Resilience, critical thinking, courage, diplomacy, empowerment
- Expanding oneself & one's world view
- Deepening community connections

How to Contact Us



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