

ABOUT

Supporting Transgender and Transsexual Students in K-12 Schools

This Canadian Teachers' Federation resource addresses cogently what the authors describe as a "relatively new phenomenon for schools" and one with which many are unfamiliar or only beginning to understand. Students, parents, families, healthcare professionals, and caregivers are rendering visible the experiences of students who are transgender and transsexual. Current research has identified this population as particularly vulnerable and requiring our collective, considered, and timely response. This guidebook is a comprehensive, thoughtful, and practical resource for those who are interested in learning about what we might do, individually and collectively, to attend to every student, every day, no exceptions.

Dr. Dianne Roulson,
Diversity Manager, Learning Support
Calgary Board of Education

This book offers a down-to-earth guide for understanding transgender and transsexual children and their development. Although the focus is on schools, it is remarkably holistic – it speaks to families as well as teachers and school administrators. But even more important is that it is practical: unlike any other book I know, it walks us through everyday strategies for creating families, schools, and communities that understand, support, and value transgender children. It will be an important resource for educators and families.

Dr. Stephen T. Russell
Distinguished Professor, Fitch Nesbitt Endowed Chair
Director, Frances McClelland Institute for Children, Youth, & Families, University of Arizona

Supporting Transgender and Transsexual Students in K-12 Schools is a smart and effective resource that demystifies gender variance and empowers teachers to create safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environments. This is a concise and easy to understand guide that covers a broad range of considerations for teachers, administrators, and parents. Students embark on a highly visible, yet deeply personal journey when they transition. Everyone who witnesses the change is affected and they will never forget the student who opened their eyes. Teachers, this is a profound opportunity to model respect, and nurture acceptance and understanding – and this book will show you how! A must read for school administrators and parents of trans-identified youth.

Cherie MacLeod
Executive Director
PFLAG Canada

This guidebook provides very needed information for educators in our K-12 school system. It would not be an exaggeration to say that the work that you have done in this guide has the potential to save lives. Every K-12 school should make this guide mandatory reading for all administrators, support staff, and teachers. I'd recommend that this resource also be made available to parents. Parents of trans and questioning kids will find great comfort in knowing that our schools actively care about *all* of the kids they serve.

Dr. Aaron H. Devor
Fellow of the Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality Professor
Sociology Department, University of Victoria

Supporting Transgender and Transsexual Students in K-12 Schools is an immensely useful resource for understanding and addressing the needs of gender nonconforming youth. With greater access to information and support, a growing number of students are coming out as transgender or transsexual in elementary, middle, and high schools. Yet, until now, there has not been a published work that assists parents, teachers, and school administrators through the process of a student transitioning. This guidebook addresses this important need with skill and insight and should be on every K-12 administrator's bookshelf.

Dr. Genny Beemyn
Director, the Stonewall Center, University of Massachusetts

This guidebook is long over due. Although progress has been made with regards to the acceptance of transgender and transsexual individuals in our society, there is still a long way to go and much work to be done. The impact of stigmatization and prejudice could be no greater than on gender variant children. Childhood and adolescence are critical developmental periods and often a time where children and youth want to blend in rather than stand out for their differences. It is well known that the rate of suicide attempts and suicide completions is much higher amongst gay, lesbian, and transgender youth. Changing attitudes in schools, with a document such as this one, will help to make a positive difference and may actually save lives. For the children and youth who are part of my professional practice, I intend to provide copies of this guidebook to their parents and the principals of their schools. It is my hope that this guidebook will be made available to all schools (private, public, and separate) and become mandatory reading for all teachers and staff.

Dr. Lorne Warneke, MD, FRCP(C) Psych
Clinical Professor Psychiatry, University of Alberta
Psychiatrist for Gender Services, Province of Alberta

As a psychologist and family therapist working closely with schools in implementing measures to counter sexism, homophobia and transphobia, I feel *Supporting Transgender and Transsexual Students in K-12 Schools* should be read by every administrator and teacher! More and more schools are facing the challenge of integrating kids who are exploring gender expression or going through the process of transitioning within the school setting. This up-to-date and very well documented guide is an invaluable resource for parents, youth workers, or schools wishing to create a safe and welcoming environment inclusive of all kids.

Françoise Susset, M.A.
Psychologist and Couple and Family Therapist
President of the Board of Canadian Professional Association for Transgender Health

The Canadian Teachers' Federation is to be congratulated on the production of this important and timely resource. The three co-authors have done a fine job of providing a thoughtful summary and analysis of the latest literature, research, and resources, as well as the perspectives of individuals with real-life experience of transsexuality. School administrators, teachers, and parents will find here ways to extend support to gender minority children and youth and specifically to transgender and transsexual individuals. Our goal to ensure that schools are safe, nurturing, and rewarding environments for all students is one step closer because of this new publication. We have a better understanding that accommodation of difference requires changes to our school policies, pedagogies, and practices. This guidebook will become required reading in the course I teach on "Schooling and Sexual and Gender Identities" in the Faculty of Education here at the University of Regina.

Dr. James McNinch
Professor and Dean
Faculty of Education, University of Regina

Gender variance and gender non-conformity in schools is not a recent phenomenon. However, today K-12 educators are becoming more aware—if not more sensitive—to this student population with an increasing number of parents now fully supporting their children to transition in schools. *Supporting Transgender and Transsexual Students in K-12 Schools* provides the data, resources, and personal stories that will help educational professionals to provide this much needed support and expert guidance. Specific strategies for creating more inclusive classrooms, plans for in-school student transitions, and suggestions for ways to support parents/guardians with transitioning children make this book essential reading for every school teacher, staff member, administrator, and school board member.

Dr. James T. Sears
Editor, *Journal of LGBT Youth*