

Young People



What YP want to ask their parents/guardians/carers

1. Can you use my new name and pronouns?

When coming out, having the people around you use a different name, and pronouns is a common part of social transition. You can involve others in the process of looking for a new name and trying out different pronouns, or you can navigate this yourself - try to identify what feels the most natural and right.

It's important to be direct and patient when asking the people around you to use new names and pronouns – they may make mistakes, and that's okay as long as they are trying, but you are allowed to correct them.

Also consider letting the people around you know if there are times they should avoid using your new name and pronouns.

2. Why am I trans?

There is no known "cause" for being transgender. Although there are theories, nothing is confirmed.

Below are quotes from trans individuals:

"God blessed me by making me trans for the same reason God made wheat but not bread and fruit but not wine, so that humanity might share in the act of creation." – Julian K Jarboe, first quoted in Daniel Lavery's *Something That May Shock and Discredit You*

"Your sexuality or gender is as natural as your eye colour, and you should never be ashamed of it." - Juno Dawson

"As I pondered a pronoun change, I began to think of gender less as a scale and more as a landscape. Some people are born in the mountains, while others are born by the sea. Some people are happy to live in the place they were born, while others must make a journey to reach the climate in which they can flourish and grow. Between the ocean and the mountains is a wild forest. That is where I want to make my home." – Maia Kobabe

"There's a gender in your brain and a gender in your body. For 99 percent of people, those things are in alignment. For transgender people, they're mismatched. That's all it is. It's not complicated, it's not a neurosis. It's a mix-up. It's a birth defect, like a cleft palate." - Chaz Bono

3. Do you accept me being LGBT+, or are you disappointed in me?

Your parents should accept you for who you are, not who they want you to be. Some parents will be shocked, or need time to adjust their idea of who you are.

Some parents will be disappointed. This is not your fault. Your sexuality or gender is not something parents should feel disappointed over. This will hurt, though, and it can be helpful to speak to a counsellor to help process your feelings.

4. Has your view of me changed?

Hopefully it has. When someone comes out to their family, they are often asking them to see them differently, especially if they've come out as transgender or non-binary. However, they should still love you as a family member.

5. Have you ever questioned your sexuality or gender identity?

If members of your family have had experiences questioning aspects of their identity – especially gender or sexuality – it can help you feel less alone to talk about those experiences.

6. What was it like to be LGBT+ when you were growing up?

It can be useful to speak to your family about their experiences, especially older LGBT+ relatives. Whilst attitudes towards LGBT+ community have changed over time, some aspects of historical homo- and transphobia have remained in our society, and it can be useful to have someone else's knowledge of how to navigate it. Family members can also give advice on how to come out to other family members, especially those of older generations who are still holding onto historical misconceptions.

7. Will family history affect my medical transition?

Sometimes family history/genetics will have an impact on the effects of medical transition, such as history of male patterned baldness. Having these conversations are important as they will come up through the process of medical transition anyway.

What YP want to ask SYP

1. Am I safe as a queer individual?

Sadly, discrimination and transphobia are high among transgender and non-binary young people, this does not mean, it is inevitable, you deserve it or should expect it.

Many individuals seek out [safe spaces](#) to help them feel safer, much like our youth groups, Space Family Days, or other community spaces.

2. How long will this take?

Transitioning is a journey. Some have an end, while others are ever evolving, but it is a long journey either way.

When an individual under 17 comes out, they should talk to their GP and be referred to CAMHS who will then refer the young person to the NHS Children and Young People's Gender Services. When an individual over 17 comes out, they should be referred to the Gender Dysphoria Clinic by their GP. These services enable people to work with professionals, access support, talk about their feelings, and find the most affirming care route. In the UK, current waiting times to access these NHS clinics are upwards of 5 years, pushing many to pursue private healthcare.

It also depends how much an individual wants to pursue; there is no right or wrong way to transition, and each person's transition is individual. A trans individual who starts hormone therapy is likely to be on it for the rest of their life to maintain the effects, surgery waiting lists can take years, or there may be multiple surgeries an individual needs to undergo.

3. Where can I access gender affirming care? Who is the best?

[TransActual](#) is a wealth of information on how you can navigate NHS and private gender affirming care.

4. How can I talk to my parents?

It can be hard to explain ourselves to our parents, sometimes it helps to write what you want to say down or ask to communicate over text instead.

We recommend checking out these resources to help you navigate talk to your family:

- [How Do I Tell My Parents?](#)
- [Coming Out as Trans to Family, Friends, and Loved Ones](#)

5. Does it get easier?

Absolutely. As you grow, you become better equipped to handle challenges in life through coping mechanisms and resilience.

6. Where can I find positive resources?

Some resources can appear trans friendly initially, but are actually spreading misinformation and harm. Be cautious around language like trans-identified, ideology, rapid onset dysphoria, and emphasis on biological sex.

Check out our [resource page](#) or [external support page](#) to find inclusive organisations who have further resources on their websites!

7. How can you help me?

Space Youth Project offers a variety of services including:

- [Youth Groups](#) – Free drop-in youth groups for LGBT+ young people, including a Bournemouth based groups specifically for trans, non-binary, and gender questioning young people
- [Peer Leadership Programme](#) – Supernovas is an opportunity for our young people to get more engaged in the organisation to access volunteering and training opportunities
- [Family Support](#) – Bi-monthly Space Family Days provide support for the families of trans and non-binary young people happening all across Dorset. Families can also access our 121 services to access individualised support
- [121s](#) – We can offer individual support within our youth groups for free or outside our groups at a cost. Some external organisations can refer or provide funding for young people to access 121s
- [Awareness Training](#) – We can provide inclusivity training such as self-taught classes and zoom/in-person training sessions to individual, organisations, and local authorities. Our volunteer Mel also offers workshops to schools on diversity and inclusivity.
- Events & Trips – We also go on trips and plan events throughout the year including National Trust trips, Pride events, young people planned activities, and exclusive development [opportunities](#)
- Support with Resources – Within any of our services you can request resources or help with anything, even non-LGBT+ issues. We can signpost or refer you to who can help
- Admin Support – We can provide support in navigating legal transition, including witness on a name change and letters of support/evidence
- Counselling – Sometimes individuals volunteer with us as part of their counselling training and we can on occasion provide counselling sessions within group times. We also have a volunteer counsellor in the BPC groups who can provide counselling to young people

8. What is the best way to come out?

It can be hard to come out to our family and friends. Often the anticipation of coming out overrides the experience or young people catastrophize possible outcomes and only focus on worst case scenarios.

We recommend checking out these resources to help you navigate coming out:

- [A Booklet Made By And For Trans Youth](#)
- [How Do I Tell My Parents?](#)
- [Coming Out as Trans to Family, Friends, and Loved Ones](#)

9. How do I present feminine or masculine?

These are questions we cover within our youth groups, Space Family Days, and 121 services. We recommend coming along so we can have personalised conversations looking at areas you are specifically wanting help with.

10. How accepting is SYP?

Space Youth Project aims to be accepting and free of discrimination of any type. This is clearly laid out in our membership conditions.

11. Can you come to my school/scout group and talk about LGBT+ stuff?

Encourage your school or groups to get in touch with us directly and we can try to see what we can do! The school would need to contact hello@spaceyouthproject.co.uk to get details of booking training with us

12. Could you do marketing to get the word out about SYP?

We try, if you have any ideas of how we can better market our services please let us know.

13. What inspired SYP to start?

Space Youth Project has been around since 2001 and LGBT+ young people felt like they didn't have any safe places they could be. [Find out more about the start of SYP here.](#)

What YP want to ask 'others'

1. How will your parents react to me? Why don't they like me?

Some friends may have family or people in their life that don't accept you for your identity. It's important you know you are not at fault and can always speak to a trusted adult for support or ask them to step in.

2. Do you want to share my safe space?

Some young people do not have access to their own safe space, sharing yours can be a lifeline for someone.

3. How do you feel about my identity? Do you want to know more?

When coming out to the people in our life, they might not know much about it and have questions or limited knowledge. Consider if you are comfortable answering their questions or if you'd prefer, send them resources you believe explains your experience.

We recommend checking out these resources to help you navigate talk to your family:

- [A Booklet Made By And For Trans Youth](#)
- [Coming Out as Trans to Family, Friends, and Loved Ones](#)
- [Guide to Being an Ally to Transgender and Nonbinary Young People](#)

4. How do you perceive me?

For many young people, how they are perceived by others is a huge aspect of their transition and can contribute to gender dysphoria. It's important for trans and non-binary young people to learn how to value how they perceive themselves rather than how others perceive them.

(This isn't easy – be kind to yourself and keep working on it.)

5. How do you (another LGBT+ young person) view your identity?

Having open and honest conversations around how you feel or identify with others who have similar experiences can help you to reflect and learn more about yourself and others. It has an incredibly positive impact on young peoples' well-being and self-esteem. This is why our youth groups are so valuable to facilitate these experiences.

6. Are you embarrassed of me as a friend? Why don't you like me?

If a friend doesn't want to have you in their life after you've come out to them, then that's their loss. You can find others who do accept you for who you are.

7. Can you come into the toilet with me?

Sometimes this can be a good part of allyship, to be a buddy in gendered environments to make your LGTB+ friends feel safer and at ease.

8. How accepting is your place of education?

Many young people, especially those of marginalised groups such as LGBT+ people, struggle with acceptance in school. It is natural to be curious about attitudes in different schools and places of education.

9. Is it okay for me to talk about my gender?

Some young people just want to talk about how they feel with their friends, but it's important to ensure your friends have the capacity for these conversations.

Boundaries go both ways.

10. Can you respect my name and pronouns?

It is basic respect for someone to accept your name and pronouns, and there can be many reasons someone fails to do this. Consider having a talk with them and if they continue to avoid using them, and talk to a trusted adult on how this makes you feel.