

AMVÄZE works



PRIDE Resources for Caregivers Understanding Gender Diversity For ages 3 - 12

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AMAZE works

Dear Caregivers,

This collection of lessons helps guide conversations with children on gender diversity, including gender identity and expression. We know that PRIDE is about celebrating all LGBTQ+ people. We also know that sexual orientation and gender diversity are often conflated. For this reason, we are dedicating this resource to gender diversity, and we have created a separate PRIDE resource guide on gay and lesbian families.

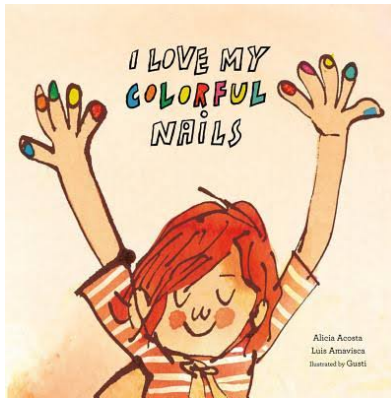
Many children who are gender expansive, who do not express gender according to stereotypical gender roles, and who are gender non-binary or transgender experience bias, teasing, mistreatment, and exclusion because of their gender identity and expression. At AMAZEworks, we know that honest, intentional conversations about identity, difference, and bias reduce bias levels in children.

We also know the power of sharing stories. When we listen to each other's stories, we build empathy. This empathy is necessary if we want to shift our thinking from "their issue" to "our issue." When we take time to understand bias, prejudice, and discrimination in all its forms, including around gender diversity, we are better equipped to stand up to it.

This work requires time and dedication. These books and lessons are a starting point for sharing stories and engaging in discussions. If you have additional questions or want more resources, we encourage you to visit our website: www.amazeworks.org.

In solidarity with all who strive for equity and belonging,
AMAZEworks

Elementary Book Lesson for Caregivers



Book Title

I Love My Colorful Nails by Alicia Acosta and Luis Amavisca, illustrated by Gusti

Recommended Ages

3 and up

Book Summary to Share With Children

Ben is a boy who loves to paint his nails different colors. One day at school, some boys start teasing him because they don't think that boys should paint their nails. Let's read to find out what happens to Ben and his colorful nails.

Reflection Questions for the Caregiver

- What were you taught about what girls and boys should like or how they should act?
- How might these childhood messages affect the way you interact with your child?
- How do you feel about your child not following societal gender roles? How can you affirm the gender identity of your child?

Reader's Note

This book allows children who are gender creative or gender non-binary to see someone like them in literature with a positive message about who they are. It also allows children who follow traditional gender roles to see a child who is non-traditional with a loving family and helps them know how to be a friend. It shows a loving, accepting family while also showing the pain felt when others do not accept the child. The book asks children to decide how they would act toward the child in the book.

Our society tends to expect children to act in rigid and specific ways based on gender. Many children don't want to be boxed in by gender roles. Not all children are transgender who are experimenting with actions and clothing that don't fit with adults' expectations related to gender. But some of them are and don't always have the words (or the comfort level) to talk with anyone about this important part of their identity.

Many people are threatened, bullied, and injured about being transgender, gender non-conforming, or gender non-binary, so it's helpful for families to bring up the topic even if they aren't aware of any children they know who are questioning their gender. Talking about gender differences also creates more room for all of our children to talk about how they feel when someone tries to limit what they can do, say, or feel based on gender.

In this way, we can make our communities safer places for all of our children. If your child questions another child's gender expression, you could say, "Well, _____ knows themselves better than we do, so _____ gets to decide how they dress and act and what they want to be called, just like you do." You could also say, "Yes, that might be a little different than how you've thought about girls and boys before. Whether we think of ourselves as a boy or a girl or something in between comes from a lot of places. We see what our body looks like, and we pay attention to who we feel we are in our hearts. Then we decide what to show other people about who we are by how we dress and act."

Connection to Social-Emotional Learning and Anti-Bias Education

SEL

SELF-AWARENESS

Self-Management

SOCIAL AWARENESS

Relationship Skills

RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING

ABE

EMPATHY AND BELONGING

HEALTHY, COMPLEX IDENTITY

RESPECT ACROSS DIFFERENCES

NOTICE, NAME, AND REJECT BIAS

RESPONSIVENESS AND ACTION

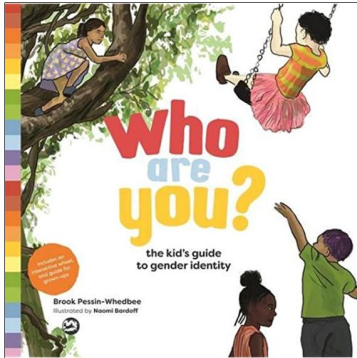
Discussion Questions

1. Why does Ben paint his nails?
 - a. What do Ben's family and friends think about him painting his nails?
 - b. What do you think about Ben painting his nails?
2. What happens when Ben goes to school with his red nails?
 - a. How does Ben feel about this?
 - b. How would you feel?
3. How do Ben's family and friend, Margarita, try to help him feel better?
4. How did Ben change after being teased by the boys at school?
5. What do you think of the ending of the book?
6. What are some other things that Ben could have done or said to the mean boys who teased him?
 - a. If you had seen the boys teasing Ben, what would you have said or done?

Journal Questions/Activities

- What do you think about the idea that there are boy activities and girl activities? Do you agree with that? What things do you like to do that may be considered boy activities? What things do you like to do that may be considered girl activities?
- Write or draw about a time when you helped a friend who was sad or a friend helped you like how Ben's family and friends helped Ben in the story.

Elementary Book Lesson for Caregivers



Book Title

Who Are You? by Brook Pessin-Whedbee, illustrated by Naomi Bardoff

Recommended Ages

4 and up

Book Summary to Share With Children

Gender is personal, and it is part of our identity. People experience gender in many different ways. This book explains some of the many different ways people experience gender and how they may identify.

Reflection Questions for the Caregiver

- Thinking back to your childhood, what did you learn about gender identity and expression?
- How has your understanding of gender expression, gender stereotypes, and gender identity changed as an adult?
- What might you need to consider before having conversations about gender with your child?

Reader's Note

As children continue to explore their identity, including gender, they will have questions about their own and other's identities. Gender is experienced by people in many different ways, and it's important for children to see different gender identities reflected positively in order to affirm each child's own identity and build respect across different identities. This book can be one tool to discuss gender diversity with your child. These discussions help foster healthy, complex identities, respect across differences, and give children language to notice, name, and reject bias when it comes to gender diversity.

Read "A Note for the Grown-ups" on page 1 of the book. Also, note the variety of resources in the back of the book, including the gender wheel.

This book focuses on unpacking gender identity and expression. To learn more about gender diversity and the difference between gender stereotypes, gender expression, and gender identity, check out www.genderspectrum.org.

Discussion Hint: It's important to point out respectful language to use when talking about people's bodies and their identities, like not asking people about their body unless they tell you they are comfortable talking about it and believing people when they say who they are and respecting their pronouns. Talk about how they are likely to make mistakes and what to do if that happens.

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RESPECT ACROSS DIFFERENCES

Notice, Name, and Reject Bias

Responsiveness and Action

Discussion Questions

1. What is sex assigned at birth? How is this different from gender?
2. What is the gender spectrum?
3. The book talks about how there are many genders. What does this mean?
4. What does it mean to be cisgender? Transgender (Trans)? Non-binary? Both a boy and a girl? Neither a boy nor a girl?
5. What do you like? (page 10) How have the things you like changed as you've gotten older?
6. What do you think the authors mean when they say that "gender is much more than the body you were born with (p. 7)"?
7. What is identity? (p. 15) How is gender one part of your identity? What are other parts of your identity?
8. What do the authors mean when they say, "You say who you say you are, because YOU know you best"?
9. Some people say there are only two genders. What can you say to someone who says this?
10. How could your classroom and school community be more understanding of gender identity?

Journal Questions/Activities

- What are the parts of your identity that you're still trying to figure out?
- Who can you talk to in your life about your gender identity?
- Use paper plates (and/or round pieces of paper) and a brad to have your child create their own wheel like the one in the back of the book.
 - For the "I have/Body" section, your child can fill in physical characteristics about themselves.
 - For the "I am/Identity" section, your child can write words or phrases that describe their identity (including but not limited to gender).
 - For the "I like/Expression" section, your child can fill in all the things they like to do.

Elementary Book Lesson for Caregivers

Book Title *One of a Kind, Like Me (Único como yo)* by Laurin Mayeno, illustrated by Robert Liu-Trujillo



Recommended Ages
4 and up

Book Summary to Share With Children

One of a Kind Like Me/Único como yo is a story (written in Spanish and English) about a child named Danny who wants to be a princess in the school parade. Danny and his mom go searching for the perfect dress, and have to get creative to get it ready for the school parade in time. As you listen and look at the illustrations, pay attention to Danny's feelings and how they change throughout the story.

Reflection Questions for the Caregiver

- Thinking back to your childhood, what did you learn about gender roles and what boys and girls should and shouldn't do?
- How has your understanding of gender expression, gender stereotypes, and gender identity changed as an adult?
- As your child moves through their own journeys of gender identity and expression, which can be both deeply personal and very public, what support do you think they might need from you and other family members, friends, and the school community?

Reader's Note

It is important to distinguish between gender expression and gender identity and not conflate these two different aspects of gender diversity. One of the ways gender non-conforming children are teased and mistreated is when other kids purposefully misgender them because they do not fit into gender stereotypes.

To learn more about gender diversity and the difference between gender stereotypes, gender expression, and gender identity, check out www.genderspectrum.org.

Be sure to read the Author's Note to Parents, Caregivers, & Educators and share this information with your child about this true story. Take time to visit oneofakindlikeme.com and check out the great Guide for Educators under the Resources section. It offers a deeper explanation of how and why to have conversations about gender with every age, more discussion questions, and how to respond to children's questions and concerns you may hear from other parents/caregivers.

Connection to Social-Emotional Learning and Anti-Bias Education

SEL

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SELF-MANAGEMENT
SOCIAL AWARENESS
Relationship Skills
Responsible Decision-Making

ABE

EMPATHY AND BELONGING
HEALTHY, COMPLEX IDENTITY
RESPECT ACROSS DIFFERENCES
NOTICE, NAME, AND REJECT BIAS
RESPONSIVENESS AND ACTION

Discussion Questions

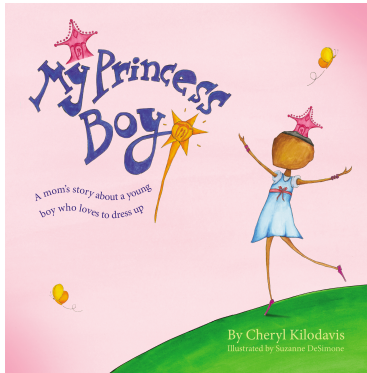
1. What is gender? What makes someone a boy, a girl, or another gender? Encourage exploration without having to have a definitive “answer”.
2. Do you think there are any clothes or colors that only girls can wear or only boys can wear?
 - a. What if a boy likes to wear skirts or dresses?
 - b. Do all girls like pink?
3. How did Danny's family react when he said he wanted to be a princess for the costume parade?
4. How did Danny's feelings change as he looked for his princess costume at the store?
5. Danny has to search hard and get creative when looking for his princess costume at the store.
 - a. Have you ever had to try more than once or get creative to do something you wanted to do? What was it? What did you do?
6. How did Danny feel at the end of the story?
7. How do you think Danny felt when Carlos said that he'd never seen a boy princess before?
 - a. What was Danny's response?
 - b. How would you have responded?
8. What makes someone a good friend? (Focus on character traits, highlighting that these traits are what matter, not someone's gender or what they wear.)

Note: Some discussion questions and journal prompts are taken or adapted from the educator's guide.

Journal Questions/Activities

- Draw or write about how you are one-of a-kind. What do you like about yourself?
- Draw or write about what is unique or different about your family.
- Has anyone ever told you not to do something because of your gender? How did you feel? Draw or write about this experience, and include your feelings.

Elementary Book Lesson for Caregivers



Book Title

My Princess Boy by Cheryl Kilodavis, Illustrated by Suzanne DeSimone

Recommended Ages

4 and up

Book Summary to Share With Children

This story is about a little boy who loves the color pink, sparkly things, and being a princess. The story was written by his mom. Let's see what she wants us to know about him and his family.

Reflection Questions for the Caregiver

- What were you taught about what girls and boys should like or how they should act?
- How might these childhood messages affect the way you interact with your child?
- How do you feel about your child not following societal gender roles? How can you affirm the gender identity of your child?

Reader's Note

This book allows children who are gender creative or gender non-binary to see someone like them in literature with a positive message about who they are. It also allows children who follow traditional gender roles to see a child who is non-traditional with a loving family and helps them know how to be a friend. It shows a loving, accepting family while also showing the pain felt when others do not accept the child. The book asks children to decide how they would act toward the child in the book.

Our society tends to expect children to act in rigid and specific ways based on gender. Many children don't want to be boxed in by gender roles. Not all children are transgender who are experimenting with actions and clothing that don't fit with adults' expectations related to gender. But some of them are and don't always have the words (or the comfort level) to talk with anyone about this important part of their identity.

Many people are threatened, bullied, and injured about being transgender, gender non-conforming, or gender non-binary,, so it's helpful for families to bring up the topic even if they aren't aware of any children they know who are questioning their gender. Talking about gender differences also creates more room for all of our children to talk about how they feel when someone tries to limit what they can do, say, or feel based on gender.

In this way, we can make our communities safer places for all of our children. If your child questions another child's gender expression, you could say, "Well, _____ knows themselves better than we do, so _____ gets to decide how they dress and act and what they want to be called, just like you do." You could also say, "Yes, that might be a little different than how you've thought about girls and boys before. Whether we think of ourselves as a boy or a girl or something in between comes from a lot of places. We see what our body looks like, and we pay attention to who we feel we are in our hearts. Then we decide what to show other people about who we are by how we dress and act."

Connection to Social-Emotional Learning and Anti-Bias Education

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RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

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RESPONSIVENESS AND ACTION

Discussion Questions

1. What are some of the things the princess boy loves?
2. What are some of the things he loves that sound fun to you?
3. Why do people laugh at and tease the boy?
4. How do you think the boy felt when others laughed and teased at him?
5. How would you feel if you were the boy?
6. What does the mom do to support the boy?
7. Turn to the page with questions about how children would act if they saw a Princess Boy. Ask these questions.
8. How can we make sure everyone feels loved?

Activity

Our Bodies Show How We Feel

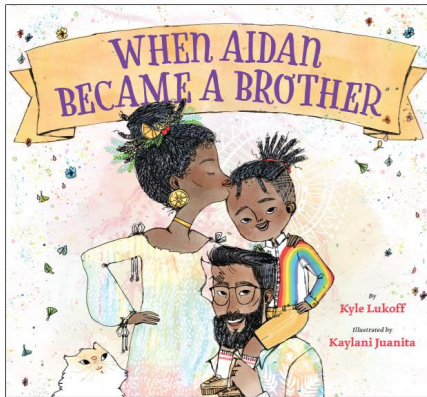
Call out teasing, bullying, or exclusionary situations, alternating with helping words situations and ask your child to show you with their bodies how they would feel.

- Someone just told you that they've noticed that you are very good at riding trikes. How do you feel?
- Someone just teased you about your hair and eyes in a mean way. How do you feel?
- Someone just asked you to play with them. How do you feel? Someone just told you that no boys can play here (if you are a boy) or no girls can play here (if you are a girl). How do you feel?
- Somebody just told you can't play because of something else about you that you can't change (maybe it is the color of your skin, the way you talk, or the clothes your parents buy you). How do you feel?
- Someone just thanked you for helping them. How do you feel?
- Someone just told you, "You can't come to my birthday party." How do you feel?
- Someone just offered to share their new toy with you. How do you feel?
- Someone just told you that your new shoes are ugly. How do you feel?
- Someone just told you that they think your new hat is great. How do you feel?

Elementary Book Lesson for Caregivers

Book Title

When Aidan Became a Brother by Kyle Lukoff, illustrated by Kaylani Juanita



Recommended Ages

4 and up; Discussion questions and journal/activities 7 and up

Book Summary to Share With Children

When Aidan was born, everyone thought he was a girl. When Aidan told his parents he felt more like a boy, they were responsive and fixed things in his life so they fit him better. Now, Aidan's parents are about to have another baby, and Aidan is very concerned with getting everything right for his new sibling. He shows he knows how to love and be a big brother through his preparations and considerations for the new baby.

Reflection Questions for the Caregiver

- How does your childcare center or local school/school district set up to support transgender students and their families?
- What else do you need to learn about and understand before having conversations about gender with your child? How will you find the resources and support?
- Think of a time when you really cared about something so much that you wanted to make sure you got it right and worried about messing up. What did that feel like? What did you do to manage your worries?

Reader's Note

Gender is experienced by people in many different ways. It is important for children to see different gender identities reflected positively in order to affirm each child's own identity and build respect across different identities. This creates empathy and understanding for gender diversity. This book provides an example of self-advocacy when it comes to gender identity. It also provides an example of the responsibility felt by a child as they become an older sibling and the consideration for the well-being of a new sibling.

This book focuses on the changes and preparation a family goes through when a new child enters the family. It also focuses on the transition of a transgender boy. To learn more about gender diversity and the difference between gender stereotypes, gender expression, and gender identity, check out www.genderspectrum.org.

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Discussion Questions

1. How did Aidan and his parents know he was really a boy?
 - a. What did Aidan's parents do after they realized this?
2. What did Aidan do to prepare for the baby?
 - a. Why was Aidan worried?
3. What preparations did Aidan and his parents make in order to make sure they didn't misgender the baby and they could grow up to be whoever they are?
4. How does Aidan advocate for himself and his identity?
 - a. How do Aidan's parents do this, too?
5. When Aidan and his dad were at the hardware store, the paint guy was confused. Why?
6. The book says, "Maybe everything wouldn't be perfect for this baby. Maybe he would have to fix mistakes he didn't even know he was making. And maybe that was okay."
 - a. When have you had to fix a mistake? What did you do?
 - b. How did it feel before and after?
7. When has someone made a mistake about you?
 - a. What did you do? How did you respond?

Journal Questions/Activities

- At the end of the story, it says, "Aidan knew how to love someone, and that was the most important part of being a brother." Choose an identity role you play in relation to others (sister, daughter, brother, son, friend, etc). Draw or write about how you show your love in this role.
- Draw or write about a time when you tried to prepare for something and worried about whether or not it was good enough and others would like it.