

Tasmanian

Gender

Service

(TGS)

For Children and Young People up to 18

Tasmanian Gender Service (TGS) is for children and young people, and their families, who are experiencing gender related issues. It is a specialised service which offers help for families living in Tasmania. We also work closely with the Gender Service at the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne and link in with other specialist gender services across Australia.

We recognise how complex ideas around gender can be and there is a huge range of diversity in how people feel about and express their gender. Both young people and their families can experience some challenges in this process, which we can help with. We always try to adopt a whole family approach.

Our goal...

To improve the physical, social and mental health and wellbeing of children and adolescents who experience gender dysphoria/gender diversity.

Who is in the team?

We are a small, Statewide multidisciplinary team at the moment, located in Hobart, comprised of a Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, Paediatrician, Psychologist and clinical nurse consultant.

In addition to these core team members, your family may be seen by one of the professionals in your area. There is a possibility that you may need to travel to Hobart or participate in a Telehealth consultation, however we will let you know about this when the referral is received.

Your child may also be referred to and seen by an allied health professional (social worker, occupational therapist, speech pathologist) if appropriate.

What do we offer?

TGS offers *advice, assessment* and *treatment* (hormones/ psychological support/ fertility counselling), if indicated, to children and young people who are experiencing significant difficulties with either being gender diverse* (wanting to express their gender in different ways) or experiencing gender dysphoria* (feeling uncomfortable with their gender assigned at birth). Not all young people experiencing gender dysphoria or gender variance will need to be seen by the TGS, although if medical treatment (hormones) is required, then you will need to be seen by the TGS.

Advice We can offer advice to families on a wide range of issues, when a young person is experiencing difficulties with their gender identity.

Assessment When the referral is accepted, we aim to see the young person and their family as soon as possible. Your family will initially meet with the psychiatrist/ psychologist/ allied health professional at the CAMHS service for 2-3 appointments. If medical interventions are required, your family will meet for a joint appointment with the CAMHS clinician and the paediatrician to discuss treatment options. There is also an option for the young person to be seen on their own, if they wish.

Treatment We can offer both psychological and medical treatments, as part of a collaborative management plan, to help alleviate distress associated with gender identity issues.

Values and Ethos

We aim to be non-judgemental, respectful and supportive to your family's individual needs and we appreciate that all families/young people are different.

We encourage freedom of young people to express themselves in whatever way makes them feel comfortable and recognise a wide diversity in sexual and gender identities.

We aim to maintain hope for the future.

We aim to help young people tolerate the uncertainty of how their gender/ feelings may change.

We aim to be inclusive and collaborative with your family throughout the process.

We have a holistic approach and can offer help for emotional, behavioural and relationship difficulties that young people and their families may be experiencing.

How will this happen?

We accept referrals from **general practitioners** and **paediatricians**. Once the referral is received, we will aim to contact you as soon as possible. It is difficult to say how long it will take for you to be seen.

We strongly encourage you to develop an ongoing relationship with your GP throughout this process and we will always keep them informed. Your GP may be required to provide the young person with a mental health care plan, if appropriate.

Research, Consultation and Training

We strive to continually improve the service we offer to young people and their families. Occasionally, we may be undertaking research to find out what is working well and where there is room for improvement. If this is the case, we will let you know and you are free to opt out if you wish.

TGS can offer advice and support to other professionals who may be working with children/young people and their families. TGS can also offer advice to schools about how best to support children/young people who are experiencing issues related to their gender.

Guidelines

The TGS provides care that is consistent with The Australian Standards of Care and Treatment guidelines for Trans and Gender Diverse Children and Adolescents (2017).

Contact information:

Catherine Graham can be contacted on (03) **6166 7193**.

**We appreciate that many different terms are used to describe difficulties with gender and that the descriptive terms used in this booklet may not be your preferred ones. We will always ask you how you would best like to describe the issues when seen.*

Website Resources

Gender help for parents: www.genderhelpforparents.com.au

Working It Out: www.workingitout.org.au

For adolescents: www.minus18.org.au (Minus 18 is Australia's largest network for LGBT youth)

Q Life: [www.qlife.org.au](http://www qlife.org.au) (Australia's national counselling and referral service for LGBTI people, families and friends.)

The Gender Centre: www.gendercentre.org.au

Twenty 10: www.twenty10.org.au (Sydney-based. Offers social support and phone counselling)

For people aged 18 and above

help can be accessed at:

Clinic 60, 60 Collins Street, Hobart, TAS, 7000
Ph. 03 6166 2672

or

Clinic 34, 34 Howick Street, Launceston, TAS, 7250
Ph. 03 6777 1371