

## Who is GenderBridge?

GenderBridge is an organisation formed to help and support transgendered people.

We are a non-profit Incorporated Society.

We provide assistance to all persons who are either transgendered, or who have a friend or family member who is transgendered.

We can provide education on transgender issues to organisations, and are actively trying, through legal means, to promote the rights of transgendered people.

We provide a social network through which transgendered people can meet and socialise, as a way of reducing the isolation and stress that many of us experience today.

General meetings, are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of every month, and social functions are organised regularly. We are based in Auckland at this stage, however we are hoping to expand further in the future.

Friends and Significant Others of transgendered people are also welcome to these meetings.

If you would like to join GenderBridge the annual membership fee for a Full Member is \$20, \$10 for a student or if not in paid work, associate member \$10. (Donations are appreciated also).

To keep our members informed we send newsletters and information. We also update our website regularly.

Please feel free to give us a call on **0800 TGHELP** (0800 844 357) if you would like some further information, to join GenderBridge, or even just for a chat. We would love to hear from you.

Genderbridge is structured as a support network and is not able to provide referrals or diagnosis for any health issues or to any health practitioners.

## Transgender (TG)

A person who feels and/or exhibits behaviour different to the general public's conventional ideas of one's gender.

## Gender Dysphoria

A general term for persons who have confusion or discomfort about their birth gender.

## Gender Identity

What a person perceives themselves to be; e.g. "I am a man", "I am a woman", "I am neither".

## Sexual Orientation

Either Heterosexual, Homosexual, Bisexual or Asexual. It is dependant upon who you are attracted to.

## Transsexual (TS)

A person who's Gender Identity is different from their Biological Sex. This person is likely to have sort hormonal treatment and in some cases Sexual Reassignment Surgery to change their physical sex.

## Intersexed (Hermaphrodite)

Someone biologically between the sexes (eg XXY). Can be born with complete or ambiguous genitals. Some have had surgery in infancy, and many of them grow up feeling they been robbed of an essential part of themselves.

## Cross Dresser (CD) / Transvestite (TV)

Someone who dresses and/or acts in the manner of the opposite sex, but does not desire to change their sex. They dress for personal reasons, which can range from a need to express their feminine or masculine side to expressing themselves erotically.

## Drag Queens and Drag Kings

A person who usually presents a larger than life image of women or men, exaggerating sexual stereotypes for entertainment or self-gratification.

## Fa'faa'fine

The Pacific Island term for a person of "indeterminate gender".

## Takataapui

A Maori word usually used to describe a Maori gay, bisexual or transgender person.

## Winyanktecha (Wintke)

Lacota Indian word meaning Gender-Crosser - Literal translation "Two-souls person".

*These descriptions are not definitive, they are provided as a basis for understanding.*



# Gender Bridge

**Promoting the health and well-being of  
Transgendered persons**

GenderBridge Incorporated  
P O Box 68236, Newton, Auckland  
Tollfree: **0800 TG HELP** (0800 844 357)  
Web: [www.genderbridge.org](http://www.genderbridge.org)  
Email: [info@genderbridge.org](mailto:info@genderbridge.org)

## What is Transsexuality?

A Transsexual (TS) person feels that they do not belong in the sex to which they are assigned at birth, and therefore change their gender roles, and often their bodies, in order to live as members of the "other" sex.

## What causes Transsexuality?

The influences which cause a person to develop this conflict between their gender and their biologically determined sex can be described as "Pre or Post Natal". Current research indicates that the most likely Pre-Natal cause for Gender Dysphoria can be found in certain hormonal imbalances at a critical point in the development of the foetus. The result is that an individual can develop having the anatomical features of one sex while having the gender of the other. Post-Natal influences on Gender Dysphoria are typically believed to come from family structure, attitudes and certain social responses to gender typing.

## Is Transsexuality a "new thing"?

Transsexuality, or Gender Dysphoria, is an occurrence that has been well documented for over 400 years. The first successful operation was performed in the 1950's, and it was then that the condition (and its treatment) was initially defined by the medical community. Modern medical technology (hormones, surgery, electrolysis etc) make this transformation much easier than it was in the past.

## Does Transsexuality occur only in males?

Transsexualism is found in both males and females, and is not limited to any particular race, geographical location or economic boundary. About 60% of transsexuals are male-to-female (M2F) and 40% are female-to-male (F2M).

## Are Transsexuals Gay?

Transsexuals can be Hetero, Homo, Bi or Asexual. One's gender identity has nothing to do with one's sexual orientation. Some transgender people may feel that they identify strongly with the greater Gay, Lesbian & Bisexual community, while others may feel that they are heterosexual. Each person is different!

## How do I know if I am Transsexual?

If you are wondering if you are Transsexual then we recommend that you seek the opinion of a professional who has gender identity experience e.g. A doctor or a counsellor. They will be able to advise you of your various options.

## When would I notice I am different?

The onset of transexuality is almost always before puberty, indeed often from earliest memory. Although a transsexual may spend a lifetime trying to deny, dismiss, ignore or fight dealing with the issue.

## Is Transsexuality something I should be ashamed of?

NO! You have done nothing wrong to create this condition. In fact some studies show that Gender Dysphoria can be a "condition" that you are born with. Are you ashamed of the colour of your eyes? No. Then why should you feel ashamed of your gender? Everyone is different, there is no single definition of "Normal". You are a beautiful human spirit, don't ever let someone else's beliefs & prejudices make you doubt your worth.

## Is it important that I seek help?

YES! Transsexualism is a condition that if left untreated may lead to depression, attempted suicide, violence or self-mutilation.

## Is there a "cure" for Transsexuality?

We believe that being TS does not necessarily mean that there is something wrong with you that needs to be "cured". The "Cure" lies with you accepting yourself as who you are, and in educating the people around you. As you may have discovered, it isn't always possible for people to immediately accept Transsexuality but with this education, and an open mind, it is something that can be understood.

## Is there a treatment for Transsexuality?

Over time various solutions have been suggested by the mental & medical health communities, but the only one that has been found to be effective to this date is for the individual to live as their gender rather than as their biological sex.

## Do I need medication?

There is no universal treatment, as each person is different. M2F can be treated with any combination of estrogen, anti-androgen and sometimes progestin. F2M are typically treated with androgen.

## Do all Transsexuals have Surgery?

No, not all TS have, or even desire, surgery. Some TS come to a point at which they are comfortable with their bodies the way they are, while others have anything from simple cosmetic surgery to complete Sex Reassignment Surgery.

Some people think that it is wrong for a person to change their sex, but we would ask of them "Do you think the same thing of someone who needs any other operation because of a birth defect?"

## You are not alone.

It can be a tough journey, but with the right help and support healthy life choices can be made.