

Children's books having to do with gender identity, to accompany the JEDI event,
Affirming & Supporting LGBTQ+ Students & Families

Winter 2021

[Nell Stewart](#), Librarian

There are quite a few books on this topic - I chose ones that I have read very good reviews of or have read myself and highly recommend. We have many of them at Aidan Library. I welcome your recommendations of others that you have read and liked!

Picture books:

Julián is a Mermaid by Jessica Love (ages 3-8)

Julián is fascinated by mermaids and dresses up as one, and his abuela is supportive.

Morris Micklewhite and the Tangerine Dress, by Christine Baldacchino, illustrated by Isabelle Malenfant (ages 4-8)

Morris loves wearing an orange dress from the dress-up clothes at school; at first other children are not kind about it and Morris's mom comforts him, but then the children change.

What Riley Wore by Elana K. Arnold, illustrated by Linda Davick (ages 3-9)

Riley's gender is never stated, and Riley creatively expresses themselves through different outfits each day, and children around Riley respond positively.

When Aidan Became a Brother, by Kyle Lukoff, illustrated by Kaylani Juanita (ages 3-7)

When Aidan was born he had a girl's name and a room and clothes that were gender norms for a girl. This didn't fit with how he felt and his parents lovingly supported his change to a transgender boy. When he learns that he will have a new sibling he is anxious to make the new baby feel loved and welcome as he has felt.

I am Jazz by Jessica Herthel and Jazz Jennings, illustrated by Shelagh McNicholas (ages 3-9)

This is an autobiographical picture book in which Jazz describes her journey of realizing and declaring that she is transgender, born with "a girl brain but a boy body." Her parents are confused at first, and other people are not at all supportive at times, but her parents quickly come to understand, and then support and advocate for Jazz.

They, She, He, Me: Free to Be!, by Maya Christina Gonzalez (ages 3-9)

This is a joyful, vibrantly illustrated celebration of pronouns and gender fluidity.

Two picture books that aren't expressly about gender identity but in which gender isn't stated for some of the characters, and is ambiguous in the illustrations, which I think supports gender nonconformity in a subtle, effective way, are:

Koko and Bo, by Lisen Adbåge, translated by Annie Prime (ages 3-6)

The Grand Expedition, by Emma Adbåge, translated by Annie Prime (ages 3-7)

Middle grade books:

George by Alex Gino (for ages 9-12)

George is a 4th grader who knows she is a girl, and she works to get others to accept this. Kirkus Reviews says “George’s struggles are presented with a light, age-appropriate, and hopeful touch.”

Rick by Alex Gino (for ages 8-13)

Rick is a 6th grader who is questioning his sexuality and eventually comes out as asexual. Kirkus Reviews says the author “seamlessly introduces language to describe a variety of sexualities and gender identities through the perspective of Rick, who is learning many of the words for the first time.”

A good nonfiction resource for parents to read with children:

It Feels Good To Be Yourself: A Book About Gender Identity, by Theresa Thorn, illustrated by Noah Grigni

Even though this is a picture book, the text covers a lot about the topic, so it can be a resource for a broad range of ages - book reviews list it as good for ages 3 to 9.