



Connecting With Families

When elementary school staff are trying to offer support, education, and resources to families about their transgender youth—use the skills you already have!

For example, if the student needed a parent conference for grades, behavioral issues, or general concerns you might:

- Refer to your school procedure and policies
- Ask for support or guidance from immediate supervisor or department director.
- Check in with the youth and follow their lead on what they are ready for

Once you have checked the aforementioned avenues, call home and use the relationship you have already been establishing all year with all of your students. Here are some tips:

- **Build rapport** – *“I hope you are doing well today! If you have a moment, I would love to chat with you about your kiddo.”*
 - › Be clear that everything is fine, nothing is wrong, and that their youth is an amazing person.
- **State observations** – *“I have noticed your kiddo wanting to play with this toy, refer to themselves in this way, or go by this name.”*
 - › Communicate that you and the school support, love, and celebrate all of this! You are reaching out to connect, offer support, and ensure everyone is on the same page.
- **See what’s next** – If the guardian is on board, then we are good to go! If the guardian is not supportive then try to empathize, reflect, and provide resources or education.
 - › Supporting a transgender youth takes a village. If there is clear pushback at home, use the support of your colleagues to help!



The goal is to bring a student's homelife into the fold and have home and school be accepting, loving spaces for the youth to explore. However, if home is clearly not on board, it is crucial to affirm the youth so they have a safer space to be their full selves. As this affirmation is happening, continue working with the youth to bring in homes as an accepting place.

In summary, think about the process you might use to support a youth with ADHD or other learning disorders.

- Present information gently
- Compliment
- Tell them
- Communicate this is not a problem, you simply want to make them aware
- Make a child gender support plan

Remember, it takes one person to change the life of a youth! Center those best practices to support transgender youth and help them thrive, while working to bring families into an affirming space.

