

# Trans Inclusive Residentials

A Free Resource for Youth Workers,  
Schools and Organisations



## What Is The Purpose Of This Guidance And Who Is It For?

This guidance is aimed at youth workers, community workers and staff in educational settings who are likely to be running residential trips. However, it may also be a valuable resource for staff working on residential sites, parents/carers of young trans people and anyone else who is considering how to run or support a trans-inclusive residential.

### Context

At Gendered Intelligence we have been running trans-only residentials since 2010, starting with a 3-day camp for 8 young people with 4 workers. Our camps have grown over the years with increasing demand from young trans people to spend time away with others that understand them. In 2016 we doubled our provision to run two camps each summer, and in 2018 we ran Super Camp. Super Camp included 152 young people, 44 trans workers and kitchen, meds and practical staff and 10 trans workshop leaders - it was the largest trans-only camp ever on record. [This guidance draws on the strategies used on GI camping residentials to create safer spaces for young trans people and applies them to possibilities for mixed gender residentials in other settings.](#)

The recommendations in this guidance should support you in running any residential project with a cohort which may include one or more young trans people. It will also enable you to think about wider themes around inclusion for all young people whether or not you are aware that trans people are in attendance.

In 2018, Stonewall found that 51% of trans people in the UK have not disclosed their trans identity at work for fear of discrimination ([read the report here](#)). With this in mind, the key consideration as you read this guidance is that young trans people will not always be 'out' as trans. You may not know, or they may not want others to know.

The likelihood is that if you've been working with young people or running residentials for a while, you have already had young trans people in your group, whether or not you were aware. Therefore, this guidance is a recommendation for best practice, regardless of whether you believe you have any trans young people in your group.

## About Gendered Intelligence

### Who are we?

Gendered Intelligence is a registered charity that works to increase understanding of gender diversity and improve the lives of trans people, especially young trans people. Gendered Intelligence was established in 2008.

We work throughout the UK, offering a broad spectrum of non-judgmental, practical services to the public, private and not-for-profit sectors, including: work in education, staff training, speakers and panellists for events and conferences, wide-ranging consultancy and public policy. We welcome enquiries from any organisation looking to become more trans inclusive.

We also provide youth groups and parent support - we work directly with 500+ young trans and gender questioning people across the course of a year, and their experiences inform our wider services.

For more information on all our services, go to [genderedintelligence.co.uk](http://genderedintelligence.co.uk)

There is no perfect umbrella term to describe the many different experiences of gender that people have. In this brochure we use the term 'trans' to be inclusive of anyone who feels that the sex/gender they were assigned at birth does not match or sit easily with their sense of self. This includes those who might also (or alternatively) describe themselves as non-binary, gender fluid or or who are exploring their gender.

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## Section 1: The Basics

In this section we will cover the basics of a trans-inclusive residential. Many of these are fundamental concepts to helping young trans people feel safe on your trip. If you can get these right, then you've already done a lot of the hard work.

### 1a. Names and Pronouns

Getting a young trans person's name and pronoun right can be a really affirming moment for that individual. This may be the first time the young person has had an opportunity to let everyone know about their identity or chosen pronoun; or it may be the first chance they have ever had to try out a new name.

Allow people to decide the name and pronoun they want to be used - and give them opportunities to change this too. Any paperwork should also give young people the opportunity to write the name they wish to be called and elsewhere their assigned name (for safeguarding purposes). It is good practice to check with young trans people which name and pronoun are used by their emergency contact/whoever may be picking them up. This avoids putting anyone in an unsafe situation.

#### What does the research say?

Research published in the Journal of Adolescent Health shows that when young trans people are called by their chosen name and pronouns there is a marked improvement in their mental health. The results suggest a 29% decrease in suicidal thoughts when young people experience their chosen name being used in just one part of their lives. ([Read the full article here](#))

Our experience at GI is that young trans people can experience mental ill health as a result of feeling invalidated by society; invalidation can lead to a sense of worthlessness. One of the key reflections from campers over the years has been how valid they felt in a space where their chosen name was used without question.

**“new friends have been made and experiences/stories past and present shared with each other but importantly it has helped shape him a little more inside.”**

**Parent** of a young person who attended GI camp 2019



## Suggested Strategy 1: Name And Pronoun Go Round

Gather everyone in a circle and begin by explaining that you're going to go around the circle. Each person will say the name and pronoun they want others to use for them

You may say something like: You may be called Michael, but prefer Mike. Or you may have a nickname, or another name you want people to use for you. It's important that everyone has the chance to choose the name and pronoun they want to use in this space. Examples of pronouns might be she, or he, or they. Begin by introducing yourself: "My name is \_\_\_\_\_..." remembering to include your pronoun: "...and I use/ take the pronoun \_\_\_\_\_." Then pass on to the next person.

**Considerations:** If you are only aware of one young trans person in the group, they may be anxious about this process, so try and discuss it with them first. It's also important that everyone has the opportunity to pass on some or all of their answer.

**Adaptations:** You may want to add a question too e.g. How long did it take you to get here today? / What are you most looking forward to over the residential? Lastly, it's good to use this circle as an opportunity for the day's announcements or another ice-breaker too, so that the name and pronoun go-round doesn't feel like the only reason you got everyone together - if there is one trans person with you they and the others may feel like that was done especially for them!

## Suggested Strategy 2: Name and Pronoun Badges

Everyone creates a badge with the name and pronoun they want to use. People may create more than one. This gives young people a chance to be creative with their name and pronoun choices, but also with the design if you bring lots of colours etc.

**Considerations:** Make sure everyone has included their pronoun. Some young people may need support with their writing - or use sticker letters.

**Adaptations:** You could also use stickers, but badges last longer and can be a nice memento for young people. You can also purchase ready-made pronoun badges which young people could choose from. You can also make an arts and crafts session or space for this process to turn it into an activity.

### SECTION SUMMARY:

- Call young people by the name and pronoun they want you to use for them.
- Don't assume anything. If you're not sure, ask. Asking everyone helps...
- Don't single out young trans people - everyone has a name and a pronoun!

## 1b. Toilets, Showers and Changing

A young trans person may already be using the toilets/changing facilities matching their identity, or this may be the first time they are able to try using a different toilet/changing facility. It can be a really scary, but liberating moment if managed correctly. Supporting a young trans person to use the correct space, and/or a space they feel safe in can mean the difference of them coming on the trip or not. The more information you can provide to your group before going on the trip around the use of personal facilities the better.

**The premise that facilities are safer because they are split by sex is based on a set of assumptions. Safer spaces are created by careful agreements around behaviour. Many of us will have stories from work settings about unsafe behaviour in single-sex facilities. It is behaviour, not bodies, which makes situations unsafe.**

### What does the law say?

The Equality Act 2010 supports the idea that anyone who identifies as trans and who is transitioning or intends to transition is protected by law and should be able to use the changing facilities and toilets best fitting with their gender identity.

There are several things to consider when supporting a young trans person to access suitable facilities.

### Which facilities does the young person want to use?

Speak to the young trans person about what they feel most comfortable doing. Which facilities do they want to use during the residential? This may be a more difficult situation if the young person is non-binary. Solutions should focus on how the young person feels most comfortable, whilst not forgetting to consider...

### Is it safe for them to do so?

The safety of the young trans person is paramount. It should be considered very carefully whether a trans boy, or trans-masculine young person would be safe changing in an open-plan male changing room, for example.

Separate 'gender-neutral' facilities may be a more suitable option (often the only gender neutral option is an accessible toilet, whilst this can be a suitable option, it should not be considered the perfect solution). A good rule is that if a toilet/changing room space does not offer enough privacy for a trans person, then there isn't enough privacy for anyone.

**“This camp has given me the space to dress how I want to. I don't feel as if I may be laughed at or hurt for my appearance here. I walked out of my tent with my first dress of the week on so much easier than I would at home. I'd only worn one in public before on a single occasion. I will have worn 5 this week alone by the end.”**

**Young Person,**  
GI Super Camp 2018

## Suggested Strategy 3: Gender Neutral Facilities

Is it possible to liaise with your chosen venue to give you 'gender neutral facilities'? This can be achieved by something as simple as a sign stuck on the door. This enables everyone to make a decision about which space feels safe to them.

**Considerations:** If adding your own signs it's good practice to note what is available in the room - cubicles, urinals, sinks, sanitary bins, hair dryer, sockets, mirror etc.

It might be that the provision of gender neutral facilities or facilities with lots of individual cubicle options is a key part of choosing accommodation for your residential.



If you don't have time to make your own signs, GI have gender neutral toilet signs available to download from our website. ([Download available here](#))

## Suggested Strategy 4: Single Lockable Cubicles

Does your chosen venue have single lockable, accessible facilities / cubicles? These are sometimes featured at swimming pools. This option avoids singling out young trans people and increases privacy for everyone.

## Suggested Strategy 5: Cubicle Count

Specifically saying how many lockable cubicles there are in any gendered toilet spaces can help a young trans person negotiate which toilet space they will use and when. For example, if they see the whole coach load of young people head to the toilets as soon as you arrive, they may wait until later to go, or if they know that in the Men's toilet there is a lockable cubicle or more than one, it may give them the confidence to go. If you aren't familiar with the venue before you go, you could ask a staff member to be in charge of checking the bathrooms and informing the whole group of what they consist of as soon as you arrive. If you are doing a risk assessment visit to the site, you may wish to include a toilet check in this.

### SECTION SUMMARY:

- Facilities should not be assumed safe just because they are single-sex spaces
- Speak to the young person about where they feel most comfortable
- Safety of the young trans person is paramount
- Check toilets yourself in advance of a trip or young people using them, let the group know how many cubicles there are, and if needed prompt venue staff to replenish toilet roll/fix locks/lights etc.



## 1c. Sleeping Arrangements

Traditionally, sleeping arrangements are split by the binary genders - one area for girls and another for boys. However, just because a space is single-gendered does not make it safe. At GI we best explain this by saying that 'bodies are not what makes a situation dangerous - behaviour is.'

There are more inclusive and equally efficient ways to divide sleeping arrangements. The most efficient way to conduct this task is by speaking with all young people concerned and establishing how they feel comfortable.

The law (Equality Act 2010) protects trans people in the first instance around their right to access the single gendered spaces of their identity, for example, a trans boy (who was assigned female at birth but now identifies as a boy or man) has the legal right to stay in the boys' dorm, regardless of where he may be in any medical transition. Equally in this instance, he may not wish to stay in a boys' dorm, and for various reasons, including his own wishes it may not be appropriate for him to be in a girls' dorm. He may want to share with a few close friends, who could be mixed genders. We have worked with schools in situations such as this, where the parents/carers of the young people in the friendship group have agreed and the result has been successful.

We recognise that as a professional working with young people you may be concerned about genders mixing in isolated spaces not monitored by workers. We also recognise this can be a concern raised by parents and carers. We are not saying that all spaces for sleeping should be mixed, but that consideration should be given so there are well thought out options for young trans people to have safe and appropriate spaces to sleep.

On GI camps we separate young people by age group - 11-15 year olds; 16 and 17 year olds; and 18-25 year olds. This creates an extra layer of safety with regards to safeguarding practices. From there, we allow young people to choose who they want to share a tent with - and having their own tent, or pod in a shared tent, is an option. We always have spare tents, as it's natural that there will be some movement after the first night of camp when young people are forming and reforming friendship groups etc. This is also useful to consider in case of other situations - e.g. a young person becomes ill, has found it difficult to sleep, or maybe where there is a peer group issue.

Equally, ensuring you have a spare tent or room means that if a young person comes out as trans during your trip and needs to change spaces, you have somewhere that is immediately suitable for them to use.

However you choose to arrange your sleeping situation, the priority must be the physical and emotional safety of every young person. There should be a clear way for young people to raise their needs and worries before and during, as well as accessible ways for them to report any concerns.



Purple Village - GI Super Camp 2018



## Suggested Strategy 6: Split By Age

Allow each young person to choose who they feel comfortable sharing a space with, but in age groupings. At GI we would give each age group a sheet of paper with tents drawn on them for the young people to negotiate and sort themselves into.

**Considerations:** Sometimes you may have close friends/couples where one has crossed an age threshold before the other (e.g. a 17 and 18 year old). It is likely they would request to share a space. We would recommend you treat each case as individual - for the main part continuing to separate by age. However, if the 2 young people concerned are intending to share a 2 person space (e.g. a small tent/twin room) then it is possible to allow this depending on professional and parental opinion, taking into consideration the whole age range of the trip. On a trip for those ranging from legal children (i.e. under 16) to those considered adults (albeit young adults, i.e. 16-21) we would make a 'blanket' rule for all that it would not be suitable for a legal child to share a sleeping space with a legal adult, and that the pre-arranged age groupings were the only option. However, if you are taking young adults only, i.e. 16-21 or 16/18-25 you may allow more flexibility with whom they choose to share space with.

**Adaptations:** You may need/may wish to add in further age splits based on the dynamics of your group. However, we would recommend you adhere to your own organisation's safeguarding guidance and the law.

## Suggested Strategy 7: Single Sleeping Areas

Prioritise using tents with separate sleeping areas or 'pods'. This offers more safety and comfort to everyone, whilst still experiencing the importance of sharing a space.

This may not be possible with inside residentials, our recommendation in this case would be to book a spare bedroom/dorm room to allow movement if needed and to discuss as a group consideration of other people's needs in their bedroom space.

## Suggested Strategy 8: Working Agreements

Collaborate with young people to write 'working agreements' for their sleeping spaces. These should involve thinking about privacy: use of space - i.e. keeping clothes neat in your area/bag; getting changed; wearing pyjamas in bed. They may also involve considerations such as: lighting (on or off?); wake up times; chat etiquette (can they go somewhere else if one person is trying to sleep?).

**Considerations:** Some young people may have specific needs around their sleeping areas - encourage everyone to think about what they need and express it as a shared aim. For example, trans young people may be particularly concerned about getting changed. Other young people are likely to share concerns around privacy, so the question becomes 'How can we ensure everyone has privacy and comfort when they need it?'

**Adaptations:** This often works best as a group exercise, but if your group is large you may wish to break people into their smaller sleeping groups first and then share as a whole group.

### SECTION SUMMARY:

- Split people by age, considering safeguarding procedures.
- Allow young people to choose who they feel most comfortable with.
- Have spare tents / single room / space for movement where possible.
- Create working agreements for sleeping spaces

## 1d. Activities

Residential trips are a great space for a young person to stretch outside their comfort zone and challenge themselves. Anyone who has run a residential trip knows the beneficial impact that organised activities can have on a young person's self-esteem and confidence.

For young trans people this may be the only space they feel safe to attempt such activities. However, there may be some additional barriers.

### Harnesses

Many activities involve harnesses for safety. There are 2 main types of harness - the chest harness and the waist/hip harness. The issue with both of these types of harnesses for young trans people is that they draw attention to the parts of a person's body that they may be trying to conceal most or amend to suit their feelings.

This may lead to questions, or remarks from others about trans young people's bodies. Safety is key, so harnesses are essential. However, you can support young trans people around this. There are likely to be other young people who share similar discomfort, or embarrassment at the attention the harness brings to their bodies.

Some instructors on activity sites ask young people to all put their harnesses on in a main area, like the activity meeting point. This could be a busy part of the site with other groups, instructors, members of the public and others walking by. It could be that the young trans person feels more trusting and comfortable with their immediate peer group and you as their worker, and that if they were to wait to put their harness on at the actual activity point, they'd feel better. Be confident to ask the activity instructor if the whole group can put harnesses on when they are alone at the activity rather than a more public area.

**“It's an opportunity to be who you are aside from the 'trans' label, which is so often overlooked in the 'outside world'.”**

**Young Person,**  
GI Super Camp 2018

### Suggested Strategy 9: Going First

If the young person goes first, they can take the harness off as soon as they're finished.

### Suggested Strategy 10: Wearing a jumper around their waist whilst waiting for their turn

This can help young people to feel more comfortable whilst waiting. You as a staff member could do this too and wait with them, or near them so they are not alone.

### Suggested Strategy 11: Reminders about appropriate comments

Speak to your whole group before the activity about how many people may feel discomfort around their bodies, or anxiety about activities - that this is an opportunity to support one another.

## Touch

In order to check the safety of a harness, activity instructors will often check them with pulls, or adjustments. Best practice is to always encourage a culture of consent when getting close to someone's personal space. This is important with all young people, not just trans individuals. Young people who are neurodivergent, or who have experiences of trauma can experience sudden touch as threatening. Consent for touch may be something you need to request of the activity instructors, or something you can model.

You might say to the instructor: It's really important to my group that we seek consent when approaching someone's personal space. So, if you need to check their harnesses, or attach clips and so on, please could you just let them know first what you're going to do and check it's ok.

You may say to your group: In order to make sure we're all safe, the instructor is going to check all your harnesses.

You could go first so that young people know what this looks like.

In some cases it may be possible for young people to check tightness, or attach extra clips themselves and simply show the instructor. In other cases, they may trust you to do this so you could ask the instructor if under their supervision you can touch the harness, not them.

## Activity Instructors

The young trans person in your care may feel comfortable with you and their peers, but be anxious about interacting with unknown activity instructors. It may also be necessary to share with the instructors that you have trans young people in your group.

Consider whether they need to know which young person it is. It is often enough simply to let staff know that you have a young trans person with you and to request they are careful with their use of pronouns and assumptions about all the young people. This way they will be more aware of gender stereotyping your whole group. Section 1f will provide more advice and practical tips for site staff and on sharing information.

### Suggested Strategy 12: Pronoun-around

In the same way you may have used this strategy with your group, you can also invite your activity instructor to join in this practice at the start of your session. This may be particularly useful if your trans young person is anxious about being mis-gendered, or if you have non-binary young people in your group. It also gives the instructor a chance to learn everyone's names.

**Adaptations:** You may wish to add in a question about how people are feeling about the activity. Again, this is useful to the instructor to know who's excited and up for a challenge and who's anxious and will need more gentle encouragement.

## Water-based activities

Young trans people often face the greatest barriers in terms of accessing water-based activities. If swimwear must be worn, then encourage and support the young trans person to wear whatever swimwear they feel comfortable in. This may mean a combination or variation of the following for any young trans person: trunks/shorts, a rash vest or swimming binder, a t-shirt, swimming costume, perhaps with trunks over the top. As long as the outfit is safe to swim in, any young person should be given the choice. Negotiate this with the activity centre manager ideally before agreeing to use an activity centre, or before going with your group, so that they can give permission

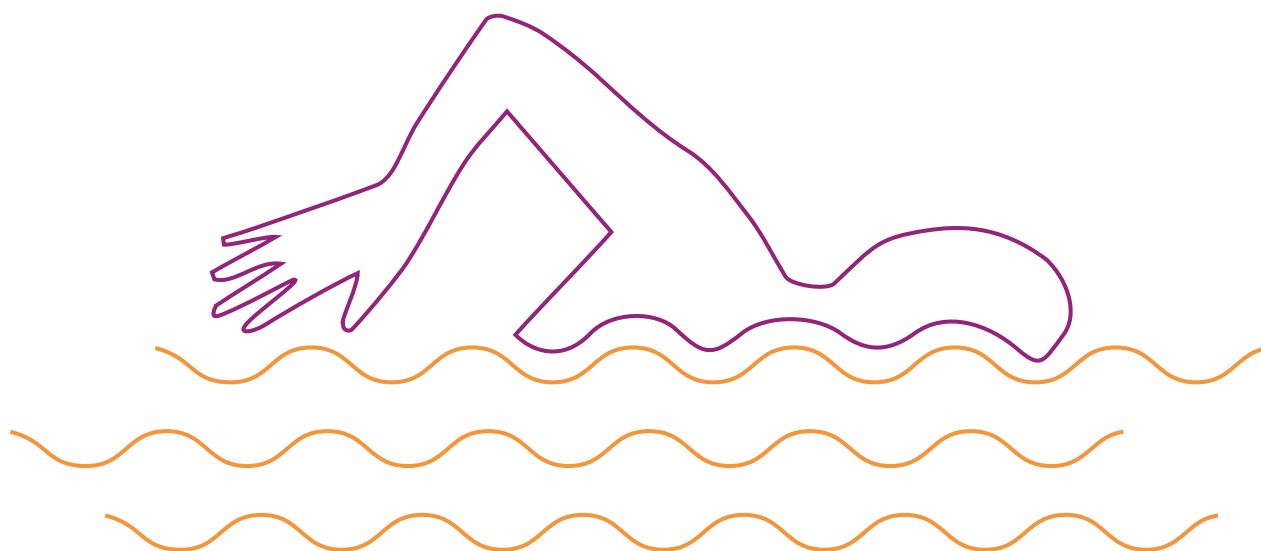
for the young people who need to wear t-shirts or baggier swim shorts etc. If they say certain items of clothing are not safe to swim in, it may be worth asking what they do when young people need to wear more clothing for other reasons, for example religious reasons, or canoeing tests etc.

If the young person wears a chest binder it is recommended that you speak to them about their plan for in the water. Young people should not spend the rest of the day in a wet binder as this can be detrimental to their physical health. Adequate and preferably private space and time should be provided for them to change after the activity. If the young person only owns one binder, encourage them to find an alternative whilst in the water (t-shirt/rash vest/sports bra). If you can have this conversation before the young person comes away with you, it may be that they can buy or borrow an extra binder or other suitable attire for swimming for the trip, so that they can wear dry clothing after a swim.

If in doubt about specific attire for activities, check with the site staff.

### **SECTION SUMMARY:**

- Speak to the instructors in advance of them working with your group
- Check in with young people on consent around touch
- Support young people to choose safe and appropriate clothing for activities, including changing into dry things after activities
- Check and agree terms with the site manager before going about what is safe or 'allowed' to wear in their pool. Agree with them that they will tell relevant staff members who will work with your group so as to avoid misunderstandings when young people are present.



## 1e. Gendered Spaces

On any mixed gender residential there is the risk that some spaces may become gendered. Whilst this can be positive in giving young people a strong sense of comradery with their same-gender peers, it can be extremely damaging for any young person who does not fit into the expected behaviours. This splitting of spaces can also leave non-binary people feeling isolated and alienated. It also runs the risk of narrowing our young people's options and views of themselves. Examples of this include - the boys being in charge of carrying the luggage, or managing the campfire; or relying on the girls to help with cooking, or making the place look nice. Equally a casual game of football or frisbee could start up in free time, this could need supporting so that all young people can feel like they can access this unstructured space. These spaces may develop on their own and young trans people may be involved. It can be an exciting moment as a trans young person to feel accepted by their peers for who they are, however, if this means buying into outdated stereotypical behaviours, then it's not a positive for anyone. Reversing these gender stereotypes can be just as damaging - if all the boys are put on cooking duty to prove a point, then there is an expectation that they will lack the skill, or not enjoy it. This doesn't ease the pressure to conform.

### Suggested Strategy 13: Create a Chore Rota

Create a chore rota with mixed gender groups on all tasks - this not only helps avoid gendered segregation around cooking/carrying, but also helps young people to mix with others that they haven't spoken to before.

**Considerations:** With any chore rota it's crucial to remember access needs - what options are there if young people cannot manage a certain chore? Can the chore be adapted, or is there an alternative way they can help out?

It's just as important to be fair - everyone should have the same amount of chore work to do.

**Adaptations:** If you don't want to be as rigid as a chore rota, be conscious of who you're assigning to certain tasks or who is volunteering themselves for jobs as they arise - make sure to keep it mixed.

#### SECTION SUMMARY:

- Be aware of gender divides that may occur
- Positively promote mixed gender spaces, tasks and chores

## 1f. Liaison and sharing information with other organisations

It may be in the best interests of your young people for you to speak to the site staff in advance about any trans young people in your group, or the possibility of trans young people. This may help to facilitate your discussion around toilets/changing facilities, as well as how activity staff support your group.

Consider whether it's necessary for the site staff to know exactly which of your young people are trans. It is often enough simply to explain that you have/may have trans young people in your group.

#### Additional questions you may have for site staff include:

- Has the site already got experience of working with young trans people?
- Which other groups might your group interact with? Is there potential for conflict or overlap whilst you are there?

- How will the site support you if there is a conflict?
- What is the site's own equalities policy and do they have anything specific on trans inclusion?

In certain circumstances it may be important to also discuss with the site the risk of media interest, depending on the type of group, or even the public profile of your organisation; some media outlets are choosing to be actively transphobic and/or alarmist currently. As an organisation that regularly arranges residential trips for young trans people, GI have attracted the attention of some such journalists. The site staff should be made aware for their own planning if you think this may affect your group. They may be able to share their policies and help support you to develop a plan which keeps everyone safe and protects the confidentiality of your group.

## Suggested Strategy 14: Written Briefing for Site Staff

It is often useful to write a briefing which can be distributed amongst staff who may have contact with your group. This ensures that the message remains in your words. GI has a briefing which we share with activity site managers and other staff, which may help you write your own or guide you on what to say - see Appendix A.

### SECTION SUMMARY:

- Speak to the site staff about your group and how they can support you
- Consider whether site staff need to know the identity of any trans individuals
- Prepare a briefing for wider site staff who may meet your group
- Consider whether you also need a plan around possible media attention

## 1g. Going offsite

Hopefully you will have created an environment on site or in your group where your young people feel comfortable and safe to express themselves without fear of harm or judgement. If, however, you need to journey off site for an outing, or even in the case of an emergency, then this has the potential to be an anxiety inducing situation.

### "The breaking of the fourth wall"

As in theatre, a residential project can create the illusion of a divide between the participants and the outside world. Leaving the site breaks through this wall. This can be a difficult moment for some.

## Suggested Strategy 15: Prepare Them

As with any anxious young person, information about what is going to happen can help alleviate concerns. Inform your young person as soon as possible that there will be a trip off site - where to and why. Give them a space to share concerns and answer them with as much information as you can.

Considerations: It may be useful to do this with all young people as a larger group - leaving a space with which one has become comfortable can be tough for anyone. Give young people time after to approach workers with any individual concerns. In all situations does everyone have to go? Could workers be left behind for anyone who really doesn't want to go off-site?



## Suggested Strategy 16: Check In

Before and during the offsite trip, check in beforehand about any concerns they, or you, may have. Don't be afraid of checking in whilst out - including asking them if they've been to the toilet. They may have said they felt confident prior to going and then faced an issue on the day.

Toilets again - Regardless of where you're going or what you're doing, it is likely that young people will need to use a toilet while offsite. There is a real risk that anxious young trans people will avoid this and instead limit their fluid intake in order to wait until they're back on site to urinate. This can have serious long-term health consequences.

## Suggested Strategy 17: Cubicle Count

Specifically saying how many lockable cubicles there are in any gendered toilet spaces can help a young trans person negotiate which toilet space they will use and when. For example, if they see the whole coach load of young people head to the toilets as soon as you arrive, they may wait until later to go, or if they know that in the Men's toilet there is a lockable cubicle or more than one, it may give them the confidence to go. If you aren't familiar with the off site venue before you go, you could ask a staff member to be in charge of checking the bathrooms and informing the whole group of what they consist of as soon as you arrive. If you are doing a risk assessment visit to an off-site venue, you may wish to include a toilet check in this.

## Suggested Strategy 18: Be Present

If you know that your young trans person is anxious about using public facilities, or you have concerns, then be present.

Depending on the circumstances and what the young person is comfortable with, this could involve standing by the sinks inside the toilets and washing your hands whilst the young person uses a cubicle, or just being nearby outside the toilets. This way, young people know you're available if they experience any negative comments or behaviour and you can monitor the situation.

**Considerations:** However you support your young person, ensure your staff team know the plan and that it suits your general safeguarding policies and procedures. Can you obtain a radar key for the trip, so that a young trans person can use an accessible toilet whilst on an off-site trip? Always checking with the young person that this is suitable to their wishes.

### SECTION SUMMARY:

- Prepare young people for any trips off-site - share as much information as you can before going
- Speak directly to trans young people about accessing public toilets and any worries they may have
- If needed, be present around toilets offsite (in line with your own organisation's safeguarding policies).

## 1h. Medical Emergencies

With any trip, there is the risk of a medical situation arising. When working with trans young people there may be extra considerations when dealing with a medical emergency. Where possible, it would be good practice to check with the young person about how they want you to deal with medical professionals, how much they want you to share, etc.

If you have a young person who has a medical condition and is more likely to need medical assistance, discuss a plan with them beforehand.

### Suggested Strategy 19: Medical Profiles

Create a sheet of information for each young person with their emergency contact information (including what name and pronouns their emergency contact knows them by), date of birth, allergies, medications taken, medical conditions, etc. This sheet can be shared with or given to the paramedic in an emergency.

**Considerations:** Make sure these are single sided so you're not giving away anyone else's information!

### Suggested Strategy 20: Briefing Medical Staff

Ensure that all medical staff supporting your young person know the name and pronouns they should be using - it may also be useful to model this for them. It may also be necessary to explain to the professional elements of the young person's clothing - check with the young person (if possible) if they are wearing anything that may need explaining.

**Example:** "X is trans. They use 'they, them, theirs' pronouns. It may also be important for you to know that they are wearing a binder underneath their t-shirt. They will be under a different name on the system, which is written on this sheet."

**Considerations:** It may be necessary for a young person to remove clothing, such as a binder, in order to receive medical aid. If possible, provide the young person with a discrete area to do this and ask them what would help them feel more comfortable without it. E.g. would it help to wear a hoodie if they have to remove their binder?

Also, ask them and the medical professional if they would prefer if you stay with them whilst the medical professionals are doing their job. (Carry this out in line with your own organisation's safeguarding and lone working policies.)

### SECTION SUMMARY:

- Where possible discuss with young people their wishes
- Ensure medical staff know relevant details about a young person's identity
- Check names and pronouns used with emergency contacts, before calling them
- If clothing needs to be removed, support the young person to manage this emotionally

## Section 2: Residential Abroad

This section contains some basic key advice and things to consider if you're planning to take a young trans person abroad on a residential trip. It looks at specific risks that may be posed to the young person concerned.

Our FAQ sheet on travelling as a trans person may also be a useful resource.

### 2a. Places of Danger

There are certain countries where it may simply not be safe to take young trans people due to governmental laws and/or social attitudes.

For example, in some countries there are laws against trans people, whilst in others there may be specific areas which pose issue - e.g. anti-trans bathroom bills in some states in the US.

Make sure you research thoroughly before deciding where to visit. If the location is set and the young trans person is determined to come, ensure they and their family know the risks. It would be best practice to put together a detailed risk assessment that is shared with your staff team. This assessment and process could be useful for other young people in your group who could present 'non-conforming' in other ways pertaining to gender or fashion etc. Ensure you have the details of who to contact and what to say should an incident occur, getting support from a partner agency or liaison person where you are travelling to if possible. Look at the websites at the end of this section for more specific details on laws and attitudes in different countries.

### 2b. Passports

Depending on the young person's situation, their passport may show a name or gender marker which doesn't match their gender identity, or their gender expression. This can lead to incidents where the validity of the passport is questioned and uncomfortable, inconvenient or extended waiting periods are created.

It may be good practice to ensure you have extra documentation verifying the young person's identity - e.g. copy of their birth certificate/paperwork from school etc. Any tickets will need to bear the same name as the passport.

We would recommend meeting with the young person (and their parents/carers) well in advance of the trip, giving them space to set out their needs and wishes, discussing the reality and then forming a plan.

### 2c. Body searches

If travelling by aeroplane or Eurostar, it is likely that your group will be required to walk through a body scanning machine, or have a physical pat-down search. This can be difficult and anxiety-inducing for trans people as specific items of clothing (e.g. binders) can be picked up as 'anomalies' which may require a more in-depth search. It is crucial that you speak to your young trans people about this process, particularly if they have not experienced it before.

Body searches or pat-downs are also 'gendered', so as a person goes through a scanner and if an alarm goes off, a woman officer would pat-down women and girls and vice versa. Perhaps you could have a staff member go through in front of the trans young person, so if the scanner goes off when they walk through, the staff member can be there to support the young person whilst being searched on the other side, and may feel more confident to speak to the officer about the trans person's gender expression, identity or clothing situation if the young person can't.

## 2d. Medical Emergencies Abroad

For general advice on medical emergencies, please see Section 1h.

It is important when planning your trip to consider whether every young person would receive treatment in the case of a medical emergency. There are certain countries where trans young people may be refused treatment by medical professionals, or treated in a gendered space that makes the young person more distressed. Good planning and support measures from you and your staff team will be crucial to easing this process if needed.

## 2e. Evacuation Plans

In extreme situations it may be necessary to evacuate a young trans person from the country you're visiting. This should be factored into your risk assessment, including consideration about staffing and also how the situation may be explained to other young people/the young person's family if they are not out as trans in all areas of their lives. Any evacuation plan should put the young person's physical and emotional safety as the priority.

### Useful Websites for Planning Overseas Trips

**[gov.uk/guidance/lesbian-gay-bisexual-and-transgender-foreign-travel-advice](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/lesbian-gay-bisexual-and-transgender-foreign-travel-advice)**

Advice from the UK government on travelling overseas, including who to contact if there's an issue

**[gov.uk/government/publications/applying-for-a-passport-information-for-transgender-and-transsexual-customers](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/applying-for-a-passport-information-for-transgender-and-transsexual-customers)**

Guidance from the UK government for trans people needing to obtain a passport

**[ilga.org/maps-sexual-orientation-laws](https://ilga.org/maps-sexual-orientation-laws)**

A map of the World, detailing the current LGBTQI relevant laws in each country

**[transequality.org/know-your-rights/airport-security](https://transequality.org/know-your-rights/airport-security)**

Useful guide for the airport check-in process and where issues may occur

**[geu.org/trans-rights-europe-central-asia-index-maps-2020/](https://geu.org/trans-rights-europe-central-asia-index-maps-2020/)**

Maps showing the laws supporting Trans people in Europe

**[transgenderlawcenter.org/equalitymap](https://transgenderlawcenter.org/equalitymap)**

Equality mapping for Trans protections in the USA

**[transrespect.org/en/](https://transrespect.org/en/)**

Worldwide data on trans protections versus trans discrimination

**[stonewall.org.uk/global-workplace-briefings](https://stonewall.org.uk/global-workplace-briefings)**

Briefing reports on different countries and their stance on LGBT people

### SECTION SUMMARY:

- Conduct thorough research when planning to take a young trans person overseas
- Speak to the young person and their family about possible risks
- Prepare a detailed risk assessment which is shared with staff, including an evacuation procedure
- Take details of who to contact in an emergency situation
- Ensure the young person has the right documentation
- Prepare the young person for the security processes

## Section 3: Other Considerations

This section will cover other additional factors which we would recommend you take into account before you embark on your residential.

### 3a. Time to get ready

Trans young people may take longer to get ready in the mornings, or after activities. This may be linked to dysphoria, adjusting binders or other clothing, or application of make-up etc in order to be seen by the world as who they are. An awareness of this in advance means you can better support them to manage their time effectively, without having to miss out what may be a crucial part of their morning routine. As well as actively not hassling them to hurry up.

### 3b. Leaving

Closure can be extremely important for all young people for a variety of reasons. For a young trans person, if your residential has provided a safe space for them to be who they are, then a return to a less-accepting world can be a particularly difficult adjustment.

It is good practice on any residential to work towards ending and help young people find closure. However, there is also work that can be done to help the impact of your residential stay with the young people.

“On Monday night when we arrived I was so stressed I wanted to leave - and now it’s 3am on Friday morning and I don’t want to leave.”

**Young Person,**  
GI Super Camp 2018

“It was magical, and like a dream I never want to wake up from.”

**Young Person,**  
GI Super Camp 2018

### Suggested Strategy 21: Affirmations

During your residential get the young people to write small notes to one another - sharing a funny moment/expressing gratitude/complimenting the other person. Collect these over the time you’re away and hand them out to people as they leave.

**Adaptations:** If you have a large number of young people it can be a challenge to write for everyone. Assigning a group of 10 names at random can be a nice way to both manage the large numbers and encourage young people to mix.

**Considerations:** Some young people may find this a tough task - support them in knowing who the other young people are and what to write. Generic comments about shared group moments, or fun pictures can work too.

The earlier in the trip you tell young people to do this and set time aside for it, the easier the process for everyone.

You can include staff in this process too!



## Suggested Strategy 22: Follow Up

It may be that you will see your young people again at a subsequent youth group session, or at school. However, it may also be that your young trans person is returning to a home, or school environment where their identity is not respected, or not known about. In these situations, a follow up phone call, email or text conversation after a trip can be really appreciated. As with many young people, a residential trip can be an opportunity to learn more about themselves and this can evoke change when they return home.

**Considerations:** Ensure you know the right name and pronoun to use if you are likely to be speaking to another member of the family first.

If young people are being collected by parents/carers at the end of your trip, check with your young trans people what name and pronoun will be used by the person collecting them - and agree a plan. Sometimes the young person may specifically want you to use the right name and pronoun in order to support them in being taken seriously by their family; at other times they may not be ready for this conversation. When necessary, ensure other young people and staff know too.

“My whole outlook on life has reformed. I am so much more confident in myself... I have left with some of the most impactful and resonant memories of my life, and friends who will stay with me forever. I can confidently say Camp was the best thing I’ve ever done for my mental health and I am a far better person because of it.”

**Young person,**  
GI Camp 2019



Affirmations - GI Super Camp 2018



## Section 4: Definition of Terms

### **Binary**

When discussing gender, the term binary is used to describe the concept of there being 2 genders: man and woman. For the most part Western society is structured around a binary concept of gender.

### **Cisgender/Cis**

Someone whose gender identity matches the sex they were assigned at birth.

### **Non-binary**

Someone who does not identify as a boy/man, or a girl/woman.

### **Pronoun**

The way people refer to themselves and one another. E.g. She/He/They/Zir.

### **Trans**

Someone whose gender identity does not match or sit easily with the biological sex they were assigned at birth. This term is often considered an umbrella term to describe anyone who feels this way. However, in practice, it is sometimes used in ways which exclude, or ignore the experiences of non-binary people.

### **Trans boy/man**

Someone who was assigned female at birth, but identifies as a boy/man.

### **Trans girl/woman**

Someone who was assigned male at birth, but identifies as a girl/woman.

### **Trans-feminine**

Someone who was assigned male at birth, but identifies with a feminine gender identity.

### **Trans-masculine**

Someone who was assigned female at birth, but identifies with a masculine gender identity.

Good luck with your residential.  
Please let us know how it goes - email us at  
**[youthwork@genderedintelligence.co.uk](mailto:youthwork@genderedintelligence.co.uk)**

If you wish to make a donation to the GI residential programme,  
please click **[here](#)**

## Section 5: Appendix

### 5a. GI Site Briefing

#### **Brief for Staff at Campsite: Gendered Intelligence Youth Group**

Gendered Intelligence runs a regular youth group for young people from across England who want to look at, or think about, gender in a different way to the stereotypes we are used to. Some young people in the group identify as transgender or as an identity which sits outside of the identities of 'man' or 'woman'/'boy' or 'girl' (i.e. gender diverse). Others in the group don't necessarily identify as trans or gender diverse but come to our group as they want to understand and question gender and its complexities further.

Some of the young people (and staff) in our group, may look like boys or men, but identify as women. Similarly, some of us will look like girls or women, but identify as boys/men. Some may look like boys or girls and feel that way also. Others may look like boys/ girls to you, but actually identify as neither and use 'they' pronouns instead of he/she.

The best advice we can give your staff on working with our group is not to assume or presume anyone's gender identity based on their appearance. Practically, perhaps you could avoid slip up or mistakes by not using any gender pronouns ('he', 'she', 'him', 'hers' etc) unless you are sure of someone's gender identity. Instead saying things like: 'pass it to the person in the yellow t-shirt' or 'look at what your friend in the blue is doing' or, 'they did that really well'...

The issue of how people look/identify will be particularly sensitive when we go swimming. Wearing swimming costumes is obviously often very revealing, but there are also difficulties with gendered toilets, showers and changing rooms. We are working with your managers to make our events as safe as possible for all. Therefore, we would appreciate if all staff who may be around the building, but most essentially the lifeguards for our swim sessions, read this briefing.

We do not want to presume that your staff will not be sensitive, but merely wanted to bring this up as we have experienced some situations in the past where staff at places we have visited have reacted with surprise when seeing a person that they think is the opposite gender, in the 'wrong' toilet/changing room.

Gender identity and being trans are different and separate from sexual orientation. Sexual orientation is how someone defines their sexual attraction and is not linked to how one defines their internal sense of gender. Transgender people can identify themselves as gay, lesbian, bisexual or heterosexual (straight).

Some of our staff also identify as trans or outside of the gender binary (male/female) in some way. We would urge any of your staff who have any extra questions to address them to us if possible, or one of our colleagues during the trip. Alternatively they could email us prior to the trip at **[youthwork@genderedintelligence.co.uk](mailto:youthwork@genderedintelligence.co.uk)**

The Equality Act (2010) includes 'Gender Reassignment' as a protected characteristic, here is what the Government website for the Equality Act ([homeoffice.gov.uk/equalities/lgbt/transgender-equality](https://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/equalities/lgbt/transgender-equality)) says:

### **What's included in the Equality Act?**

The act replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single act to make the law simpler and to remove inconsistencies. This makes the law easier for people to understand and comply with. The act also strengthened protection in some situations.

The act covers nine protected characteristics, which cannot be used as a reason to treat people unfairly. Every person has one or more of the protected characteristics, so the act protects everyone against unfair treatment. The protected characteristics are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

The Equality Act sets out the different ways in which it is unlawful to treat someone, such as direct and indirect discrimination, harassment, victimisation and failing to make a reasonable adjustment for a disabled person.

The act prohibits unfair treatment in the workplace, when providing goods, facilities and services, when exercising public functions, in the disposal and management of premises, in education and by associations (such as private clubs).

We are really looking forward to our trip. For many of our young people this will be the only opportunity they get to go camping in an environment they feel safe. Every year this is an extremely validating and empowering experience for our group, so we thank you in advance for making it a comfortable and positive time for our group!

Kind Regards,

#### **Isa Sallinen**

Residential Lead and Senior Youth Work Practitioner  
(I use she, her/they, them pronouns)

#### **Jake Kelly**

Head of The Youth Service  
(I use he, him & his pronouns)

**[genderedintelligence.co.uk](https://genderedintelligence.co.uk)**

Gendered Intelligence is a registered charity that works to increase understandings of gender diversity and improve the lives of trans people.

We offer a broad spectrum of non-judgmental, practical services to the public, private and not-for-profit sectors, designed to develop, improve and enhance trans inclusion and appreciation of gender diversity.

Email: **[youthwork@genderedintelligence.co.uk](mailto:youthwork@genderedintelligence.co.uk)**

Office telephone: **020 7832 5848**

Office address: **200a Pentonville Road, London N1 9JP**

Please contact us if you would like more information about any of our other services:

### **Youth Groups**

Gendered Intelligence runs youth groups in London, Leeds and online for 8-30 year olds, free to access for all trans, non-binary or gender-exploring young people.

**[youthwork@genderedintelligence.co.uk](mailto:youthwork@genderedintelligence.co.uk)**

### **Work In Education**

Gendered Intelligence provides a wide range of interconnected services for educational communities across the UK, from primary education to university. These include mentoring for individual students; age-appropriate assemblies, workshops and lectures for larger groups; and support for staff via training and consultancy.

**[education@genderedintelligence.co.uk](mailto:education@genderedintelligence.co.uk)**

### **Professional Services**

Trans awareness training, consultancy support, and membership services for organisations in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors.

**[training@genderedintelligence.co.uk](mailto:training@genderedintelligence.co.uk)**

**Gendered Intelligence 2022**

A charity registered in England and Wales

Registered charity number 1182558