

ILLINOIS

(See additional information on Illinois in Part I of Materials.)

An activist in Illinois filed a Freedom of Information request with the Illinois state Board of Education. He received the following reply in September of 2022:

RE: PUBLIC RECORDS REQUEST of September 09, 2022 [Redacted]

Dear [Redacted]

The Illinois State Board of Education received a public information request from you on September 09, 2022. You have requested:

“Any and all documents, and/or links to online resources, currently in use or in force, containing rules, policies, curricula guidelines and other instructional materials, intended to provide guidance to Illinois public school teachers regarding how to teach the subjects of gender identity, gender dysphoria and/or gender affirmation to students.”

The Illinois State Board of Education has reviewed its files and the information you requested can be found on the following websites:

<https://www.isbe.net/sexualhealth>

<https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Supporting-All-Students.aspx>

If you have questions, please contact ISBE’s Legal Department at (217) 782-8535.

Click on the links in the reply to see all materials. Below are some highlights.

Don’t Panic: Talking with Your Middle Schooler about Healthy Relationships and Sexuality.

This Guide for parents tells them early on to use terms like “people with vulvas and ovaries” instead of “woman”, etc.

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

Response for Teens believes that people of all identities need and deserve sexual health education that reflects them. Language is an important tool for keeping the door to communication open between you and your child. Young people of all identities need to see themselves reflected in discussions about sexual health and relationships. “Inclusive language” means that we will refer to people in ways that don’t leave anyone out. For example, we talk about people with vulvas and ovaries, and people with penises and testicles. You may choose to use male/female, but remember to keep an open mind about your own child. By using the inclusive language modeled in this guide, you will be affirming and supporting your child in who they are. Your acceptance will help them make healthier choices.

Further on, the Guide tells parents how to talk about “gender identity”:

Gender Identity and Sexuality

Understanding their *gender identity* and *sexual orientation* helps middle schoolers figure out who they are and how they relate to others. This is often the time when feelings of sexual attraction start. Young teens may have their first crush and begin thinking about their sexual orientation. This can be scary because fitting in and peer acceptance are so important at this age. Love and support from a parent/caregiver are essential.

It may seem strange, but science now shows us that sex and gender are more complicated than many of us were taught. *Everyone* has a gender identity and sexual orientation. Talking about these topics with your child will show them that you believe all people deserve respect and compassion.

WHAT TO KNOW

SEX & SEX ASSIGNED AT BIRTH

Sex refers to people’s biology – their external genitalia, internal reproductive organs, chromosomes, and hormonal makeup. “Sex assigned at birth” refers to the labeling of a person as “male” or “female” by looking at their external genitals. Sometimes a baby may have genitals that don’t easily fit into the typical male or female categories; this is called *intersex*. Some health care providers will decide to assign intersex babies as male or as female. However, we now know that there are more than two clearly-defined biological sexes. Remembering this fact when talking to your children is an important way to emphasize respect for all bodies.

GENDER IDENTITY

Gender identity is a person’s innermost sense of being a boy or a girl, or something in between—or outside of—those genders. There are many gender identities. Gender identity is different than sex because gender doesn’t have to do with what body parts a person has, it’s about how they feel on the inside. Sometimes gender identity can correspond with sex assigned at birth and sometimes it can differ.

SOME LANGUAGE USED TO DESCRIBE GENDER IDENTITY:

Cisgender: Someone whose sex assigned at birth (male or female) matches their gender, or how they feel on the inside (boy or girl). For example, a person assigned female at birth who identifies as a girl is a cisgender girl.

Transgender: Someone whose sex assigned at birth differs from their gender. For example, a person assigned female at birth who identifies as a boy is a transgender boy.

Non-Binary: Someone whose gender identity doesn’t fit into simple categories like boy/man or girl/woman.

Pronouns are a small but important way to support someone’s right to self-identify. he/him; they/them.

Misgendering means referring to someone using language (especially pronouns) that does not correctly reflect their gender identity. This often happens when people use appearance to determine gender identity.

GENDER EXPRESSION

Gender expression is the way that people show and express their gender to the world. This is sometimes based on stereotypes and is usually through mannerisms, clothing, hairstyles, activities they enjoy, and how they talk. A few examples considered masculine gender expression are wearing a suit and tie, having facial hair, or playing with trucks. Some examples considered feminine gender expression are wearing makeup, wearing dresses, and taking dance classes. What is considered “masculine” or “feminine” is defined by society and culture and changes over time.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

There are two different types of attraction: physical and emotional. It is common for people to experience both, but it's possible to experience one but not the other.

Physical attraction, or sexual attraction, is when someone finds the way a person looks to be attractive or sexually desirable.

Emotional attraction, or romantic attraction, is finding another person's personality attractive.

Some people only experience physical or romantic attraction towards people of one gender. Some people are attracted to multiple genders. And some people aren't attracted to anyone! Who someone is physically and/or emotionally attracted to describes their sexual orientation. Some examples of sexual orientations include:

- **Gay:** A man who is attracted to other men.
- **Lesbian:** A woman who is attracted to other women.
- **Straight:** A person who is attracted to the opposite gender.
- **Bisexual:** A person who is attracted to multiple genders.
- **Asexual:** A person who does not experience physical attraction toward anyone.

WHAT TO DO / START THE CONVERSATION:

- Try not to jump to conclusions about your child's identity.
- Look for **Moments in the Margins** – use TV, celebrities, or current events to ask your child what they think.
 - Ask your child what they know about gender and sexual orientation – they might educate you!
 - Wonder aloud: “I wonder how it might feel to be treated differently because of your gender identity.”
 - Express your disapproval of slurs or jokes based on gender or sexual orientation when you encounter them.
- Use your pronouns when you meet your child's friends. It sends the message that you are open and accepting.
- Use gender inclusive language.
 - Ex. “dating someone” vs. “boyfriend/girlfriend”

MORE TO CONSIDER:

- People's gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation are not connected. For example, one should not assume that a boy who wears makeup is gay, or that a girl who prefers suits over dresses is lesbian.
- Do not label other people's identities for them.

IF YOUR CHILD COMES OUT AS LGBTQIA+:

- **Do not assume this is a phase** but allow your child to evolve. Affirm your child's identity now and communicate that you will accept them even if their identity shifts over time.
- **Protect your child's privacy;** let them decide who to tell.
- It's extremely important that young people have a **trusted adult** in their life who they can turn to if they are questioning their identity. According to a [study](#) by the Trevor Project, LGBTQ youth who report having at least one accepting adult in their life are 40% less likely to attempt suicide.

Parents are only directed by the Guide to groups that promote gender identity ideology:

LGBTQIA+

Adults:

Websites:

[Gender Spectrum - Parenting Resources](#)

[Planned Parenthood - “What should I teach my middle schooler about identity?”](#)

[GLSEN - “Pronoun Guide”](#)

For a sampling of the other gender identity ideology-promoting materials recommended to families, [click on this link](#), and then click on the Gender and LGBTQ+ categories.

NATIONAL SEX-ED STANDARDS

If schools teach sex-ed in Illinois, they must adhere to the [National Sex Education Standards](#), which are dominated by gender identity ideology-pushing requirements. The standards require that children learn gender identity ideology's various terms, definitions, and tenets, laying out dates by which milestones in that learning must occur. They are couched in terms of nice-sounding goals, each of which are actually directly undermined by the curriculum requirements. The standards are said to help ensure that young people "grow into sexually healthy adults," for example, even though medical "gender affirmation" stymies and maims sexual organs, creates adults incapable of having orgasms, and causes sterility. Endorsing organizations include organizations such as GLSEN, Human Rights Campaign, and Gender Spectrum.

INCLUSIVE CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE- Condensed Edition

In August of 2019, Governor J.B. Pritzker signed a new Illinois state law, which requires "accurate portrayals" of LGBT individuals. This guidance document promises to "transform classrooms in Illinois into those that are reflective and protective of the experience of the LGBTQ+ community."

The Guide cites standard misleading GLSEN-generated claims about high rates of problems for TQ+ students. It is full of leading questions to be used in "Inquiry-based Learning." Children are to be asked, for example, "What were some of the groups that did not believe the LGBT community should have certain rights?" Undoubtedly, children will be praised for identifying gender critical groups as opposing "trans" rights, when these groups, in fact, defend free speech, and the rights of women/gays and children from attack. Similarly, young people are to be asked "What and who did the gay liberation movement leave behind?" The correct answer to this loaded question, according to the guide, is that it left TQ+ people behind. An example of an "Informed Action" that students should be encouraged to undertake is "Create a fundraiser to send funds to the Sylvia Rivera Law Project. Discuss why doing so is important."

The Guide says these frameworks—which lead kids to gender identity ideology groups, and omit any and all voices expressing concerns about that ideology—will help kids learn how to think critically. The Guide emphasizes that promoting TQ+ revisionist history and other gender identity ideology indoctrination can and should be integrated into lots of different classes.

MEMORANDUM: COLLECTION OF DATA POSTPONED UNTIL '23-'24 SCHOOL YEAR



DATE: March 4, 2022

MEMORANDUM

TO: SIS Users

FROM: Illinois State Board of Education

SUBJECT: **Collection of Student Sex and Sexual Orientation Postponed Until the 2023-24 School Year**

Thank you for your patience and partnership as ISBE worked through the implementation of Public Act 102-0543, which requires ISBE to collect and report student sexual orientation and sex, in addition to gender, so that we can collectively support equitable outcomes for all our students, including our LGBTQ+ students. **ISBE will postpone the implementation of this requirement until the 2023-24 school year.**

When we released initial guidance in January, local leaders raised concerns with the provisions in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Illinois School Student Records Act (ISSRA) that give parents/guardians the right to have access to their children's education records. As the law requires the reporting, albeit optionally, for all students, birth through 12th grade, the field's concern is that students who are providing this information may not fully understand that this information will become part of their student record and be available to others, including their parents and school personnel, under both state and federal records laws.

Given that these concerns require further examination to resolve and the fact that many school districts have already started the school registration process for the 2022-23 school year, ISBE will not ask districts to collect data on sexual orientation and sex this school year.

As provided in subsection (e) of the Public Act, ISBE has informed the General Assembly that the agency is unable to begin reporting the data required by subsection (a) on sexual orientation and sex and will delay implementation to ensure it does not potentially cause undue harm to any student.

ISBE will form a working group of educators, LGBTQ+ advocates, families, and students from across the state to ensure the data are collected with all students' safety and privacy in mind. ISBE will conclude this stakeholder engagement by October 2022 in order provide the field with revised guidance or to propose legislation to amend the requirement before school registration begins for the 2023-24 school year.

**ISBE NON-REGULATORY GUIDANCE. SUPPORTING TRANSGENDER,
NONBINARY & GENDER NONCONFORMING STUDENTS**

March 1, 2020

This Guidance document declares that gender identity ideology should be enforced and promoted in public schools. Definitions are provided for terms like “gender expression”, identity, and pronouns, but not for “gender” itself. The meaning given for “gender identity” lists “male” and “female” among possible genders.

Gender Identity. A person’s internal, deeply held sense or psychological knowledge of their own gender that can include being female, male, another gender, nonbinary, gender nonconforming, or no gender, and is unrelated to the person’s sex assigned at birth. Gender identity is an innate part of a person’s identity, and the responsibility for determining an individual’s gender identity rests with the individual. Unlike gender expression, gender identity is not visible to others.

The Guidance states that those who “identify as” a different sex or “nonbinary” can enter whichever locker rooms, bathrooms, and sport teams they want. It calls for ongoing training of all staff members to make sure they will adhere to this guidance.

A school district policy that refuses to treat a transgender student in a manner consistent with the student’s gender identity “punishes that individual for his or her gender non-conformance, which in turn violates Title IX.” *Id.* at 1049.

Provide ongoing training to all staff members. One of the most common challenges that students, teachers, staff, administrators, and school board members experience when creating affirming environments for transgender, nonbinary, and gender nonconforming students is having effective ways to address harmful and/or discriminatory language and actions, especially in the moment. Regular training is an essential part of preventing discrimination and harassment in a school environment and helps ensure the effective and informed implementation of inclusion practices.

The Guidance says there must be support for GSAs and faculty should be recruited to sponsor these clubs.

Support LGBTQ+-affirming student groups. Districts should identify faculty sponsors willing to work to begin and support GSAs in all elementary, middle, and high schools.

Affirmation is established as the only acceptable policy vis a vis kids who reject their bodies, and support plans are promoted. Even for very young children, the Guidance conflates parents taking cautious approaches with them making children “unsafe.” When children don’t “have a supportive home environment”, schools are to work with children to circumvent parents’ wishes.

Be mindful of how students’ chronological and developmental age, as well as family support, may affect the process. For preschool and elementary school-aged children, the level of parental involvement may look different than for middle school and high school-aged students. However, supporting a student’s health, well-being, and safety is always paramount. When a transgender, nonbinary, or gender nonconforming student does not have a supportive home environment, regardless of their age, the Gender Support Coordinator can work with the student to identify what course of action will prioritize their safety.

Set limits on disclosure of a student's gender identity. District staff should only discuss a student's transgender, nonbinary, or gender nonconforming identity with other staff if it is necessary to support the student's social, emotional, or academic success. Districts should ensure all staff are trained and aware of the district's procedures on confidentiality. Information gathered about a student's transgender, nonbinary, or gender nonconforming identity should be kept secure and confidential, and not be released or disclosed outside of district staff without the student's explicit consent. It is essential to keep in mind that disclosure or misuse of a student's confidential information may establish a hostile environment, potentially subjecting them to bullying and harassment by peers, discrimination by district staff, and/or family rejection.

The guidance requires wrong-sex pronoun usage, and forfeiture of sex-based rights by other students. The discomfort and privacy concerns of other students are deemed "prejudices" to be ignored and treated with disdain.

F-3. What if some students or parents are uncomfortable with transgender, nonbinary, and gender nonconforming students using school facilities that correspond with their gender identity?

Under state and federal law, the discomfort or privacy concerns of students, teachers, or parents are not valid reasons to deny or limit the equal use of facilities by transgender, nonbinary, and gender nonconforming students. Rather, the interest of any student seeking more privacy should be addressed by providing that student a more private option upon their request. "The prejudices of others are part of what the [Human Rights Act] was meant to prevent." *P.S. and Komarek Sch. Dist. 94*, ALS No. 16-0003 (Ill. Hum Rts. Comm'n March 15, 2018 and February 4, 2019). "[T]here is no right that insulates a student from coming in contact with others who are different than them or a Bathroom Privacy Act, unless the behavior violates a school policy or is criminal." *Id.* The presence of a transgender student in a locker room simply does not "implicate the constitutional privacy rights of others with whom such facilities are shared." *Students & Parents for Privacy v. United States Dep't of Educ.*, 16-CV-4945, 2017 WL 6629520, at *5 (N.D. Ill. Dec. 29, 2017). If school districts are found to have violated the IHRA or Title IX, they will be subjected to significant monetary liability, including damages, attorneys' fees, and costs.

The document notes that coaches and others involved in sports "can have a particularly hard time removing gendered language from their activities. Coaches and athletic teams should receive training to help with the cultural adjustment."

The document insists that "gender affirmation" must be injected wherever and whenever possible in student's days.

With regard to training teachers and others, the guidance notes that "progress cannot be made until and unless staff participate in effective training programs that address the unique needs of transgender, non-binary, and gender non-conforming students."

RESPONDING TO CONCERNS: TEACHING ABOUT GENDER

The Illinois schools rely directly on organizations that promote gender identity ideology for the contents and tone of what they teach, and for materials. Below is the opening section of a document about how teachers and others should respond to concerns raised by parents. The document is written by Gender Spectrum. It lists and responds only to concerns poorly articulated. It does not include the cogent analyses and resulting concerns of those who find gender identity ideology to be anti-science, sexist, homophobic, and otherwise harmful.



Responding to Concerns: Teaching about Gender

Why should my child learn about gender at school?

- School is a place where children are taught to respect one another and to learn to work together regardless of their differences. Learning about gender diversity is part of that work. Our students are growing up in a world that is increasingly recognizing the diversity of gender. Creating a more tolerant, inclusive, and accepting school environment teaches all children to recognize and resist stereotypes. We teach children to stand up for others, to resist bullying, and to work together.
- We also know that many children whose gender is seen as different than what is expected of them can face very difficult circumstances. Too often teasing, bullying, and violence are common experiences for a gender-expansive child. A growing number of school districts and states specifically prohibit bullying and harassment of students based on gender expression or identity. Furthermore, various federal, state and municipal laws protect students from discrimination because of their gender. Proactive education and training to help students understand gender diversity more fully helps school districts meet those legal obligations while working to create a safer, more supportive learning environment for all students.

NATIONAL ITEMS

TRANSGENDER READING DAYS

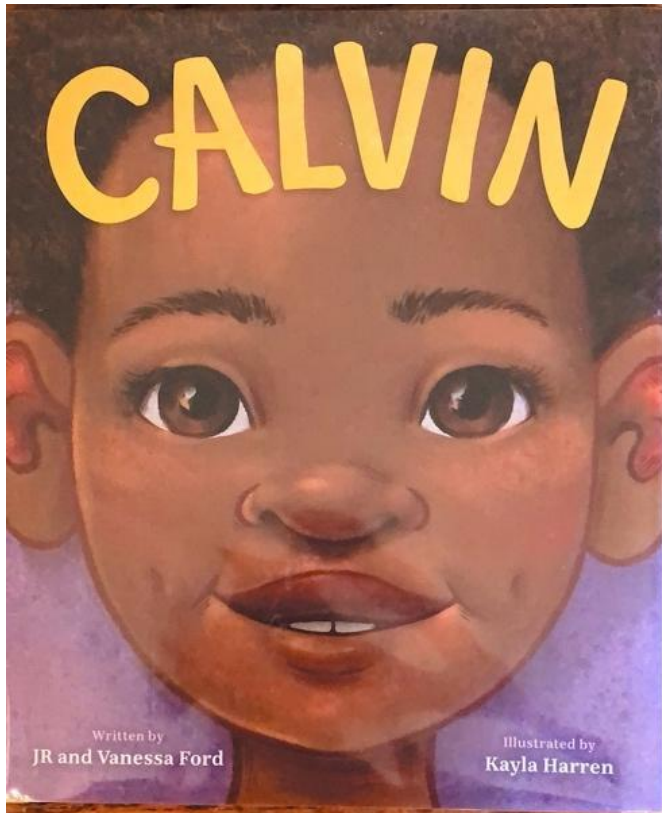
For seven years, and counting, the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) has sponsored an annual “Jazz and Friends National Day of School and Community Readings.” [According to this article](#), the 2022 event, which took place in February, was co hosted by the National Education Association (NEA) and the American Association of School Libraries. The following books were recommended for reading to five- to 12-year -old children:

- I Am Jazz which is discussed in other Parts of the archives posted on the WDI website.
- From the Stars in the Sky to the Fish in the Sea which is discussed in other Parts of the archives posted on the WDI website.
- Calvin, discussed below.

- Born Ready: The True Story of a Boy Named Penelope, discussed below.

Calvin

Calvin is the story of a little girl who believes herself to be a boy.



USA
CAN

*Being the only one in my class.
How would everyone react to me?
What if my friends wouldn't
call me "he"?*
What if . . . what if . . . what if.

Calvin has always known he's a boy, even though the world sees him as a girl. He hasn't told anyone yet, but with a new school year approaching, he can't wait a moment longer. "I'm not a girl," he tells his family. "I'm a boy—a boy in my heart and in my brain." Though his loving family is quick to support him, Calvin is nervous about what his friends and teachers will think.



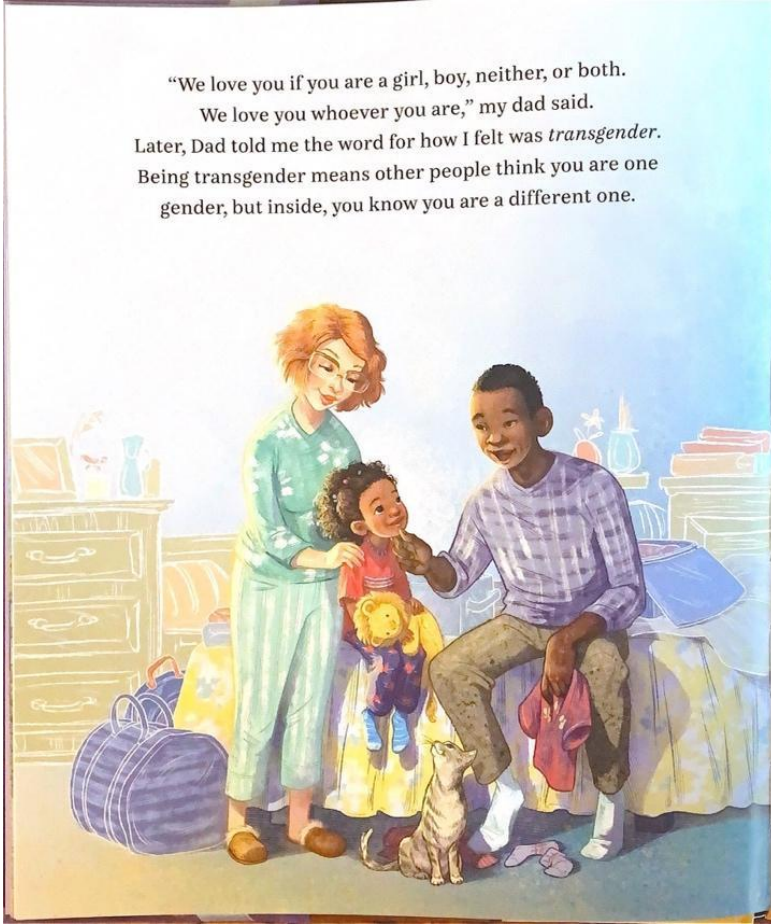
Inspired by the authors' own transgender child and accompanied by warm, joyous, and inclusive illustrations, this must-have picture book celebrates kindness and empathy and shows what it means to make someone feel safe, respected, and welcomed.

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS

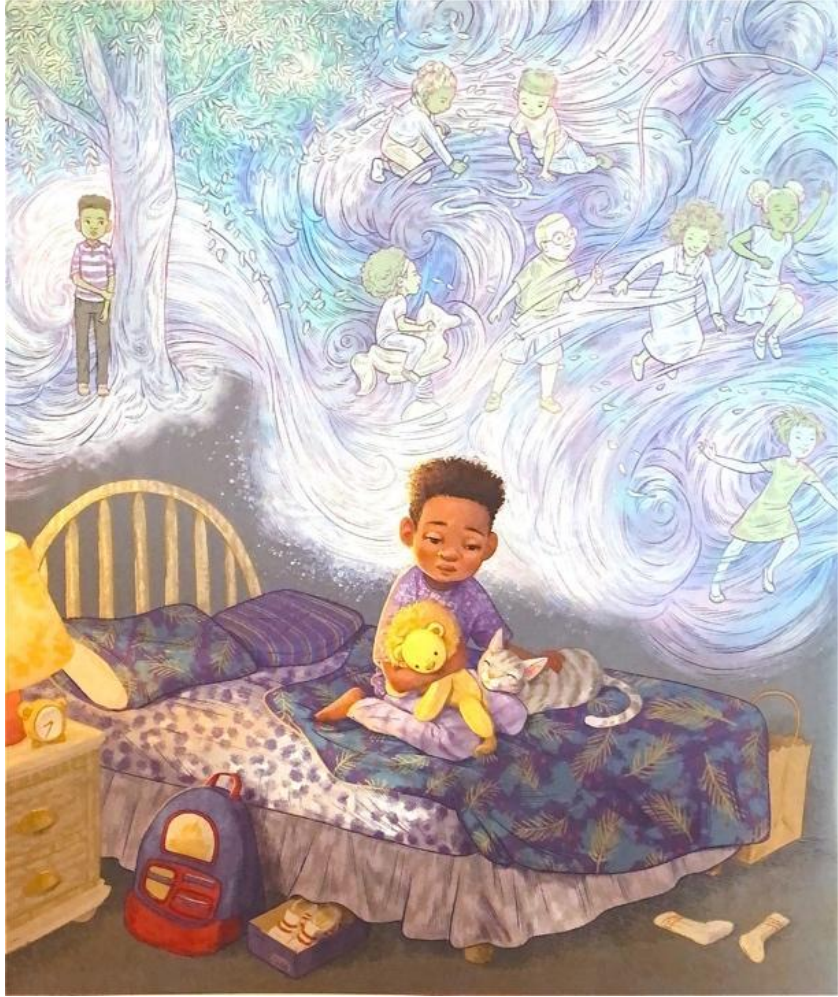
An imprint of Penguin Random House LLC
New York • Penguin.com/kids
Manufactured in China

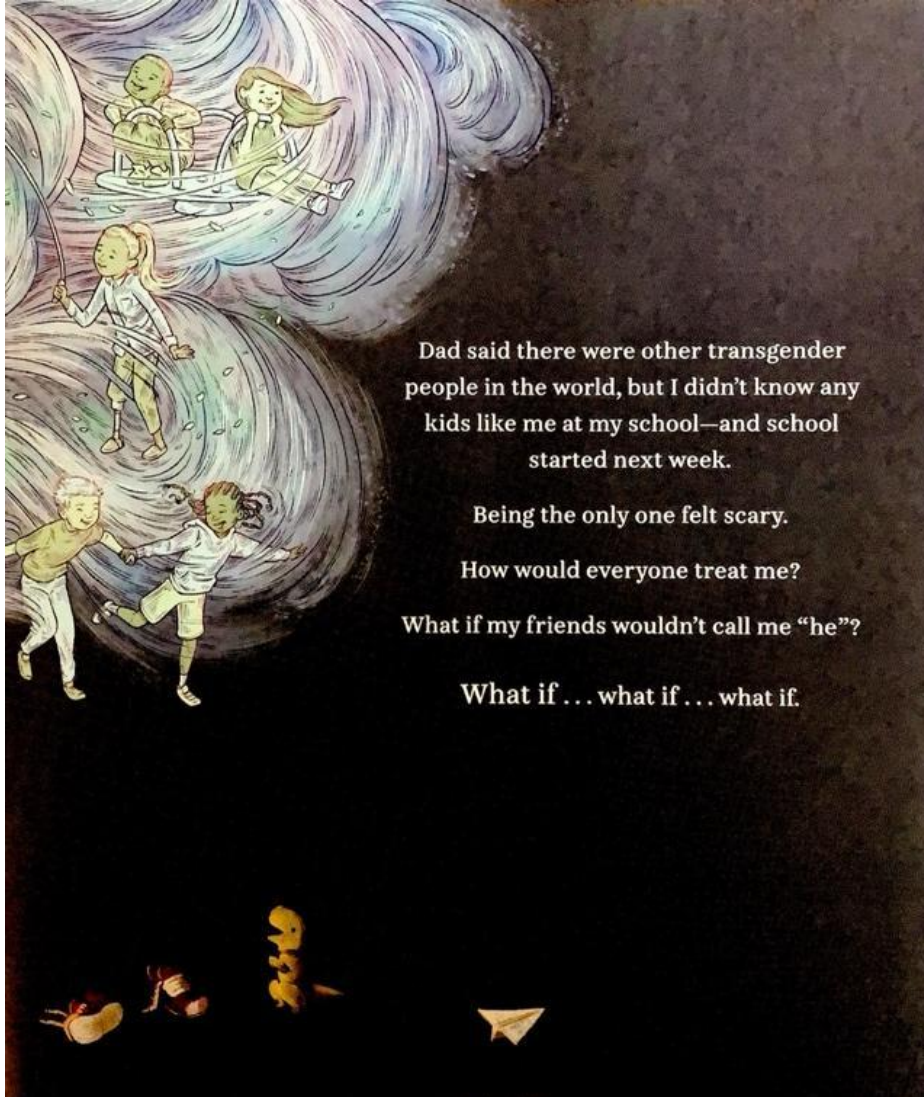
Her parents instantly agree that she is a boy.

“We love you if you are a girl, boy, neither, or both.
We love you whoever you are,” my dad said.
Later, Dad told me the word for how I felt was *transgender*.
Being transgender means other people think you are one
gender, but inside, you know you are a different one.



Calvin's grandparents are equally instantly in agreement. The parents and grandparents buy her boys' swimming trunks and refer to her as "him."





Dad said there were other transgender people in the world, but I didn't know any kids like me at my school—and school started next week.

Being the only one felt scary.

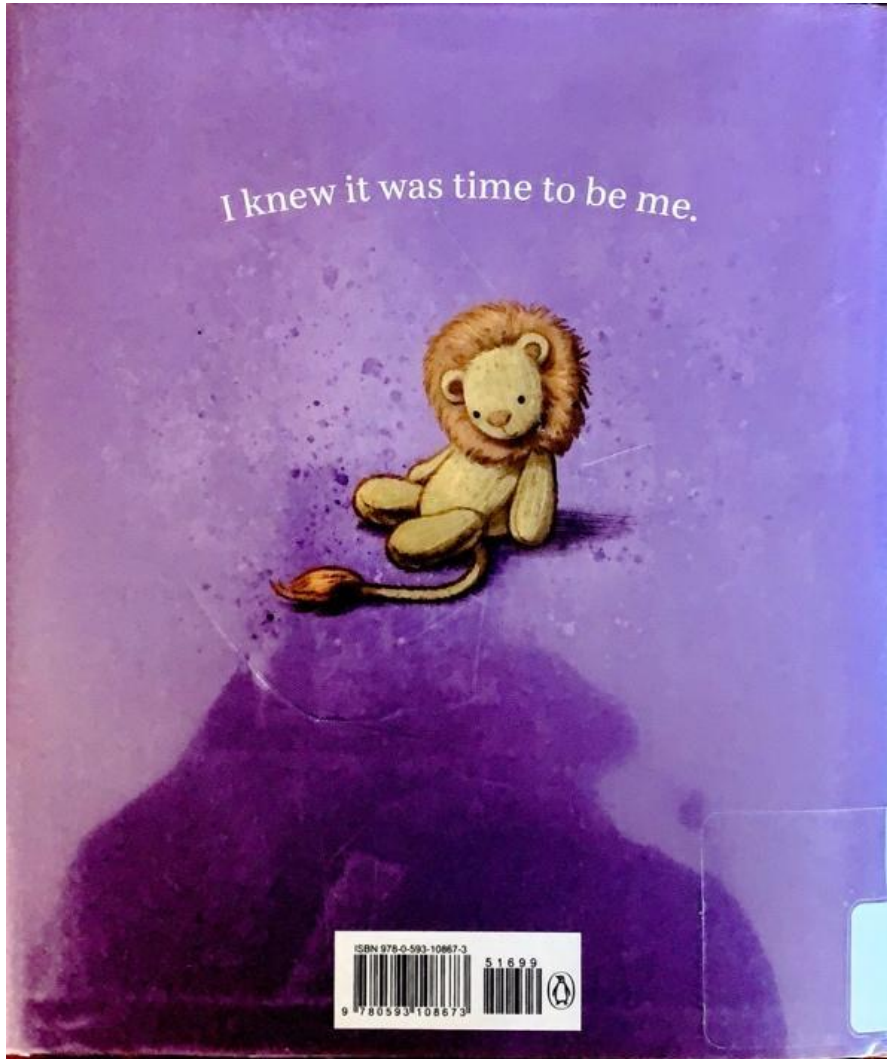
How would everyone treat me?

What if my friends wouldn't call me "he"?

What if . . . what if . . . what if.

Calvin worries about being accepted as a boy at school, but it turns out that all the teachers agree that being a boy is a matter of self-declaration and has nothing to do with anatomy. So, Calvin feels "safe."

Everyone pretends along with Calvin that she is a boy, and therefore everything is wonderful and happy and safe. The back of the book implies that by being something she isn't, this girl is being herself:



Born Ready: The True Story of a Boy Named Penelope

Like Calvin, the book *Born Ready* tells the story of a very young girl who thinks she's a boy.

BORN READY

THE TRUE STORY OF A BOY NAMED PENELOPE



Written by
JODIE
PATTERSON

Illustrated by
Charnelle
Pinkney Barlow

Everyone knows that Penelope loves skateboarding and karate. They also know that Penelope is a great ninja—strong and powerful—and a champion secret keeper. But Penelope has one secret that feels too big and scary to keep in.

Mama has her own superpower—she's great at loving Penelope, always! So Penelope trusts Mama with the secret that he's a boy and always has been. Together they join forces to show the world that no matter who you are or how you look on the outside, it's your time to shine. You are born ready!

This true story of change and acceptance will open your heart to all the different ways a family can love.



Just like in Calvin Penelope's parents instantly agree she's a boy and treat her as one.

Then Mama says the best word I've ever heard.
"Yes."
She says, "We will make a plan to tell everyone we love
what we know."
"What's that?"
"You are a boy."

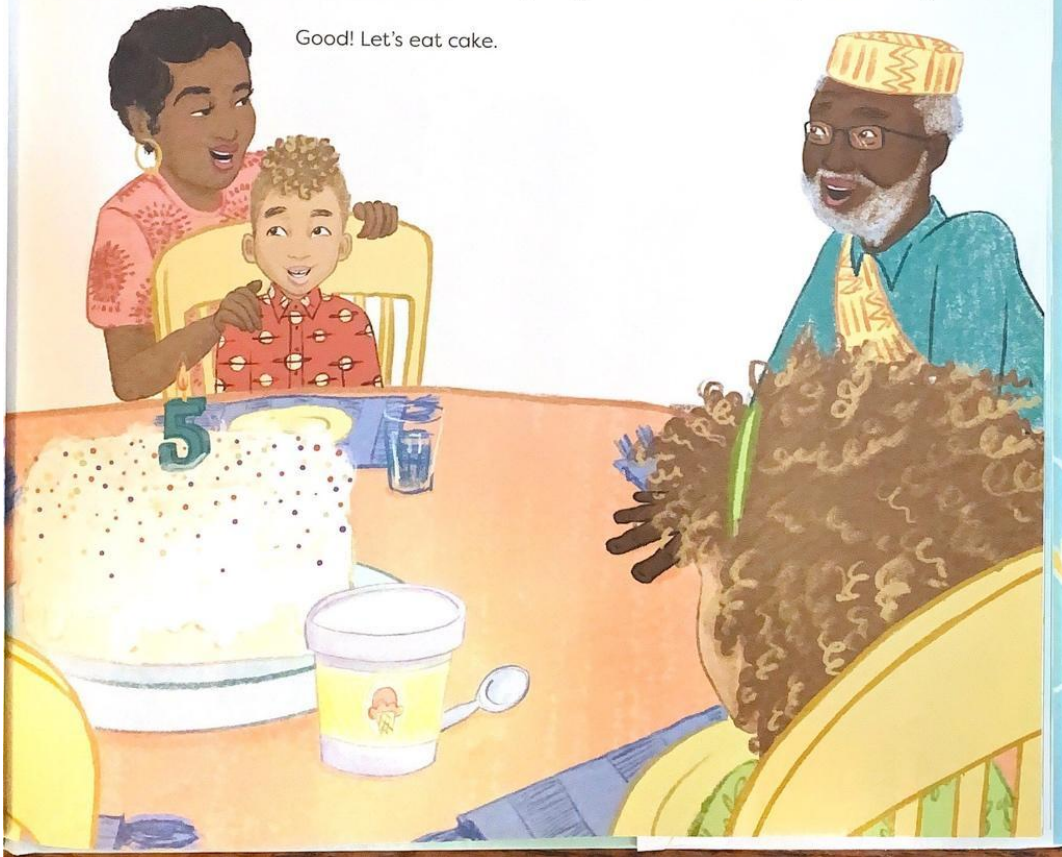


Penelope worries about whether her grandparents will accept, but they do instantly. Her grandpa—who is wearing traditional garb from Ghana—is pleased as punch. He points out happily that in his native language of Twi, there are no sex-specific pronouns. The implication is that indigenous people of Ghana embrace the idea that someone born with female anatomy is a boy if she says so, which is a rather large leap from the fact that gendered pronouns don't exist in their language.

Grandpa G slams his hand down on the table. "Ah! Chale! In my language of Twi, gender isn't such a big deal. We don't use gender pronouns."

I don't understand everything, but I do know Grandpa G is smiling.

Good! Let's eat cake.



There's only one doubter in Penelope's circle: Big Brother. He is portrayed as a know-it-all with the following page. Note how the book dismisses the idea that everything has a scientific explanation.

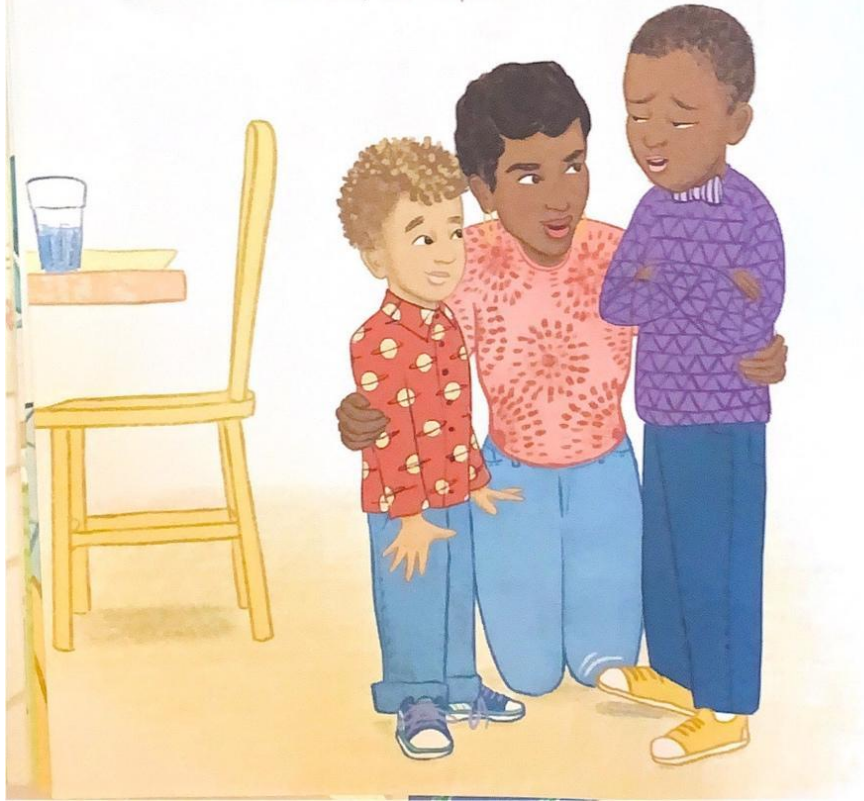
Big Brother acts like he knows everything.
"Penelope, do you know that the air around a lightning bolt
is hotter than the sun?"
"Nope."
"Do you know that everything has a scientific explanation?"
"Nope."



Big Brother states the truth: "This doesn't make sense. You can't become a boy. You have to be born one." Instead of being honored for stating the truth in the face of pressure to pretend with others, Big Brother is chastised. He is told that it is hateful to not go along with the lie that his sister is a boy.

But Big Brother isn't smiling. He looks mad.
"This doesn't make sense. You can't *become* a boy.
You have to be born one."

Mama puts her arms around both of us and pulls us
in tight. "Not everything *needs* to make sense. *This is*
about love," she whispers.



Everybody at Penelope's school instantly goes along with the ruse. In fact, the principal declares that by insisting that she's a boy, Penelope is teaching the teacher.

"Your parents told me you are a boy. Is that true?"
"I think like a boy. I feel like a boy. I might look different from other boys, but yes, I'm sure I'm a boy."

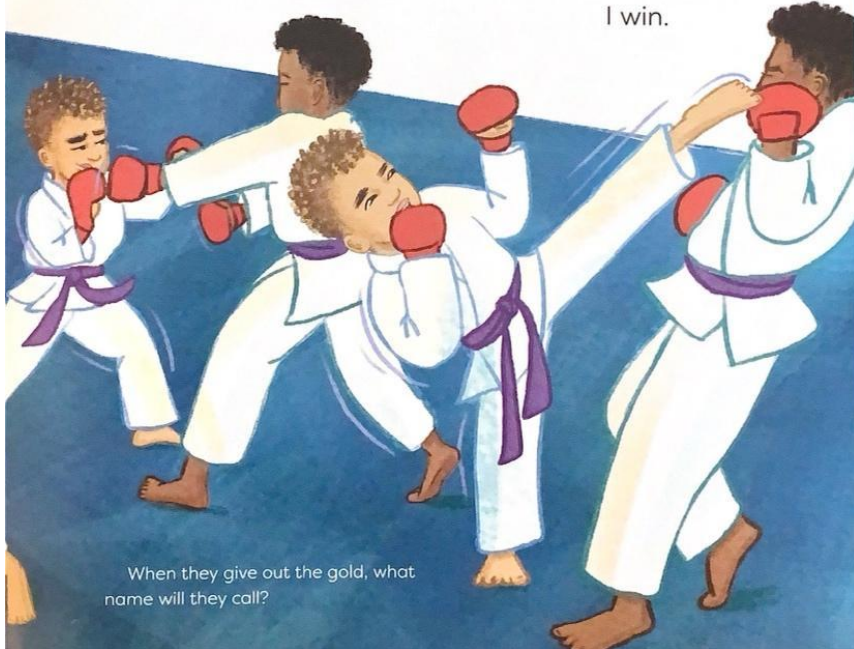
"Well, Penelope . . . today you're my teacher!"



In the final pages of the book, Penelope participates in a karate tournament and wins top prize, defeating a taller person who looks like a male. Since Penelope and the other competitors are quite young, this is plausible. By high school, males will almost always win in most sports, which is why women-only sports are important.

I shuffle my feet.
I bob from side to side.
Boom! Roundhouse kick to the head.

I score.
I win.



When they give out the gold, what name will they call?

"And the gold goes to..."

"PENELOPE!"

Me.

It's my time.

