The Experiences of Parents/Caregivers Accompanying Gender Diverse
and Trans Children and Youth Attending Specialty Clinics: The Stories of Gender-Affirming Care Project

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Key Points

- Parents’ experiences of acceptance continue after seeking gender-affirming care for their child: resistance, denial, surprise, support.
- Parents who struggled to accept their child’s gender identity usually drew on five main pillars of acceptance to move forward in their journey: (1) education; (2) realizing that support would contribute to the child’s well-being; (3) allowing themselves time to integrate the new reality; (4) support from other parents; and (5) support from professionals.
- Generally, parents reported positive experiences with clinics. A few expressed negative experiences with wait times to access care, lack of mental health services for their child, and delays related to protocol restrictions due to age.
- Supportive contact with other parents and with affirming health care providers helps facilitate parents’ journeys towards acceptance.
- A more systemic, family approach to care in clinics that work with youth would be desirable.

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