



# Supporting siblings' communication

## Helpful wording to guide siblings through communicating with others.

This resource offers a script on how to start and continue the conversation. Of course, you can tailor the wording to suit your situation.

### How to tell friends their sibling is trans

- 'Hey, I wanted to let you know that <name> identifies as <gender identity>. [She's / He's / They're] starting to live in this gender now and will be wearing different types of clothes from now on.'
- '[She's / He's / They're] changing [her / his / their] name to <chosen name> and we need to say <pronouns> now instead of <old pronouns>. Can you please try your best not to use the old ones anymore?'
- Respecting <name>'s new name and pronouns isn't so much to ask. It might take a little time and effort to get used to, but doing it is a basic sign of respect.'
- 'Yeah, it all feels pretty weird. But I'm so proud of [her / him / them], and happy to see [her / him / them] feeling good now.'
- 'I don't have a [sister / brother] anymore, 'I have a [sister / brother]! It's pretty cool.'
- '[She feels / He feels / They feel] feel uncomfortable in [her / his / their] body. It was getting serious. [She's / He's / They've] been so unhappy.'
- '[She's / He's / They've] been so much happier and calmer since starting to live as [a girl/a boy/non-binary / <other>].'
- 'It's been really hard telling everyone, but [she / he / they] did it. [She's / He's / They've] been so brave and I'm really proud of [her / him / them].'

### How to deal with bullying as a result of having a trans sibling

The first thing to note when responding to bullies is to stay calm and hold your ground. Doing so means that you're not allowing the bully to take away your power, which is what they're trying to do. A few tactics to use in the moment are:

- Ignore, don't react. Walk away.
- If you feel safe, say firmly but calmly, 'Stop it now.'
- If you feel confident, use humour to diffuse the negativity.
- Don't fight or be mean in response. That continues the cycle.

After the incident is over, talking to a friend might help you feel better. It's also important to report the incident to a trusted adult, or your school. Telling an adult allows them to take action to stop the behaviour continuing and this is really important.

- 'You can try to make me feel weird or bad about it, but I'm so proud of my [sister / brother]. They are really brave living their life, especially when people are so mean about it.'
- 'Yep. <Sibling> is trans. And [she's / he's / they're] pretty much the coolest and bravest person I know. [She's/He's/ They're] also really nice and kind to everyone. You being mean to me about [her / him / them] being <gender identity> isn't kind at all, and it's super lame.'
- '[She's / He's / They're] not pretending to be [a girl / a boy / non-binary]. They are [a girl / a boy / non-binary]. And people are being mean to [her / him / them], and me, about it. [She / He / They] obviously wouldn't be making it up just to be getting bullied in return.'
- 'Whatever. I've got <sibling>'s back, no matter what anyone says, or how cruel anyone wants to be to me or [her / him / them] about it.'
- 'Wow, that's a super hurtful thing to say. I'm guessing you must be feeling bad inside and putting those feelings on someone else. I'm sorry, but I'm not going to be that person for you.'
- 'I have asked you not to insult [me / my sister / my brother / my sibling]. If you say that to [me / her / him / them] again, I am going to the principal straight away.'
- 'That question is too personal, and I don't think <sibling> would feel comfortable with me sharing that kind of information with you.'
- 'Personal details about my [sister / brother / sibling] are not up for public discussion. End. Of. Story.'
- 'You can't assume someone's gender according to their appearance or their body. Gender is internal and individual.'
- 'What's making you so angry that you want to talk to me this way? Is there anything I can do to help?'
- 'I know you feel tough talking to people like this. But trying to hurt others isn't going to help you feel better on the inside, really.'
- 'You don't need to be this kind of person. You have it in you to make the world better. What do you think you need to do to be that person instead?'