



**DIGITAL
TRANSGENDER
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PRIMARY SOURCE SETS

Transgender and Gender-nonconforming Youth

In the United States, transgender and gender-nonconforming children and adolescents have been misrepresented, misunderstood, and understudied. As transgender people become more visible, there has been a common misconception around transgender youth - that they are brand new. But the historical record shows these kids have not only existed for a long time, but they have played a central role in how we understand trans identity, sex, and gender. The materials compiled in this guide document the complex history of transgender and gender-nonconforming children and adolescents from the 1960's to today, featuring work both by and about trans youth.

This resource was compiled by Shelby Haddock for Dr. Avery Dame-Griff's Transgender Social Movements Class and edited for the DTA by Eamon Schlotterback.



Sylvia Rivera (seated) and STAR youth pose for camera - 1970

Vanguard Revisited - 2011

This retrospective gathers the history of the 1960s queer and trans youth organization Vanguard. You can read more from Vanguard in the publication's dedicated [collection](#).

Come Out! No. 7 page 5 -1970

The Street Transvestites Action Revolutionaries, or STAR, led by Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera was a political organization that collected funds and resources to provide shelter and aid to LGBT youth. In this photograph you can see Rivera and several STAR youth.

Ideal Sex Change Time is Youth, Says Doctor – 1970

This article draws information from a medical expert about the benefits of childhood and adolescent medical transitions.

Information for the Family of the Transsexual and Children with Gender Identity Disturbances - 1977

This booklet, created by the Erickson Education Foundation, provides information for families with children who are transgender or otherwise experience gender variance. It gives insight into what trans children may experience concerning their gender as

well as advice to families and parents on how to approach their child's gender.

Get Your Diagnoses Off Our Bodies and Off Our Kids! - 1990

This flyer by the transgender activist organization Transsexual Menace is a response to how gender-variant children are impacted by medical diagnoses. It focuses on psychiatry's role in policing children's gender expression.

Support Our GenderQueer Youth! – 1996

This poster circulated by the Transsexual Menace protests transphobia in the school system. It brings attention to a student punished for wearing feminine clothes to school.

Our Trans Children – 2001

This pamphlet published by the PFLAG's Transgender Network provides information for parents, family, friends, employers, and counselors interested in learning more about trans issues. It gives insight to commonly asked questions regarding trans people and the challenges they may experience concerning their gender identity and expression. The pamphlet also brings attention to the issues and risks trans youth face within and outside the family.

behind the bars. L/G/B/T/Q youth in prison - 2006

This zine discusses sexual minorities in the prison system. It draws attention to the treatment of transgender people in the prison system, including increased risk of abuse and violence because of their identity.

Queer & Trans Youth Sexual Assault: A Youth Issue - 2007

This zine contains information, statistics, and advice on the issue of sexual assault experienced by queer and trans youth. The zine's framing suggests a moment in history when trans youth are understood as a demographic rather than an anomaly.

Discussion Questions:

1. Compare “Information for the Family of the Transsexual and Children with Gender Identity Disturbances” and “Our Trans Children.” What similarities and differences do you notice between the two? What do you think accounts for these differences?
2. How do these materials complicate modern day controversies surrounding trans children (access to medicine, education, public restrooms, and sports teams etc.)?
3. Several of these materials were created by or are about activists. Why are trans youth seen as a political issue?
4. Search the DTA for more items on transgender youth (try searching for “kids,” “children,” “teenagers,” or other terms). What did you find, and how does it expand your understanding of trans children?
5. After reading these materials, what are some concrete things you can do to be a better ally to transgender and gender-nonconforming children and teenagers?

Further Reading:

Gill-Peterson, Jules. *Histories of the Transgender Child*. University of Minnesota Press, 2018.

Grimm, Gavin. “[Opinion: I fought for years in court for my basic rights as a trans kid. It shouldn't have been this hard.](#)” *Washington Post*, 30 June 2021.

[Schools in Transition: A Guide for Supporting Transgender Students in K-12 Schools](#). Ed. Beth Sherouse.

Serano, Julia. “[Detransition, Desistance, and Disinformation: A Guide for Understanding Transgender Children Debates.](#)” *Medium*, 2016.