

Creating Support Groups For Families with Transgender-Identified Children



**“I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
your works are wonderful, I know that full well.”**

Psalm 139:14

Since its first meeting in November 2024, the Wonderfully Made parent support group at Burke Community Church in Burke, Virginia, has continued to grow and provide a place for parents and relatives of transgender-identified children to share their struggles, questions, and concerns. But at its core, Wonderfully Made is a place where people who are dealing with what may be the most confusing and harrowing ordeal of their lives can spend time with others who understand them and their experience completely.

When a child says, “I’m transgender,” the family is launched into a cataclysm of confusion, fear, and destabilization. Similar to divorce, chronic illness, or the death of a loved one, it is difficult if not impossible to understand what a suffering person is experiencing unless you too have suffered that anguish. Pastoral or therapeutic counseling can be helpful. Supportive friends and family are irreplaceable. Research and resources are an imperative. But there’s nothing quite as comforting and empowering as being with people who are going through the same thing you are.



“Welcome to the club that no one wants to join.”

People continue to reach out about joining Wonderfully Made, highlighting the widespread nature of this pervasive problem. Members invite friends who are going through this issue with their children. Burke Community Church receives calls and emails from around the country asking how to create similar groups in their congregations and neighborhoods.

Why are groups like Wonderfully Made so unique, so necessary, and yet so hard to launch? In part because of the unsettling position in which parents of transgender-identified kids find themselves.

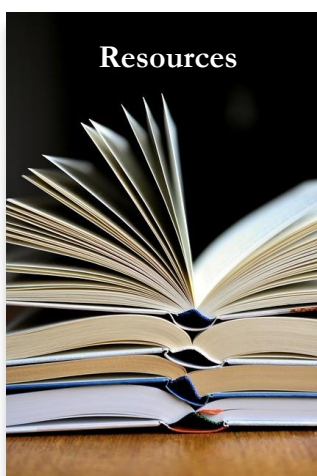
Families dealing with transgender-identified children are often afraid, ashamed, and bewildered. They may be terrified about what their kids want to do to their bodies, as well as how family members and friends will react. People who have been indoctrinated into gender ideology can be

cruel to anyone who doesn't applaud and affirm it, even going so far as to report parents to Child Protective Services¹ or help the confused child run away from home.² Simply voicing an opinion contrary to gender ideology can land one squarely in the crosshairs of transgender activism.³

For those with strong religious backgrounds, watching a child stray so far from truth and reality can also cause parents to question the soundness of their parenting and religious instruction. They may fear that sharing the situation with others will open them up to harsh criticism and hurtful questions.

The flood of emotions and confusion parents experience when thrust into this world is real and terrifying. Where is truth found and how can one be sure of anything when organizations like the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Psychological Association say parents must affirm this delusion? Will children really commit suicide if not allowed to socially and medically transition? How can parents swim upstream, fighting not only doctors and therapists, but school staff and neighbors and even their own family members?

What Parents & Families Need



Parents need truth that is grounded in robust, trustworthy research and time-tested experience.

A growing number of organizations have collected sound resources and reference materials that can help parents see through the false narratives propagated by the gender industry.



By providing access to experts such as pediatricians, therapists, pastors, and/or people who have been through this experience and pulled their children out of the gender cult, parents can make decisions that are based on facts and data rather than politics and propaganda.



The welcoming and supportive nature of the Wonderfully Made group allows parents to share the raw emotions they're processing as well as the things they may wish they had done differently. Being seen, known, and understood provides a powerful foundation for doing the hard work that must be done to save a child from this ideology.

¹ <https://nypost.com/2024/05/23/us-news/montana-parents-who-lost-custody-of-daughter-after-opposing-gender-transition-claim-14-year-old-was-taken-without-warrant/>

² <https://thefederalist.com/2022/10/27/democrats-and-activists-offer-gender-confused-minors-cash-and-uber-rides-to-away-from-home/>

³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qj3q3WjSEfs>

Starting a Parent-Support Group

1. Build a team of people who will host and help manage the group, possibly including pastors, doctors, psychologists/therapists, and parents who have experience dealing with the issue for longer than a few months.
2. Decide on your purpose and announce an interest meeting:

“Next Thursday Jake & Evelyn Postell will host a get-together for parents whose children struggle with same-sex attraction or gender identity.”
3. Set a regular date, time, and place for meetings.
4. Collect contact info for participants, to be kept confidential and used only for communicating about the group and its meetings.



Of Note: The Four Main Categories of Transgender-Identified People

Although there are many commonalities between the experiences of parents who are dealing with this issue, it's useful to be aware that four main categories of transgender-identified people exist, and parents' response to their child may be nuanced based upon which category their child may be in.

Young Children

Some very young children, under the age of 10 years, are presenting as transgender, but this is often because the parents have seeded the ideology into their children. It is unusual for such families to seek support, because they enjoy the cultural approval they receive for having a “trans kid.”

Teenage Girls & Young Women

This is the largest demographic today, with estimates as high as 65% or more possibly being on the autism spectrum.

These girls are typically bright and high-achieving, but may struggle socially. They often are trying to opt out of womanhood for a variety of reasons.

Teenage Boys

Young boys around the adolescent or teen years may identify as transgender if they are more sensitive, gentle, or artistic by nature. They may have been told that because they don't fit the manly-man mold, they must, therefore, be trans. They may also be opting out of their status as “cis, hetero, white males” who have been culturally vilified as oppressors.

Adult Men

Adult men formerly comprised nearly ALL of the population of transgender-identified people. Today they fall behind only teenage girls.

Transgender-identified men are often autogynephiles, who are aroused at the idea of themselves as sexually submissive and objectified women, but they may also be ashamed of having a same-sex attraction (to other men).

Kinds of Support Groups:

Educational: At each group meeting an expert leads an informational component with the goal of teaching members about various issues.

Therapeutic: Led by a trained counselor or therapist, these groups provide cognitive, behavioral, and emotional support with the goal of helping the members become better able to manage their situations.

Conversational: This group exists to provide a place for the members to share their needs and concerns with others who are experiencing the same things.

Goal-Oriented: This is a purpose-driven group, wherein the members work toward a goal such as passing legislation or putting on an event.

Your group may serve one or more of these or other functions. Be certain, however, if your group purports to do one of these things—e.g., provide therapy—that you have the appropriate experts, preparations, and legal foundations for doing so.

Ideas for Group Meetings

Prayer

Bring in a subject-matter expert on topics such as:

- Gender ideology
- Church teaching on sex and gender
- Adolescent psychology
- Effects of cross-sex hormones
- Research on gender “medicine”
- Parenting skills

Breakout workshops on various topics

Open conversation

Facilitated conversation around a specific topic

Book or Bible study

Have questions or need further help? Contact us at: careministry@burkecommunity.com

More resources are also available at www.advocatesprotectingchildren.org

Some Suggested Guidelines

- For continuity and control, it’s best to have one or two people serve as leaders/hosts who regularly open the meetings and facilitate the discussions.
- Strive for a judgment-free atmosphere in the group. Although perspectives may differ on how best to parent a trans-identified child, everyone should feel welcome to share their experience without fear of being belittled, criticized, or vilified.
- Have a pastor, deacon, elder, or other authority figure within the church maintain oversight of the group, even if he or she does not regularly attend. If a difficult situation arises that is beyond the skill or expertise of the group leader, it’s useful to know ahead of time who will step in to help.
- Consider setting up an opt-in chat group on an app like Signal, where members can continue to support each other outside of the group meetings.
- Protect the privacy and confidentiality of the group. Be cautious about allowing unknown people to attend without vetting them first. Transgender-rights activists often seek out groups and individuals who don’t capitulate to gender ideology in order to expose, harass, cancel, or dox them.

