

## Gender Development in Children

Ages 2-3 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender Identity begins to form</li> <li>• Begins to seek out same-sex models to identify with</li> <li>• Gender variant children may seek models to identify with that are opposite sex of their assigned birth sex</li> <li>• At this stage children are concrete and want to label things into nice, neat categories</li> </ul>
Ages 3-4 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender Identity has been established A strong desire/need to incorporate gender identity into their world</li> <li>• Very aware of gender differences in others</li> <li>• Starts to develop gender schemas (basic “ideas” for how males/females look, act, etc)</li> <li>• Gender roles/stereotypes are refined</li> <li>• Trans children struggle to express their differences in their feelings about their own gender from their peers</li> </ul>
Ages 4-6 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender Scripts form (girls wear makeup, dresses and men shave, wear pants, etc)</li> <li>• Children may have ideas that are rigid about gender or may think that their gender may magically change when they grow up</li> <li>• Schools have a profound effect on children’s ideas of gender and acceptance</li> <li>• Trans children at this stage have been insistent about their gender identity and may have been for a couple years. They are adamant that they are a “boy” or “girl” even though their biological sex states otherwise</li> </ul>
Ages 5-7 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender Consistency</li> <li>• Gender Stability</li> <li>• If a trans child is forced to limit their gender expression             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Behavioral problems</li> <li>• Suicidal Ideation</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Ages 9-12 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For trans children/adolescents as puberty changes develop gender dysphoria may significantly increase</li> </ul>
Ages 12-18 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender Identity becomes even more stable</li> <li>• Specific behaviors of trans teens             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Binding breasts</li> <li>• Cutting/Growing out hair</li> <li>• Experimenting with clothing, makeup, etc</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

(from Gender Identity and Sexuality Development in Children, Brad Stepp)