

The TORONTO TRANS and TWO-SPIRIT PRIMER:

An Introduction to Lower-income,
Sex-working and Street-involved
Transgendered, Transsexual & Two-Spirit
Service Users in Toronto



prepared and presented by:
Trans Programming at the 519



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Introduction

Welcome to Trans Programming at The 519. Our trans programme is a multi-service programme that is primarily for lower income and/or street active transsexuals, transgendered and Two-Spirit identified people. (TS/TG/2-S). Here we do all sorts of things as a service for the TS/TG/2-S community, including:

- Meal Trans drop-in every Monday from 6:00 to 10:00 pm
- running a social drop-in for youth every Wednesday night
- conducting an outreach programme that distributes free condoms and lube
- providing advocacy
- hosting a legal clinic
- conducting trainings for staff and residents of shelters and hostels
- offering a comprehensive resource collection of TS/TG/2-S material for clients to access
- experience, and/or a street-active lifestyle

Our Trans Programmes represent many things to the transsexuals, transgendered and Two-Spirit people who walk through our doors. We are entirely peer-run, meaning we are all TS/TG/2-S people who have 'been there'. People accessing our services can find support from others like themselves who will validate their feelings, experiences, and the discrimination they may face in their day-to-day lives trying to access other services in the city or validate those who proactively choose to do sex work, we believe from their lives in general. We are sex worker positive, meaning that we that prostitution should be decriminalized, and we offer all sex workers the safe sex resources they may need to live with pride and dignity: such as our legal clinic, our outreach programme, and referrals to sex worker positive services in Toronto as well as any representation they may need in crises matters. We support any TS/TG/2-S/2-S youth by referring them to trans-youth friendly doctors and services, we support and validate their choice to transition, and we launched the Trans Youth Toronto! drop-in in early January 2000. We also provide information, support, and resources for TS/TG/2-S/2-S people facing many other issues because the kind of TS/TG/2-S people who access our services are not the stereotypical ones you see in movies or on television. Some of our clients are facing issues of homelessness, substance use, spousal and parental abuse, prejudice, violence, isolation and depression. We are also Toronto's only TS/TG/2-S specific community service. So we have our work cut out for us for sure. But we believe strongly in transsexual and transgendered PRIDE, and our positive look on TS/TG/2-S bodies, sexualities and lives is the foundation for all we do.

Intersections of Oppressions

It is important to understand that this resource is not meant to address issues of gender theory, or conceptual notions of gender as they are often presented in academic discourses of trans/Two-Spirit identities. This manual is meant to be a practical discussion of lived experiences of a large segment of the trans community that faces poverty and class-oppression.

Toronto's trans and Two-Spirit community members face more than just transphobia as they attempt to access service. It is often the intersection of racism, classism, ableism, ageism, and other forms of linking oppressions that create the barriers that the lower-income trans community faces. In this manual, every effort will be made to use case studies involving these various linking oppressions so that service providers will have a broader understanding of the ways in which racism, classism, transphobia, ageism and ableism all combine together to create larger obstacles in the path of trans and Two-Spirit people.



Terms and Definitions with brief Explanations

Gender: This word refers to how you identify yourself, which for trans people is different than our biological bodies. If sex is between your legs then gender is between your ears.

Sex: Your biological body. Your sex is the male / female part on your birth certificate. A trans person is someone who does not identify with, or feel comfortable in, their birth sex.

Transsexual: Someone who wishes to live consistently (full-time) in the sex category (i.e., male or female) that is more in line with their internal sense of gender. Transsexuals often – but not always – want to medically/surgically change their bodies. Although difficult, this transition is necessary for many and should never be withheld.

Transgendered: There is much debate over the meaning of this word, but generally, it refers to someone whose gender (their internal identity) does not match what society expects of their sex (their body). Unlike most transsexuals, a transgendered person may not feel the need to medically or surgically change their body.

Two-Spirit: This is a recent term being used by some members of the Aboriginal and First Nations communities to describe a person with both the male and female spirit. It can describe someone's sexual orientation, or their gender identity, or a combination of both. Not everyone who is Two-Spirit would identify themselves as being "trans" in any way. In the context of this manual, we are referring to someone who uses the term Two-Spirit to describe their unique gender identity and who might place themselves somewhere on the spectrum of "trans" identities.

Intersex: Someone who was born with a body that is not clearly male or female as a result of their chromosome make-up, hormone balance, or genitals. Intersex people used to be referred to as "hermaphrodites".

Transsexual Woman (MtF): This is a person whose sex at birth was "male", but identifies herself as a woman. Regardless of what stage she is at with her transition, nor how she appears, if she is identifying as a female, she is to be considered female, and referred to as "she".

Transsexual Man (FtM): This is a person whose sex at birth was "female" but identifies himself as a man. Regardless of what stage he is at with his transition, nor how he appears, if he is identifying as male, he is to be considered male and referred to as "he".

Passing: The act of convincing people that you are NOT a transsexual for safety or personal reasons.

Transition: The in-between time when a trans/Two-Spirit person starts to dress how they want to, perhaps change their name, and perhaps change their body if they choose. Because of the cost as well as other factors, transition can be a very long process leaving people quite noticeable and open to discrimination.

Transphobia: Fear or hatred of changing sex and gender characteristics.

Gender Identity: A person's sense of self and the way they view themselves to be, regardless of their physical body's primary or secondary sex characteristics. Their internal sense of their core "manhood" or "womanhood" or both or neither.

Cross-dresser: Formerly known as "Transvestite". A person who wears clothing usually attributed to the opposite sex/gender for many – or no – reasons at all.

Biocentrism: This is the assumption that people whose assigned sex at birth matches their gender identity throughout their lives are more "real" and/or more "normal" than are those whose assigned sex at birth is incongruent with their gender identity. This comes up when, for instance, women's shelters may be uncomfortable serving transsexual/transgendered women with the fear that their non-trans clients would be uncomfortable. Underlying this is a biocentric attitude that transsexual women aren't real women. When a service implies that trans-women clients should be "grateful" when they are included in "women's only spaces", this is also an example of biocentrism.

FTM/MTF: These terms originally were used only to describe transsexual people, but now are used to describe a larger spectrum of transgendered and transsexual individuals and simply indicate the "direction" of cross-gender-identification. Female-to-Male or Male-to-Female.

Gender Dysphoria: This is the psychological term used to describe the anxiety, anguish and pain that rise from the incongruity of a person's physical sex and their sense of identity, combined with the societal pressure to conform to sex/gender norms. To seek relief, many transsexual people enter transition. (No one knows what causes Gender Dysphoria. Theories – some quite questionable, all unproven - include: environmental influences, bad parenting, brain chemistry, hormonal imbalances, abnormalities in pregnancy, hormone fluctuations in the womb, and genetics)

Gender Identity Disorder (GID): This is the psychological classification found in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual published by the American Psychiatric Association. GID is the diagnosis under which trans people may receive treatment, but it's controversial. Some trans people do not believe they have a mental disorder and resent the classification. There are many other transsexuals who believe that the whole area of mental illness has been stigmatized unjustly.

Dr. Harry Benjamin Standards of Care (SOC): These are the guidelines commonly used by gender clinics and physicians across North America and Europe to treat transsexuals. The guidelines set out in the Standards of Care are not “law” in psychiatry, however most surgeons performing SRS insist on the recommendations outlined in these Standards.

Pre-hormonal: Keeping in mind that quite a few transsexuals are made to follow a certain set of guidelines in their transition by Gender Identity Clinics and psychiatrists, many transsexuals are not yet on hormone replacement therapy, but plan to be in the future. According to this set of guidelines, they must in effect “prove themselves” to be sincere in their desire to change their sex. This requires one year known as the Real Life Test (or the Real Life Experience) where they are not given any of the body-altering hormones that will help them to pass more effectively in society even though they are still expected to live in the opposite gender. Because these guidelines are not medical law, many transsexuals are able to get on hormone replacement therapy through a general practitioner who is perfectly competent to monitor their health safely. A person may also be Non-hormonal which means they might have a physical inability to take hormones, may not have the financial or social means, or may just choose not to. Nevertheless, their chosen identity is ultimately the most important factor in how they are to be addressed.

Pre-operative: After one year without hormones, according to the guidelines which are in place at many gender clinics and psychiatrists following the SOC strictly, transsexuals must then go another year without surgery which realigns their bodies. There are a number of surgical procedures which a transsexual may choose to undergo to help in the overall transformation. (electrolysis, chest reconstruction, tracheal shave, etc) A non-operative transsexual may choose to not have any surgeries at all or may be unable to afford the extremely high cost of the surgeries. Again, the lack of body-altering surgery does not in any way diminish this person’s chosen identity.

“Real Life Test/Experience”: This is the first of the “gatekeeping” devices of the Harry Benjamin Standards of Care, requiring transsexuals to live in their congruent sex for a year without the benefits of body-altering hormones or surgery. Hormones and surgery facilitate a transsexual man or woman living/passing safely and comfortably in society. Some transsexuals will gain access to hormones and surgeries before they live “full time” in order to help make their transition more seamless.

Sex Reassignment Surgery (SRS): This is the generic term for any/all medical surgeries which are part of a transsexual's transition process. Some transsexuals have preferred to call these procedures their "sex realignment surgeries". SRS is extremely expensive and very few lower-income trans people are able to afford these medical interventions.



Multicultural Trans Identities

“Trans” is a shorthand that is often used in Toronto to describe all kinds of identities of people who cross gender norms by the way they dress, behave, or move through society, but it is a term that stems from white and European communities. Examples of people who transgress societal notions of masculinity and femininity can be found across every culture worldwide. Here are just a handful of terms taken from Gary Bowen's vast web compilation at <http://www.amboyz.org/articles/f2mwords/f2mwords.html> to describe those identities:

- AIONOLIT: (Hebrew) "which is the female counterpart to a eunuch, or gay man. The Talmud translations in English call aionolit a barren woman, but the context shows that it's talking about FTM transgender and lesbians."-- Faris
- BAA: (Navajo American) a woman warrior; a Navajo woman's name; a woman with masculine characteristics, a tomboy.
- BABAMBA: (Congo) an African people known to have had female husbands or male daughters
- BADE: (Crow American 'not man, not woman') a transgendered person

- BINABAE: (Filipino) a person born male who is “like a woman” in some way
 - BONAE: (Roman) 'the good people' male and female cross dressed pagan dancers who had the power to grant prosperity to any house that gave them gifts
 - BUYAZI: (Gisu African) a male or female cross dresser.
 - ELXA: (Native American) a transgendered person
 - FAKA FAFINI: (Polynesian) An effeminate man who dressed and lived as a woman, and who was also accepted by Polynesian society.
 - GHOTI/GHODI: (Old Norse) a transgendered priest or priestess, usually m2f
 - HIJRA: (India) male born person who lives in-between genders and occupies a traditional sacred role.
 - ISANGOMA:(Zulu African) male-to-female priestess or female-to-priests
- . JOTA: (Mexico) a feminine gay man who dresses as a woman and is the receptive partner for anal sex, sometimes with partners who do not realize she is male; a drag queen, a cross dresser
- KATOEYS: (Thai) a cross dresser, a member of a third sex
 - KITESHA: (Basongye African) alternate gender role for males and females.
 - LHAMANA: (Zuni American) male to female transgendered person.
 - MKE-SI-MUME: (Swahili) a man-woman, a gender variant person; a gay man or lesbian woman
 - MORONI NOHO: (Paiute American) female to male transgendered person.
 - MUTARAJJULAT: (9th century Islam) 'women who wish to resemble men.
 - NADLE, NADLEEH: (Navajo American) 'other', usually male to female, but also female to male.

- **NIIZH MANITOAG:** (Algonquin American) 'Two Spirit', the Great Mystery in Its role as the hermaphrodite Creator of the world, and the origin of the term two-spirit
- **POSESTRA** (15th century to present day Albania) an Albanian woman who swore perpetual virginity, wore men's clothes, and was accorded the legal and social privileges of a man. Some even served as soldiers in the Turkish army
- **SAL-ZIKRUM:** (Babylonian) 'male woman'; "Based on evidence from the Code of Hammurabi, the Sumerian culture recognized a separate type of woman called a salzikrum...Salzikrum is a compound word literally meaning "male woman." A salzikrum was entitled to greater rights of inheritance than an ordinary woman."--Faris
- **TAINNA WA'IPPE:** (Shoshoni American) man-woman, a transgendered person with a male body
- **TRANSFORMISTA:** (Spanish) a transvestite
- **TRAVESTI:** (Brazil) born biologically as men, travesties go to lengths to appear as women in dress and body, while sometimes still identifying as being male homosexuals.
- **TWO-SPIRITED/TWIN-SPIRITED:** (Niizh Manitoag, Algonquin American 'Two Spirit', 1990) the Great Mystery in Its manifestation as the hermaphrodite Creator of the world; a person with both masculine and feminine attributes; a gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgendered Native American; this term is contested; all parties agree that the appropriate tribal designation should be used when possible because tribal roles vary immensely.
- **VESTIDO:** (Mexico) a female who dresses as a man and who successfully passes as a man; a masculine lesbian who wears male clothing.
- **WINKTE:** (Lakota Sioux American 'kill woman') a sacred person who lives either full or part time as the opposite gender; if living part time has apparel, name, and family for each gender, usually m2f, "would be woman"--Little Crow, et al
- **WOBO:** (Maale African,) lit. 'crooked', meaning gender variant.

Resources for Multicultural Trans/Two-Spirit Identities:

2-Spirit People of the 1st Nations

43 Elm Street, 2nd floor (Bay and Dundas area)
Weekly drop in (call for specific information)
416-944-9300

Asian Community Aids Services (ACAS)

33 Isabella St. Suite 107 (Buzz 526)
Email-fsoropia@yahoo.com
416-963-4300 Ext 65

Trans of Colour Support Project

Looking for support, activism or an outlet for your artistic juices?
Contact JD or Rupert by leaving a message at (416) 392-6878 x325.

Salaam – Queer Muslim Community of Toronto

Join us for a monthly support group. Come talk and get support about coming out, dealing with family, faith, work, and relationships, whatever. The meetings will be held on the 4th Monday of each month 8 - 9:30 pm, starting August 25th at the 519 Community Centre. Tel: (416) 925-XTRA Ext. 2209. E-mail: salaam@salaamcanada.com or visit www.salaamcanada.com

Kulanu –Queer Jewish Community

Calling all queer Jews! Kulanu is part of the Hillel of Greater Toronto, the umbrella organization for Jewish student life on campus, but is for EVERYONE. Email: kulanutoronto@hotmail.com

ASAP-Alliance for South Asian AIDS Prevention

20 Carlton St
Suite M126
Toronto, ON, Canada
M5B 2H5
416-599-2727 Ext 224
Email-ed@asaap.ca
Website: www.asaap.ca

Web listing of online Multicultural Trans Support Communities

(including Asian, Black, Deaf, Latino/a, Muslim, Arab, First Nations and Jewish communities)

<http://www.amboyz.org/resources/culture.html>

Lower-income Trans/Two-Spirit Communities in Toronto

Service providers often ask why so many transgendered, Two-Spirit and transsexual people in Toronto are lower-income, street-active, and sex-working. According to Gender Specialist Diane Ella born in her article “Social Services for Gender Variant Youth” (included in the book *Social Services for Transgendered Youth*, edited by Gerald P. Mallon, Harrington Park Press, January 2000) there are a variety of issues that may commonly arise during the lives of transgendered, Two-Spirit and transsexual people before and during their coming out/transition process. She describes the following issues:

Psychological

- Low Self-Esteem
- Depression & Anxiety
- Suicidal thoughts and behaviours
- Self-Harm
- Substance use
- Eating Disorders
- Social, Emotional & Cognitive Self-Isolation
- Lack of Role Models

Medical

- Avoidance of Medical Services due to Bodily Discomfort
- Unmonitored Use of Non-Prescription Hormones

Sexual

- Lack of Applicable Sex Education leads to high risk behaviours
- Risk of Participation in Unsafe Sex Practices due to low self-esteem
- Difficulty finding and maintaining relationships within peer groups
- Identity confusion (gay woman versus straight man?)

Family

- Parental Rejection, or general lack of support (parents, siblings, extended family, step-family, foster family – divorce mandated if you go through a gender clinic, and threat of losing custody of children)
- Risk of Homelessness, Poverty & Street Life
- Risk of Out-of-Home Placement (foster care, residential care) for youth
- Abuse (verbal, psychological, physical, sexual)

Community

- Violence
- Verbal Harassment
- Sexual Exploitation
- Conflict with the Law
- Homelessness and difficulty finding and maintaining housing
- Loss of friends and specific community alliances – i.e., lesbian community sometimes sees FTM as traitors
- Lack of community advocacy resources, and no easy access to any gendered facility (i.e., women’s hostels, detox centres, shelters)

Lack of Understanding Teachers & Guidance Counsellors when TS/TG/2-S and gender variant youth attend schools and “cross-dress” they are inevitably harassed by other students, but it’s the TS/TG/2-S kids who are sent home to change, who are suspended, who are told to quit causing trouble

- Social rejection
- Underachievement & School Failure
- Lack of School & Career Goals – inability to envision their own future
- Dropping Out
- May have to make the difficult choice between having surgeries or paying for post secondary education

Employment

- Unemployment – inability to get or keep a job as a visible trans person, inability to use old job references or educational transcripts which appear in a person’s old name
- Underemployment – having to take ANY job just to survive, including sex work
- Lack of School & Career Goals
- Discrimination & Harassment in the Workplace by fellow workers, and by clients

Mental Health System

- Misdiagnosis treating the person as being mentally ill instead of supporting their identities
- Inappropriate Medication – anti-depressants/anti-anxieties instead of treating the cause of depression and anxiety
Psychiatric Hospitalization

- Inappropriate and/or Adverse Treatment - aversion therapies, enforced gender normative behaviours
- Lack of access to treatments such as hormones and surgeries unless you jump through hoops like the HBSC

Case Study:

When Janice (not her real name) arrived in Toronto she was in severe distress. She was a teenaged MTF Two-Spirit and trans identified girl. In her city of origin, she'd been in the child welfare system in foster care. She ended up in foster care when she was in her pre-teens because of physical and sexual abuse in her family. In her foster placement, the cycle of abuse continued. For all these reasons, Janice was frustrated, isolated, and angry. At the same time, she kept hearing about the vibrant transsexual community in Toronto. She made the decision to walk away, leaving behind the bulk of her worldly possessions and bringing only a small knapsack and less than \$50 dollars.

On the streets, Janice connected with some Goth and punk kids and negotiated to stay with them for a few nights. They didn't know she was transsexual and accepted her completely as a woman. Her safety was jeopardized, though, after the police – in an example of targeted policing – approached the group of loitering youths. The police asked for her name. She told them her legal female name. Upon checking her out on their computer, because of some previous mischief, they found her old name listed. They loudly announced her old name and her old identity, and in so doing jeopardized her physical safety with these youth (not to mention ruining her chances to get housing for a few nights.) The kids called her a freak and took off, leaving her stranded. She tried to get into a shelter. After realizing she was trans, one agency said she was only allowed to access the one room that was “single occupancy”, i.e., segregated and that room was occupied. They couldn't take her.

Another facility refused her saying they knew there was still space available at a men's shelter and that she could “dress as a boy for one night to access one of those beds”. Janice feared for her safety in any men's facility and knew she'd be at increased risk for sexual, verbal and physical harassment.

These factors often influence trans/Two-Spirit people to migrate to large urban centres like Toronto from other parts of Canada as well as other parts of the world.

They come hoping to find a vibrant trans community and support networks to help them through transition. Sadly, large urban centres like Toronto still provide only minimum supports, and trans people still experience a tremendous amount of transphobia, discrimination and prejudice, and most – if not all – of the issues they faced before migrating to Toronto still impact their daily lives leaving them at risk for increased levels of poverty.



Homelessness, Hostel and Shelter Issues

"Housing is the biggest issue for our community. There's major discrimination through building owners. It took me four months to find an apartment that would accept me besides roach coaches." – Trans woman, 25.

A large portion of the Toronto TS/TG/2-S community is homeless or under-housed. Especially in Toronto where rent is high, lower-income people are often unable to afford housing costs. Even for those who can afford housing, there is still housing discrimination on the part of landlords, leaving many trans and Two-Spirit people unable to access housing and needing to make use of the shelter and hostel system.

Shelters and hostels are often “gendered facilities”, where people are segregated into men’s floors, women’s residences, etc. This makes accessing shelters and hostels particularly challenging for trans and Two-Spirit women who are visibly trans. They are often refused access to the services they require because they are not seen as being “real women”. In order for these trans women to gain access to women’s facilities, there are usually a number of restrictions or conditions. Some shelters may only allow trans women who have had genital surgeries, or trans women who present in women’s clothing all the time. The high cost of sex-reassignment surgeries, electrolysis to remove facial hair, make-up, and a new

female wardrobe makes these conditions impossible to fulfill. In some cases, it is systemic euro-centrism which contributes to problems of access. In many countries outside of North America, gender identity and sexual orientation are seen as being directly related. They may not have words to describe these as separate concepts.

In order for hostels and shelters to better serve the trans and Two-Spirit community, we need to reconsider the notion of “access”.

What do we mean by "access"?

Access means access with dignity. Getting in the door is the first step but access includes more, such as the quality of services, as well as the spirit in which the service is provided. Access is a commitment.

Access work can be done proactively. Often it takes a crisis before assistance is sought, but it can help to anticipate problems arising before, during, and after opening up your services to transsexual/transgendered people.

Access is not about special treatment... it is about equality and removing barriers that have been erected.

Access work is imperfect. Every organization will make mistakes. This is part of the process. Listen to criticism. Ask for feedback.

Access is a partnership. This is accomplished by trans people and shelters/hostels working in partnership, and listening to each other's concerns. The Trans Programme at The 519 values its' community partnerships with hostels/shelters.

Access is for everyone. Although our programme focuses on access for transsexual / transgendered people, we recognize the need for access for many other groups such as: people with disabilities, immigrants/refugees, youth, seniors, people living with HIV/AIDS, the deaf community, people using English as their second language, people with mental health concerns, etc, etc, etc. We acknowledge that our work is connected to larger struggles for equality.

Issues Affecting FtM (female-to-male) trans people in Hostels/Shelters :

FtMs (female-to-males or trans men) are in a unique position as people who identify themselves as male or masculine, but who still face many problems that society associates with women. Because of the high cost of chest surgery, and the difficulty in getting approval for testosterone, passing as a man is out of reach for many FtM's... making a men's shelter a potentially dangerous situation. A trans man who does not pass might be perceived as a female in an all-male dorm/shower area/bathroom, and is therefore at risk for physical, sexual, or verbal assault. Some FtMs might choose to face these risks at a shelter, which they feel, matches their identity... but we are in need of other options.

Unfortunately, there are no FtM shelters or rape crisis centers, so as people who face (or have faced) sexual assault, spousal abuse, and gender discrimination, there is, as of yet, no place better equipped to meet the needs of FtM's than women's services. FtM's need women's services to open their doors and their policies. This will require much revamping of policy and assumptions about men and women, but there are organizations and spaces that are successfully and safely shared by women, trans women, and trans men. A trans organization like Trans Programming at the 519 can assist with this process. Also Fred Victor Centre has included their policy to include FtM's to access their Services.

Helpful Tips for Providing Access for Trans/Two-Spirit people in Hostels/Shelters:

Remember that gender is self-defined. Sometimes this may not correspond with a person's physical appearance (their birth sex) but service providers need to accept gender identity as defined by the individual rather than by their own perception. This may mean practicing referring to a trans person by their chosen pronoun (he or she) and staff reminding each other when mistakes are made. Transition can take a long time and passing is difficult and expensive and therefore, not a reflection of how "real" or "serious" someone is. With all the discrimination... it is very unlikely that anyone would pretend to be trans. Outing yourself as trans does not usually result in invitations to gala luncheons and film premieres!

Be proactive and change your intake procedure. Asking new residents if they identify themselves as male, female, or transsexual/transgendered/Two-Spirit allows a trans person the opportunity to disclose and ask for any services they might need. It also allows for a non-trans person to ask "what's that?!" at which point you can explain. For example, the intake procedure at a women's hostel might include stating that "we have many different women here. We have women of different races, different religions, women with mental health issues, lesbian

women, Two-Spirit and transsexual women". At which point they could explain what a Two-Spirit woman or a transsexual woman is, why she might not look like a woman to you, and why she is welcome in a women's hostel. The new resident could then make an informed decision of whether or not to stay.

Training, training, training. Contact the Trans Programme at The 519 to schedule workshops for staff and/or residents. A workshop for staff is a good chance for them to ask questions, brainstorm difficult scenarios, and become more confident in their work with members of the trans community. A workshop for residents is a good time for them to meet trans people, ask questions, break stereotypes, and see the ways in which our struggles are not so different.

Make changes on paper as well. Staff turnover in the hostel/shelter system can happen pretty quickly so relying solely on the experience of staff will not always work. Make changes to policy that will exist even after knowledgeable staff have moved on. Making policy change can be challenging, especially in organizations with a mandate to serve women only.

Make discrimination unwelcome. Work toward a climate where differences are respected. Staff need to take the first step toward this. Having posters, pamphlets, books, or videos about trans people (or diversity in general) sends a strong message about who is welcome. Creating an atmosphere where staff can be "out" about who they are, can sometimes be the first step.

Create a safety zone. We realize this may be out of the question for some hostels already struggling with space...but if your hostel/shelter has an area with semi-private rooms, consider offering this to people (not just trans people) who have greater safety concerns. Just be sure it doesn't get used as a place to segregate people and that a trans/Two-Spirit person who wanted to stay in a gender specific dorm would still have the support of staff in addressing discrimination. Be sure to remember that the problem lies with the transphobia, and not with the trans person.

Acknowledge the many barriers. If residents at your hostel/shelter are expected to work on their goals as part of their stay, be sure to recognize trans specific goals as well. Tasks such as getting a legal name change, getting on hormones, attending regular doctor and counseling appointments can all be quite overwhelming and often need to be completed prior to pursuing other goals such as housing, employment, and education.

Resources for Low-income, Homeless and Street involved Trans/Two-Spirit People:

Meal Trans (lower income and street involved trans/Two-Spirit people)

Program Coordinator: Kyle Scanlon

The 519 Church St. Community Centre
519 Church St., Toronto, Ont., M4Y 2C9
416-392-6878 x104

Meal Trans at the 519 is a multi-service programme primarily for lower income and/or street-active transsexuals, Two-Spirit and transgendered people. We run a weekly drop-in every Monday night from 6 to 9:30pm at The 519 Church Street Community Centre. It's a place to get together over a healthy meal, access resources, information and referrals, discuss issues relevant to our lives, and learn with and from each other and build a stronger community. mealtran@the519.org

Trans Sex Worker Outreach Programme

Outreach Worker: Monica Forrester

The 519 Church St. Community Centre
519 Church St., Toronto, Ont., M4Y 2C9
416-392-6878 x305

The Trans Sex Worker Outreach Programme distributes free condoms and lube to transsexual, Two-Spirit and transgendered sex workers. The outreach worker also provides safer sex information on HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections, peer support, advice and referrals. The programme also developed *The Happy Transsexual Hooker: a healthy resource guide for transsexual and transgendered sex workers*, which is distributed free of charge.

Trans Communities' Shelter Access Project

The Trans Communities' Shelter Access Project is a team of trans people funded to develop and provide workshops and policy assistance to shelters / hostels / and detox centers, with the aim of making services more accessible to transsexual/transgendered/Two-Spirit people.

416-392-6878 Ext 332

Email: transaccess@the519.org

Web:

http://www.the519.org/public_html/programs/trans/access_project/index.shtml

Street Helpline

An information and support service for the homeless community.

On the street? Needing shelter or housing or information?

Call us! 416-392-3777

Toll free 1-866-392-3777 (local calls)

Anishnawbe Street Patrol

Mobile vans providing harm reduction supplies such as food, blankets, clothing, first aid, flu and hepatitis shots, TB testing, needle exchange, condoms, and assistance accessing shelters, detox centres, hospitals.

All year long Food van hours are Tuesday through Saturday 5pm to 1am.

November through April Out of the Cold vans operate Monday through Sunday, 4pm to 12 midnight.

Can be contacted via Street Helpline at 416-392-3777.

Sunday Drop In for homeless men, women, Two-Spirit and trans people.

The 519 Church Street Community Centre

A year round programme featuring meals, movies, and resource information for homeless people.

Summer Hours (May – Oct) Sundays: 10am – 3:30pm (lunch served at 1pm)

Winter Hours (Nov – Apr) Sundays: 8am – 5:30pm (lunch is served at noon and dinner is served at 4pm)

Contact: 416-392-6878 x105

Clothing Programme for Men, Women, Two-Spirit and Trans People

The 519 Church Street Community Centre

Distribution of clothing to homeless and people living in poverty serving men, women and trans people. Limited socks, undergarments.

Tuesdays 5:30-6:00 pm Women's clothing only

6:00-8:00 pm (Women's and Men's clothing)

Thursdays 10:00am-3:00 pm (Women's and Men's clothing)

Contact: 416-392-6878 x 105

The 416

416 Dundas St E

416-9280-3334

A drop in for Trans women and women who are homeless, street involved and substance users. They provide meals, food bank, nurse on site and replacement of I.D loss.

Issues Affecting Trans and Two-Spirit Youth

Unfortunately in this society, many youth are not respected as individuals capable of making good decisions for themselves... and attitudes toward trans and Two-Spirit youth are no exception. Although some families embrace their children's identities and transitions, many other families are not accepting. This rejection can motivate trans youth to seek out community in large urban centers. Without a great deal of financial stability, however, trans youth often end up homeless and struggling to navigate an equally unaccepting hostel/shelter system. According to a study by Street Health, half of Toronto's TS/TG/2-S street-active population is under 26 years of age. Some of the specific barriers trans youth may encounter are:

- Getting approval for hormones and surgeries is extremely respected as an independent decision maker. Most trans and Two-Spirit youth can only accomplish these things with a supportive worker or family member willing to advocate on their behalf.
- Puberty, which is difficult for most, can be extra traumatic for someone who's by difficult when one is not body is changing in the opposite direction from how they see themselves.
- Medical staff untrained in how to respond to trans and Two-Spirit youth, often make the medical system a hostile environment. For this reason, many trans people do not access even the simplest of health care procedures and suffer through unnecessary symptoms and illnesses.
- Tasks such as getting a legal name change, getting on hormones, attending regular doctor and counselling appointments can all be quite overwhelming and often need to be completed prior to pursuing other goals such as housing, employment, and education.
- Post Secondary education and other long term goals are often on hold for someone whose energy and money must be saved for the challenges of transition
- Finding a job or housing in a competitive market will be difficult for any person who looks different and especially for someone who has changed their name, or sex, and discarded a problematic birth certificate, SIN card, or other identification.

- And similarly to other youth, realistic worries about sexuality, identity, depression, suicide, fitting in, self-esteem, abusive relationships, etc are all part of daily life.

The choice of trans and Two-Spirit youth to face these risks must be seen as a testament to their determination to be themselves. Youth are in need of service providers equally determined to assist them. Many youth hostels/shelters are now being supportive by recognizing these barriers and adjusting policies, procedures, and expectations, to be more reflective of these realities.

Resources for Trans and Two-Spirit Youth:

Trans Youth Toronto (transgendered, Two-Spirit and transsexual youth aged 26 and under)

Weekly drop in on Wednesday nights from 5pm to 9pm.

The 519 Church Street Community Centre (at Wellesley)

Trans Youth Toronto is a place to get together, access resources, hop on the internet, and surf trans-youth websites for free, get information and referrals, chat about issues relevant to OUR lives as TS/TG/2-S youth and have a lots fun!

SOY-Supporting Our Youth

Sherbourne Health Centre

365 Bloor St. E, #301 Toronto, ON

416-324-5077. Fax 416-324-4188

www.soytoronto.org

Contact-soy@sherbourne.on.ca

Leslie Chudnovsky-soymentoring@sherbourne.on.ca

Trans_Fusion Crew (for trans and Two-Spirit youth aged 26 and under)

(sponsored by Supporting Our Youth)

Trans_Fusion Crew is a grass-roots activist project that creates social and political spaces that speak to the concerns, struggles, and victories of transgendered, transsexual, Two-Spirited, intersexed youth and allies.

Scheduled weekly drop-ins on Thursdays from 7 – 9pm – please call Elisa @ 416-324-5083 or Ayden @ 416-324-5078 for specific details and meeting location.

coordinator@soytoronto.org

Children's Aid Society LGBT Youth Programme (for trans, Two-Spirit, intersex, gay, lesbian and bi youth)

(an initiative of the Children's Aid Society of Toronto)

This programme provides various services, resources and events for youth in care. Contact Sherry McMullen at 416-924-4640 x3055 for more information.

Transformations (for trans youth age 26 and under)

A closed psycho educational support group. Please call to register for next scheduled session.

Contact LeeAndra Miller 416-924-2100 x259 or email leeandra@ctys.org

The Triangle Programme

For teens that have been targeted at their schools or have suffered incidents of homophobia or transphobia, the Triangle Programme has become a safe alternative. Curriculum includes a detail look into queer history, including TS/TG/2-S.

Call (416) 406-6228 x169 or email triangleprogram@hotmail.com

SHOUT Clinic

467 Jarvis St. (Just south of Maitland on the east side of Jarvis)

It is a multi-service medical drop-in for youth and they have been truly supportive of our TS/TG/2-S youth in the past. You can even visit their clinic if you don't have a HEALTH Card, even if you are not here legally.

Call: (416) 927-8553

WAYV (Welcoming All Youth of the Village)

WAYV is a youth group that is run out of the 519 Church Street Community Centre, for queer youth aged up to and including 25. The term "queer" here refers to anyone who is gay, bisexual, lesbian, questioning, transgendered, two-spirited, or anything else belonging in that category - you are all welcome at WAYV!

Email: www.lgbyt@hotmail.com Web: www.wayvtoronto.org

FLUID

Fluid is a group for bisexual, bi-curious, pansexual, gender queer, questioning and other queer youth who don't fit neatly into categories. Come join others to explore, express, connect and have fun!

Call (416) 924-2100.

Transceptance

A Peer-Support Group for **Parents** of Transsexual and Transgendered youth.

Contact: Catherine transceptance_group@yahoo.ca or Rupert Raj rroj@sherbourne.on.ca; 416-324-4174

YAAHA! Youth Group

This is a 'chill' group in Scarborough that aims to provide a safer space that supports an environment of inclusion, support, and community for all colors, genders, ethnicities, and sexualities where what happens is decided by the youth attending, in collaboration with the facilitator. This has included having relaxed hangout space, movies, guest speakers other fun stuff! Good for youth wanting an established yet welcoming group without a rigid structure re: what they do or when they come to or leave the group. This group meets every two weeks from 4-9 pm in an anonymous location near the Scarborough Town Centre LRT Stop. Bonuses: TTC tickets, food, membership on a group email listserv Agency: Toronto Public Health

Contact: Leanne at (416) 338-6295 or yaahayouth@hotmail.com

Centennial College Student Association Gay Straight Alliance

The first ratified club for LGBTQ students in East York in a number of years, the CCSAI Gay-Straight Alliance is committed to creating a positive environment and raising awareness of the LGBTQ student population, within the Centennial College community, by means of community outreach and education to the student body. Our club will serve as a social support group, helping others with the 'coming-out' process and providing a safe space. All of our members are encouraged to support, respect and accept each other's individualism. Meetings are held on a regular basis and the whole group decides upon social events.

Bonuses: The opportunity to make friends with awesome people!

Agency: Centennial College Student Association

Contact: LGBTQ Student Coordinator 416.289.5000 ext. 4797

Lesbians Gays Bisexuals Transgendered Queers at U of T Scarborough (LGBTQ@UTSC)

This student group provides social and educational programming like workshops, tri-campus parties, pubs, Frosh activities, discussion nights, and more to community members, students, staff, and faculty at UTSC. The group also has access to the LGBTQ Lounge, a queer/trans student drop-in space at UTSC that has a computer w/ internet access, phone, fridge, magazines and newspapers, and a 200+ book library. Check the website for open hours, contact info, and event listings:

www.utoronto.ca/~lgbtq Bonuses: food, 200+ book library (non/fiction, politics, erotica, gender/sexuality/coming out, etc), large south asian & east asian population, email listserv & event announcements

Agency: University of Toronto student club . Timing: the Lounge is generally open every day, and the group usually has 2 weekly social meetings, one for everyone and one specifically for women/transfolk; also lots of one time only events
Contact: LGBTQ@UTSC co-ordinators at 416-287-7041 or lgbtq@utsc.utoronto.ca

Q2 Youth Group

Calling all Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Same Gender Loving, Transgender, Transsexual, Intersexed, 2-Spirited, Queer, and Questioning Youth in the East Toronto Area! This is a relatively new group just getting up and going. What will happen at group meetings will be determined by the youth attending, in collaboration with the facilitator. Good for youth wanting a newer group where they have direct input into what kind of a group it will become. Bonuses: TTC tickets & food. Agency: East Metro Youth Services, Markham and Ellesmere area. Timing: Thursdays from 4:30pm to 8:30pm
Contact: Azi at (416) 438-9419 ext.255 or arazbani@emys.on.ca

STAGES: Stories from under your tongue... (ITT2BLGQQ friendly)

This is about spoken word, poetry, dubpoetry, and Your Voice. This group is for youth 13-19 living in Scarborough and looking to get lyrically creative. It's FREE but space is limited, so move quickly - register now! To register call Leacock CC (416) 396-4040 or L'amoreaux CRC (416) 396-4510. The program barcode # is 1096541

Agency: Northwest Scarborough Youth Centre, Agincourt Community Services Association, & the City of Toronto

Timing: Thursdays, 6:30-8:30 pm at Stephen Leacock Community Centre, 2520 Birchmount Rd. (North of Sheppard)

Facilitator: Julia Gonzales, local writer + artist: Email: mangoe55@hotmail.com

PeopleRPeople: LGBT Positive Space for Youth in Malvern

PRP is a new group creating LGBT positive space for youth in Malvern, with meetings twice a month at a confidential Malvern location starting in April. If you're interested or want to know more, get in touch by dropping an email to Leah, the group facilitator, at peoplerpeople@riseup.net or leave a message at 416.462.5387

Web Resources for Trans Youth and their Families:

From within, by Victoria, a teen transitioner: <http://www.thegirlinside.me.uk/>

“Mom, I need to be a girl,” by the mother of a teen transitioner:
<http://ai.eecs.umich.edu/people/conway/TS/Evelyn/Evelyn.html>

Mermaids, a family support site for children and teens with gender identity issues:
<http://www.mermaids.freeuk.com/>

Gender peace discussion forum: <http://www.genderpeace.com/>

Amber Space: <http://www.sianna.com/users/amber/>

College transition issues:
<http://ai.eecs.umich.edu/people/conway/TS/College.html>

Transitioning early in life: <http://ai.eecs.umich.edu/people/conway/TS/TS-IIa.html#anchor184279>

Aging Trans and Two-Spirit Issues

Another particularly vulnerable group of lower-income Trans and Two-Spirit people is the growing population of aging transsexual, Two-Spirit and transgendered people. Transsexual, transgendered and Two-Spirited people face all the same challenges with aging that other men and women face. As we age, some of us may experience some debilitating physical conditions (like the loss of acute eyesight, problems with balance, diminished mobility and energy) that demand adjustment. Yet for members of the aging low-income trans and Two-Spirit community, there may be some additional concerns and issues. Trans and Two-Spirit people may fear that as they age they may be at increased risk for elder abuse. They may also may be affected by:

- Insensitive, or inappropriate care in their own homes or in care facilities at the hands of nurses and personal support workers.
- Negative attitudes toward trans and Two-Spirit people among health care professionals
- Problems and concerns related to medication
- Complications related to hormone treatment
- Lack of access to community supports

- Lack of access to support from spouses and partners
- Lack of appropriate medical health care information specific to their bodies
- Being an invisible minority
- Harassment by other residents (and their families) in a care facility
- Needing and being denied the use of gender-appropriate washroom facilities
- Having problems if their identification documents do not match their lived gender identities.

Service Providers who work with elders and/or trans/Two-Spirit people need to consider:

- Providing medical training related to specific trans/Two-Spirit health issues (long term use of hormones, cervical cancer in trans-men, prostate cancer in trans women) in such institutions as hospitals, community health centres, long term care facilities, nursing homes, community care access centres etc.
- Developing, monitoring and implementing best practice guidelines, policies and protocols to ensure trans and Two-Spirit people receive sensitive and appropriate care.
- Requiring all health care professionals and personal support staff receive training that includes awareness of and sensitivity to the situation of trans and Two-Spirit people (body image, self esteem issues, the possible anormative appearance of genitals, etc.) and the special demands of providing personal care to them.
- Offering sensitivity workshops for residents of long-term care facilities and their families so that they can learn to be respectful of those who are transsexual, Two-Spirit or transgendered.
- Providing privacy for trans and Two-Spirit people who do not wish to be outed.
- Safeguarding their trans and Two-Spirit clients from elder abuse.

Resources:

Older Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Trans Programme (for queer, trans and Two-Spirit people 50 and over)

(there are currently a drop in programme on each Monday at The 519 from 1:00 to 6:00 pm at the east room the programming is intended to be inclusive of Trans/Two-Spirit people. Together they strategize, and build a stronger, more supportive community.

The 519 Church Street Community Centre.

Contact **Dick Moore** at 416-392-6878 Ext 118 or e-mail seniors@the519.org

Employment

"I wish we could be treated like anybody else and have the same job opportunities as anybody else... I'm a very intelligent person." Trans woman, 33.

Discrimination and transphobia exist in all areas of society including the job market. For people who are "trans", finding and maintaining employment is challenging. A study conducted in a large urban centre in the United States indicated that 19% of FTM participants (n=123) were unemployed while 60% of MTF participants (n=392) were unemployed. (Clements-Nolle, Marx, Guzman, & Katz, American Journal of Public Health, June 2001, Vol. 91, No. 6.) Why the discrepancy? It may have to do with issues of "visibility". In general, the process of hormonal transition acts more quickly on trans men than it does on trans women leaving many trans women "visibly" transgendered for longer than their FTM counterparts.

For those who are "visibly" Trans, employers may themselves be prejudiced and will refuse to hire someone if they can tell the person is trans or Two-Spirit. Even employers who are more open-minded sometimes fear that a visibly transgendered, Two-Spirit or transsexual employee will make their customers uncomfortable and will choose not to hire a visible Trans person.

Even for those Trans and Two-Spirit people who are less visible, there are still barriers to employment. Trans and Two-Spirit people who don't want to be "out" as Trans may be unable to use job references from their past, or educational transcripts which are listed in a person's old name.

For those Trans and Two-Spirit people who are employed, and attempt to transition on the job, they face discrimination and harassment in the workplace by fellow workers, supervisors and customers. Employers may fabricate reasons to fire their Trans and Two-Spirit employees, or due to continuous harassment at work, Trans and Two-Spirit employees may be forced to quit.

Resources for Trans and Two-Spirit Employment Assistance

Youth Employment Services (YES)

YES is very committed to finding safe, secure, and non-volatile employment environments for TS/TG/2-S youth, and have gone out of their way to find fantastic opportunities for our participants.

Call: (416) 504-5516

Trans and Two-Spirit Sex Workers

"I know I have a little bit of money saved up. But that's going to run out sooner or later, so I have to go back to my original support, sex work. I'm taking a chance by doing it, but I'm not going to starve either." – Trans woman, 29

"Shake your tits, shake your tush, and have some guy slip you twenty, fifty, a hundred dollars. It builds up your self-esteem!" – Trans woman, 23.

Sex work can be “up-grading”, not degrading for some trans and Two-Spirit people. Trans people, particularly trans and Two-Spirit women, often find sex work to be a viable option for survival in a world where employment discrimination and harassment is prevalent. There are lots of reasons why the sex-trade attracts trans and Two-Spirit people:

- Sex work is good money – especially if they are having trouble finding or keeping a job – and covers the cost of rent, food, phone, hydro, etc.
- Sex work presents an opportunity for trans people to run their own business and have ultimate control!
- Trans and Two-Spirit women get to access a whole community of other girls like themselves.
- Sex work offers trans and Two-Spirit women the validation that they are beautiful and desired in a society that historically treated them like “freaks.”

For all the positive aspects of sex work, there are some negative repercussions. We live in a society with overwhelmingly negative and fearful attitudes toward bodies, and sexualities. For those who make their living in the sex trade, there can be many hazardous working conditions and barriers to service. Despite these barriers, many TS/TG/2-S women continue to find community, empowerment, independent income, and pride in the sex working community. The Meal Trans Programme was founded by transsexual sex workers and continues to take its' direction from that community, supporting both those who actively work in the sex trade, and those who do not. The following is a list of barriers that trans and Two-Spirit sex workers may be facing.

- Trans/Two-Spirit Sex workers are often facing the double stigma of both those identities while attempting to get their needs met by agencies
- Agencies who expect or require sex workers to leave the sex trade often force them to lie about their work, making them less safe
- Negative attitudes toward sex work mask the reality that it is a part of the rich history and culture of trans and Two-Spirit women.

- Health promotion materials rarely target trans/Two-Spirit women sex workers.
- Negative attitudes toward sex work mean that harassment and violence often goes unnoticed and unaddressed by the police, social services, and the queer community
- The criminalization of sex work forces sex workers to work without the job protections others have.
- Gender identity clinics have often refused to assist sex workers with their transition (access too much needed hormones and surgeries).
- Police harassment, neighbourhood coalitions, and restrictive bail release conditions often force trans/Two-Spirit sex workers to move out of the areas they are known in and work in more isolated and less safe working situations.

For all these reasons, it is important for service providers in large urban centers to validate sex work as a profession and make their service accessible to those who might be doing sex work, and to advocate for the decriminalization of sex work to help make it safer. Some ways to do that might be: being flexible with curfews and considering it night work/shift work; having condoms and lube handy; having affirming posters/information on sex work support agencies such as Maggie's, Meal Trans, etc; carrying "bad date" sheets; legal information and support.

Resources for Trans and Two-Spirit Sex Workers:

Trans Sex Worker Outreach Programme

Outreach Worker: Monica Forrester
 The 519 Church St. Community Centre
 519 Church St., Toronto, Ont., M4Y 2C9

The Trans Sex Worker Outreach Programme distributes free condoms and lube to transsexual, Two-Spirit and transgendered sex workers. The outreach worker also provides safer sex information on HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections, peer support, advice and referrals. The programme also developed *The Happy Transsexual Hooker: a healthy resource guide for transsexual and transgendered sex workers*, which is distributed free of charge.

2-Spirited People of the First Nations

43 Elm Street, 2nd Floor (Bay and Dundas area)
 416-944-9300

For two-spirited or LBGTT people of aboriginal ancestry. Weekly drop in, counselling support, HIV/AIDS prevention.

Contact: 416-392-6878 x305

Maggie's, Toronto Prostitute's Service Project

Maggie's offers a Peer resource centre and drop-in, support for victims of violence or sexual assault, information on legal issues surrounding sex trade, promotion of safer sex practices and materials, and referrals to legal and other community services. Staffed by working prostitutes. Publishes Bad Trick Sheet, Boys Town Trick Sheet, and Bad Call Sheet which are regularly updated listings of men who abuse sex workers.

Contact: 416-964-0150

Email: maggies@bell.net

Sex Worker Alliance of Toronto (SWAT)

The Sex Workers Alliance of Toronto was founded in 1992 to fight for sex workers rights to fair wages, and safe and healthy working conditions. SWAT opposes any law that criminalizes sex work. SWAT publishes a Bad Date Booklet, provides health and legal information, and free condoms. Volunteers support others working in the sex trade by doing outreach and court watch. SWAT also educates service providers and policy makers about the needs of sex workers.

Phone: 416-921-SWAT(7928)

Street Outreach Services (for youth 25 and under)

Provides support to youth who are involved in prostitution or at high risk for prostitution. Provides information, assistance, alternatives and supportive counselling, individual and group support, street outreach Monday-Saturday, HIV/AIDS anonymous testing, counselling, drop-in groups, medical, legal, housing, welfare, literacy, employment services * peer education and outreach * transitional cooperative housing for clients * coffee, showers * laundry facilities * condoms, bleach kits, dental dams, and needle exchange.

Contact 416- 926-0744

Sex Professionals of Canada (SPOC)

SPOC is an organization made up of sex workers that fights for the decriminalization of sex work. SPOC wants sex workers to be able to work with safety and dignity. Their website posts news relevant to the sex working community, a bad date list,

Contact: 416-364-5603. Website: www.spoc.ca

Health Issues affecting Lower Income Trans and Two-Spirit People

The health of transgendered, Two-Spirit and transsexual people may be jeopardized on a regular basis because of the transphobia that permeates the medical model of health care. Some transgendered, Two-Spirit and transsexual people are fearful about outing themselves to family physicians so they never go in for that prostate exam or pap smear they really ought to have. There are doctors who won't give trans and Two-Spirit people the full physicals they ask for because they're too disgusted to touch the bodies of trans people. There are also the M.D.'s who just won't take trans and Two-Spirit people on as clients at all if they are made aware of the trans history.

Often, when service providers discuss "access to health care" for trans and Two-Spirit people they slip into thinking only about access to hormones and surgeries. Most of the trans and Two-Spirit service users that will be making use of shelters, hostels, detox centres, etc do not have the financial resources to undergo "transition." Transition is extremely cost-prohibitive for many trans and Two-Spirit women and men. At its most basic level, it can mean buying a whole new wardrobe, purchasing make-up, buying a wig, and potentially having electrolysis to remove unwanted facial hair, but for someone with no income or a low-income, food and rent are likely higher priorities. The most extreme forms of transition include hormonal and surgical interventions, and currently these medical procedures are not covered by Ontario's health insurance. According to the Ontario's Centre for Addiction and Mental Health Gender Identity Clinic, the average MTF surgery costs \$27,000 and the average FTM surgery costs \$17,000, and that's not including the cost of post-operative care. For a lower-income, street-involved trans and Two-Spirit person, these medical procedures are simply unavailable. Not being able to afford any of the tools of transition means that Two-Spirit and trans men and women who are not "passing" are more vulnerable to societal stigma, including physical, emotional, sexual abuse, etc, problems finding and keeping jobs, problems finding and maintaining housing, finding and maintaining relationships, etc.

Homeless/street-involved/sex-working trans and Two-Spirit people are facing additional barriers to health care.

A few quick facts about homelessness: the mortality rate for the homeless is 3-10 times the mortality rate seen in the general population. Alcohol use in the homeless ranges from 3 to 9 times higher than in the general population. The homeless are admitted to psychiatric hospitals 100 times more often than the general population.

Add trans-related stigma to the mix (and, oh, racism, stigma around disability, stigma around mental health issues, etc) and you've got a real sweet blend of toxicity that these good people have to breathe in daily. (facts about homelessness and health taken from the website: Delivering Health care to the Homeless website- http://www.med.uottawa.ca/homeless/main_e.html)

There is a number of health issues directly related to the hostel and shelter system. Shelters are often overcrowded, which leads to the potential spread of communicable diseases, scabies, and lice. Lice are particularly common since few homeless people have access to laundry facilities on a regular basis. Taking ANY medications will be challenging for many homeless trans people who are involved in the shelter and hostel system because of the lack of storage areas, the fact that their medications are often stolen or lost, that they have difficulty getting medications in the first place, and that they sometimes forget to take medications because they don't have a standard routine. For trans and Two-Spirit women this can often mean the decision to share hormones and needles with other girls who can provide them. Sharing needles increases risk for HIV, hepatitis, etc.

Many homeless trans and Two-Spirit people don't end up being able to access the shelter and hostel system at all. Often it's because they're refused access to those heavily gendered facilities. Shelters and hostels are normally divided up into women's floors, men's rooms, women's hours, etc. And trans and Two-Spirit people who are on the streets haven't generally had the cash to get the surgical procedures which will allow them to change their legal ID. This can leave many trans and Two-Spirit people with no other options but to stay on the streets, leaving them at risk for a whole laundry list of diseases. Skin disorders are exceptionally common in the homeless. Foot problems, ringworm, nail infections, frostbite, and leg ulcers are frequent problems since homeless and street-involved people tend to walk everywhere, having no money for transportation costs. The homeless are at increased risk of developing lower-leg vein dysfunction partly because they are frequently unable to lie stretched out or flat on their back at night. The homeless who sleep on park benches are particularly vulnerable.

It's a nightmare to be facing multiple oppressions in society. When looking at the social determinants of health for trans and Two-Spirit people, it's easy to see how the journey for lower-income, sex-working, street-involved trans and Two-Spirit people is by far one of the more challenging ones. Physical transition is the least of their concerns. Higher priority needs include basic needs (food, shelter), accessible care (hostels and shelters that don't use legal identity as a factor in determining who can access which beds) and fair medical treatment (doctors that are knowledgeable about HIV as it relates to homelessness or transition medications).

Resources for Trans and Two-Spirit Health Care:

Sherbourne Health Centre – Primary Care for Transsexual, Transgender, Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Communities

333 Sherbourne Street, Toronto, Ontario.

Sherbourne Health Centre offers comprehensive primary health care to our diverse and vibrant community including counselling services, medical and nursing care, information, workshops, group support and community health initiatives.

Sherbourne Health Centre also operates the Health Bus, a community project that provides homeless and lower income people with free access to over-the-counter medications, nursing care, referrals to doctors/specialists, transportation to emergency services, needle exchange, preventative supplies (toothbrushes, soap, shampoo, vitamins, socks) and seasonal supplies (sunscreen, water, hats, scarves, gloves). Service is confidential and no health card is required.

Contact: 416-324-4181 or www.sherbourne.on.ca

Trans-Health Website

This site features a number of Canadian writers and contains a quarterly online magazine of relevant physical and mental health and fitness issues for transsexual and transgendered people. This very inclusive site covers information for MTFs, FTMS, pre-op, post-op, non-op, and more!

<http://www.trans-health.com>

Street Health Community Nursing for homeless and under housed persons

Provides hands-on nursing care, assistance obtaining health cards/other identification, a sleeping bag exchange. No Ontario Health card required. Also provides mental health outreach for homeless and underhoused persons with mental health issues including support, crisis intervention, and case management.

Contact 416-921-8668. Email: info@streethealth.ca

Mental Health, Substance use and Self-Harm

Like many other trans and Two-Spirit people, lower-income, sex-working, and street-involved TS/TG2-S men and women are often facing multiple mental health issues including depression, anxiety, suicidal thoughts/behaviors, self-harm, drug and alcohol use, and eating disorders. For many homeless and lower-income trans people, these problems are made worse by the constant anxiety about some of the most fundamental needs in life, like food and shelter.

Substance use:

“Most of us have used alcohol or drugs as a coping mechanism at one point or another. Sometimes life is painful, and a good stiff drink or a toke of a joint provides a short-term solution. But there can be a long-term cost.” – Trans woman, 26.

“I’m shooting up on heroin; I’m shooting up on speed. I been using one needle for almost a week and they say that’s how I got HIV.” – Trans woman, 22.

“A lot of FTMs in the community are struggling with drug and alcohol issues, and there is no in-patient, or really adequate out-patient treatment to meet the needs of FTMs.” Trans man, 28.

“It was hard for me to quit drugs in the end because they were quite truly the only thing I felt I could rely on to keep me going – my only indulgence to compensate for the seemingly five million things I couldn’t achieve because I hadn’t the financial means to do them.” – Trans woman, 26.

For some members of the trans and Two-Spirit community, society pressures to conform to accepted gender norms and to hide their true identity, along with practical problems in realizing their desire/need to live as the men or women they see themselves to be, added to issues of racism, classism, ableism and age-related discrimination can lead to cycles of suppression/depression and social withdrawal.

Both alcohol and drug use, often rooted in feelings of worthlessness and hopelessness, are common in the trans and Two-Spirit community as a whole. Although accurate statistics on drug and alcohol use are scarce, there is substantial evidence in the published literature and from interviews in Boston that such use is widespread and significant in urban centres with large trans populations. A study

of transgender prostitutes in two areas of Atlanta, Georgia found the rate of crack use to be 71% and 56.3% respectively. The MDPH/GISST study estimated that at least 80% of Boston's transgender population has a drug and/or alcohol problem.

Alcoholism and long-term drinking increase risks for pancreatitis, hepatitis and fibrosis. And since most shelters do not allow alcohol inside, clients who need shelter often quickly ingest any alcohol they possess to avoid having it confiscated, which only furthers the damage to the internal organs. Drug use - especially needle-sharing - is a problem in the trans and Two-Spirit homeless and street-involved community. Medical risks associated with shared needles and intravenous drug use is also a concern for homeless, street-involved, sex-working trans and Two-Spirit people. These risks include HCV and HIV from needle sharing , spreading skin infections at injection sites, opportunistic infections, and overdose causing extremely low blood pressure and death. And let's not forget...for homeless trans/Two-Spirit people, those aren't just "illicit" drugs they're sharing needles to inject. It's also hormones. Homeless trans and Two-Spirit people don't usually have the cash to buy the hormones, nor the needles, nor the place to properly store them. That leads to needle-sharing.

Self Harm:

"There's a part of me that's self destructive. I mean, you know, we don't really seem to matter! I mean, we put all this work into looking like women. We do all this stuff... and it still isn't good enough." – Trans woman, 26.

Cutting habits or self-mutilation is not a 'talked about' subject but many transsexuals cut themselves out of habit, despair, depression, or feeling that they have no control in life, or over events such as puberty. They may feel their bodies have betrayed them, and cutting may be one way to express their frustration. Outsiders may not understand why people do this but often it is the only way a person can 'feel' or release emotions they find hard to express verbally. In the cases of transsexuals, Two-Spirit and transgendered people doing this, it is often done because they feel alone, unloved, unable to tell the people they love what they really feel, such as feeling they were born the wrong sex or gender.

There are transsexuals who have cut, mutilated, burned, and even castrated themselves out of feelings of anxiety and stress.

It is not uncommon for TS/TG/2-S people to relieve these feeling through alcohol and drug use as well. It can be relaxing, and it can be an escape from the heavy

stress of low self-esteem, except that it can lead to heavy addiction and substance use.

Eating disorders are also common among transsexual, Two-Spirit and transgendered people. This is especially true among transsexual women who are striving to fit into society's strict gender norms.

Resources for Low-Income Trans and Two-Spirit Mental Health Issues and Addictions:

Rainbow Services at CAMH

Rainbow Services provides counselling to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, Two-Spirit, intersex, queer and transsexual people who are concerned about their use of drugs and alcohol. Their services are available to individuals with a variety of goals, including those who want to try to quit, cut down, or who would just like to gain more awareness about their drinking or drug use. Their programs are specialized to take into account the unique needs and issues that our communities face. (416) 535-8501 ext 6781 or 1-800-463-2338 x6781 Website:

www.camh.net/rainbow_services/

Street Health Community Nursing for homeless and underhoused persons

Provides hands-on nursing care, assistance obtaining health cards/other identification, a sleeping bag exchange. No Ontario Health card required. Also provides mental health outreach for homeless and underhoused persons with mental health issues including support, crisis intervention, and case management. Contact 416-921-8668. Email: info@streethealth.ca

The Thursday Night Group

This group is open to transsexual and Trans gendered people 18 years of age or over, who have used or are now using drugs or alcohol, and also to those who support them. The group provides a safe place for open dialogue and peer-support. The group meets every Thursday at The AIDS Committee of Toronto (ACT), Fourth floor, 399 Church St. (at Carlton).

Call: (416) 760-2791.

Jean Tweed Treatment Centre

Jean Tweed is accepting TS/TG/2-S people into their excellent programme on an outpatient basis. There are requirements for entry and it is very important the participant make the arrangements themselves.

Call: (416) 255-7359

Women's Own Detox

Women's Own is a non-medical emergency alcohol and drug detox centre. Referrals can be made 24hours, even self-referral, and they usually have vacancies available. The staffs are very discrete about a clients TS/TG/2-S identity and never disclose to other clients.

Call: (416) 603-1462

The Toronto Raver Info Project (TRIP)

TRIP provides information about party drugs and their long term effects, including complications with other medications like anti-retroviral medication (anti-AIDS drugs)

Call: Erin Lewis, TRIP Co-ordinator & Outreach Worker
(416) 504-6131

The Works

The Works does needle exchanges (all types of syringes, including hormone needles) completely free of charge. They will even show transsexuals how to properly inject hormones in the thigh and butt. They have a roaming van with registered nurses on board if you are unable to make it to their drop-in or if you are having a bad trip. They also provide condoms, lube, and HIV testing, safe crack use information.

Call: (416) 392-0520

HIV/AIDS and Trans/Two-Spirit Issues

HIV and Male-To-Female Trans/Two-Spirit Women:

"When you have a low self-esteem and this fine guy comes up to you and it's like, I want to have sex with you, and he's so fine, and you're like, 'If I don't use a condom, he's not going to want to do it!'" - Trans woman, 20.

"I went out with a guy who I knew was HIV-positive, and I had unsafe sex with him because he showed attraction for me". - Trans woman, 26.

"My friend and I have never been exposed to any AIDS prevention. It's already a day late and a dollar short for transgender." – Trans woman, 23.

Rates of infection for HIV, and sexually transmitted infections and HEP C is thought to be extremely high for trans and Two-Spirit women – particularly for those working as sex workers - in large urban cities like Toronto. Statistics from other large urban centres bear this out. There are a number of overlapping factors which contribute to the high HIV seroprevalence rates reported in the homeless and street-active trans and Two-Spirit community. These include:

- Toronto's mainstream AIDS Service Organizations are not yet targeting trans and Two-Spirit women in terms of prevention materials, harm reduction strategies, or outreach.
- Trans and Two-Spirit people face intense societal stigma which leads to low self-esteem. Sometimes people with low-self esteem choose consciously not to practice safer-sex. In other cases, subconsciously people with low self-esteem may act in ways that reduce their ability to make good choices.
- Drugs and alcohol use can diminish one's ability to make informed choices about safer-sex practices.
- Sex workers may often not know the STI or HIV status of their clients. Clients may also not divulge an HIV+ status to a sex worker.
- Clients sometimes offer more money to a sex-worker to forgo the use of a condom. Some sex workers may refuse this, but others may be tempted by the extra money, especially if they are in a vulnerable position.
- Many trans and Two-Spirit women in the sex trade who are practicing safer-sex with clients will choose not to practice safer-sex with their primary partners as a means of showing more intimacy towards that partner.
- There is a high incidence of sexual assault against TS/TG/2-S sex-workers. Sexual assault often occurs without a condom.
- Lack of Resources: Most current safer-sex material created by ASOs is geared towards men having sex with men, and trans/Two-Spirit women will not see this material as having any relevance to their own lives. The material which is geared towards safer-sex practices for women never includes the kind of genitals that many trans/Two-Spirit women actually have, so this material is also useless.
- Trans/Two-Spirit women who have not had genital reassignment surgery sometimes "tuck" their penis up under the perineum towards the anus and wear a tight undergarment to keep it in place. During this process, the skin of the

penis and inner thigh can become rough and broken and can facilitate HIV transmission if it comes in contact with HIV infected semen.

- Trans/Two-Spirit women with surgically constructed vaginas find that the new vagina does not lubricate naturally, which makes it more susceptible to stretching, tears, and cuts, which can facilitate HIV transmission if it comes in contact with HIV infected semen. Some surgically constructed vaginas are created with a piece of colon substituting for the vaginal wall. The tissue of the colon is extremely absorptive, and this type of constructed vagina is more vulnerable to HIV than the lining of a non-trans woman's vagina.
- “Communicating” laws force trans/Two-Spirit sex workers to limit potential negotiations with clients about safer sex practices.

Although The 519’s Trans Programming operates a very successful outreach programme (with a TS sex worker who is already active within that community), other ASOs, street based organizations, and outreach workers are actually further perpetuating misunderstanding about safer sex issues by refusing to target them specifically (by even just hiring a TS outreach worker with relevant sex work experience, things would vastly improve). It is tragic to refuse to target a community with one of the highest HIV infection rates just because it is a smaller/minority population. Instead of using HIV infection statistics of TS/TG/2-S sex workers for gay men’s and bisexual men’s studies, they should be separate and used to support the development of HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment programmes for and by TS/TG/2-S people.

Trans and Two-Spirit HIV concerns aren't just about risk for contracting HIV. There are ongoing issues for those who do become HIV positive. Very few doctors in North America have experience treating trans and Two-Spirit clients at all, never mind trans/Two-Spirit clients who are HIV+. They might not be certain about how anti-retroviral meds will interact in conjunction with a trans-woman’s anti-androgens and estrogen pills, or how a “cocktail” combination of drugs will impact on her liver when she already has Hepatitis A. A lot of sex-working trans and Two-Spirit women who are HIV+ aren't receiving regular health care at all because they're tired of dealing with the prejudice of judgmental doctors. And for those trans and Two-Spirit people who are homeless and HIV+, there are a number of factors that make adhering to their HIV medications difficult, including the cost, the fact that no immediate benefit from the drug is felt so they stop taking them, the side effects, which are not anticipated by the patient, and often some confounding drug addictions and mental illness.

HIV and Trans/Two-Spirit Female-to-Males:

"I've been in risky sexual situations just for the attention actually, or just for the acceptance as being male." – Trans man, 28.

"For gay FTMs, we might be willing to do something with someone that's less than safe, because it's like 'Oh my God, an opportunity to have this gay experience' I feel that." – Trans man, 22.

"My sex drive is totally different now (with testosterone use). It puts me in more of a head space where I'm more likely to do riskier activities than I would've done before." Trans man, 25.

Most of the discussions around HIV issues are geared towards the risk of MTF trans and Two-Spirit women. FTM trans and Two-Spirit men face their own reasons for HIV risk.

- Some trans and Two-Spirit FTMs who had previously been lesbian-identified have little knowledge or conscious thought about issues of HIV/AIDS. The lesbian community has been less focused on issues of HIV and AIDS prevention than the gay men's community, or even the straight community, so they may feel that HIV "can't" or "won't" affect them.
- Many people, including trans and Two-Spirit men, may hold common stereotypes about HIV and AIDS, for instance they might believe that they could tell if their sexual partner was HIV +, or that you can't get HIV if their male partner pulls out before he cums.
- Trans and Two-Spirit FTMs may have internalized messages from society saying that their bodies are undesirable. If a trans-man with low-self-esteem is propositioned, he might say yes to the encounter, even if it means having sex without a condom.

Some interesting statistics on vulnerabilities to HIV for trans communities:

Previous research in the United States suggests that transgendered persons in large urban centres are at high risk for acquiring HIV. A small study of transgendered sex workers in Atlanta found that 68% were seropositive for HIV, 81% had seromarkers for syphilis, and 80% had seromarkers for hepatitis B. The prevalence of HIV infection in this population was much higher than that of nontransgendered sex workers in the same neighborhoods. For those trans people not engaged in sex work, a study with a more representative sample of the transgender community found that 15% of transgendered individuals seeking hormone therapy at a San Francisco public health clinic were infected with HIV. (Clements K., and

Wilkinson W., Kitano K., Ph.D., Marx R., Ph.D. 1999: HIV Prevention and Health Service Needs of the Transgender Community in San Francisco. IJT 3, 1+2, http://www.symposion.com/ijt/hiv_risk/clements.htm

In Canada our research bears out the high rate of HIV in trans populations as well:

- One Toronto agency – Street Outreach Services – found that 80% of their TS/TG youth clients were HIV-positive.

Travers, W. (1996) Transgendered Youth Workshop. (Toronto)

- In a study in Vancouver, it is reported that between 70 and 80% of Vancouver TS/TG street-involved people are HIV-positive.

de Bruyn, T. (1998). HIV/AIDS and discrimination. A discussion paper. Ottawa: Health Canada, Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network, Canadian AIDS Society.

Resources for Trans and Two-Spirit People concerned about HIV/AIDS:

Trans Sex Worker Outreach Programme

Outreach Worker: Monica Forrester

The 519 Church St. Community Centre

519 Church St., Toronto, Ont., M4Y 2C9

The Trans Sex Worker Outreach Programme distributes free condoms and lube to transsexual, Two-Spirit and transgendered sex workers. The outreach worker also provides safer sex information on HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections, peer support, advice and referrals. The programme also developed *The Happy Transsexual Hooker: a healthy resource guide for transsexual and transgendered sex workers*, which is distributed free of charge.

Contact: 416-392-6878 x305

Sherbourne Health Centre – Primary Care for Transsexual, Transgender, Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Communities

333 Sherbourne Street, Toronto, Ontario.

Sherbourne Health Centre offers comprehensive primary health care to our diverse and vibrant community including counselling services, medical and nursing care, information, workshops, group support and community health initiatives.

416-324-4181 or www.sherbourne.on.ca

Asian Community Aids Services (ACAS)

33 Isabella St. Suite 107 (Buzz 526)

Outreach Worker E-mail fsoropia@yahoo.com 416-963-4300 Ext 65

Prisoners with HIV/AIDS Support Action Network (PASAN)

A free service for prisoners, ex-prisoners, and young offenders with or affected by HIV/AIDS and their families. PASAN provides advocacy, counselling, prevention education, needle exchange, support in accessing community supports, social services, housing and medical care.

Contact 416-920-9567

Email: PASAN@interlog.com

Casey House Hospice

Casey House is a hospice which does in-care, and out-patient care, and offers a wide variety of programming for those with HIV and going through the onset effects of AIDS.

Call: (416) 962-7600

Toronto People with AIDS Foundation (TPWAF)

Provides services for anyone with urgent needs looking for HI/AIDS friendly resources. They offer free programming and have resources available on site such as a small food bank and income maintenance case managers. They also provide financial assistance for medical purposes. (this could include hormone costs and electrolysis!)

Call: (416) 506-1400

The AIDS Committee of Toronto (ACT)

Although ACT currently has limited resources on HIV/AIDS in TS/TG/2-S populations, a number of their staff have made strong commitments to TS/TG/2-S issues in the past and can most definitely help connect people with information .

Call: (416) 340-2437

Fife House

Fife House is for men, women and trans people living with HIV infection or AIDS who require or may benefit from 24 hour supportive staff. Must be eligible for rent geared to income.

Call: (416-205-9888. Email: info@fifehouse.org Web: www.fifehouse.org

Legal Issues affecting Lower Income Trans/Two-Spirit People

There are a number of legal issues facing lower-income and sex-working trans and Two-Spirit people. There are laws affecting sex workers, human rights laws, and legal identity issues.

Laws affecting Sex Workers:

There are several laws that affect trans and Two-Spirit sex workers:

- “Communicating for the purpose of prostitution” in the criminal code which says that you can not communicate with any person in a public place for the purpose of prostitution.
- “indecent acts” exposing yourself in public which can mean almost anywhere, in a car, even on your own property if you can be seen from a window or through a door.
- “counselling to commit a crime” means you are a partner in any crime you give advice about
- “bawdy house” if a place is used regularly for seeing customers
- “carrying a concealed weapon” includes mace, pepper spray, or stun gun
- “obstructing justice” if you refuse to give your birth name, whether or not you use that name.
- deportation laws as well have greatly affected the trans sex working community with over many girls being deported in the past few years. Especially if they are HIV positive and they are classified as a “menace to society“... cheaper to deport than to house and treat.
- one of the most pressing issues for youth is Bill 86, which now gives authorities the power to seize without a warrant, anyone under 18 who they suspect of being involved in sex work. Even without charges they can be held for 30 days and forced to undergo medical treatment, counselling etc.
- in addition, it is illegal to pay anyone under 18 for sex
- it is illegal to make or possess sexy pictures of anyone under 18... any youth found in such photos/videos can be held in a detention centre and forced to name their friends/lovers/customers.

The community has been subject to constant harassment and sweeps by police and at one point had to switch to working on the west side of Jarvis to avoid the 51 Division’s jurisdiction. While some attempts have been made to work with a

GLBT Toronto Police Liaison Committee on these issues, decriminalization is necessary for the community to work and live safely.

Human Rights Laws:

Excerpt from *Human rights legislation - Policy on Discrimination and Harassment because of Gender Identity*. Approved by the Commission: March 30, 2000

“The Human Rights Code (the "Code") states that it is public policy in Ontario to recognize the inherent dignity and worth of every person and to provide for equal rights and opportunities without discrimination. The Code aims at creating a climate of understanding and mutual respect for the dignity and worth of each person so that each person feels a part of the community and feels able to contribute to the community.

The Ontario Human Rights Commission (the "Commission") has developed policy statements and guidelines that cover many human rights issues. However, issues related to gender identity remain largely unresolved in policy, procedures, and law.

Gender identity is not an enumerated ground in the Code. However, the existing legal structure in the Code can support a progressive understanding of the ground of ‘sex’ to include ‘gender identity’ and protect individuals who are subject to discrimination or harassment because of gender identity.”

There are a number of current court challenges in Ontario testing whether or not protected categories of “sex” do include gender as a grounds of discrimination or harassment. Most trans and Two-Spirit people don’t have the financial resources to take their daily experiences of harassment and discrimination into a courtroom, however, and they are left to face that discrimination alone.

Legal Identity:

For those working in many women-only organizations such as shelters, hostels, and detox centers, it is often a challenge to determine how to overcome access barriers to trans and Two-Spirit women. The ultimate question is: How do we determine WHO is a woman? Some shelters and hostels have decided to make the determination based on someone’s legal identity. Legal identity is made up of two parts, a person’s legal name, and their legal sex designation of M (male) or F (female). This chapter will critically address the problems which result in using a

trans/Two-Spirit woman's legal identity as a factor in determining whether or not she should receive access to women's only space.

Most people assume that changing one's legal name is easy and simple. It isn't. Especially since the terrorist attacks at the World Trade Center, the application for name change for anyone in Ontario is more complex, and there are more potential reasons for a name-change application to be denied or postponed pending further investigation. Now we'll explore some of the barriers that trans and Two-Spirit people face when it comes to changing their legal name.

- costs money to change the documentation itself – can be cost prohibitive for lower income trans people (Present cost is \$137.)
- history of bankruptcy may cause your application of name change to be denied or postponed pending further investigation (fear that a person is changing their name only to avoid bad credit history)
- criminal charges in your past may cause your application of name change to be denied or postponed pending further investigation (fear that a person is only changing their name to avoid being linked to their criminal past)
- an ongoing court case may cause your application of name change to be denied or postponed pending further investigation (fear that a person is changing their name only to avoid facing sentencing, fines or imprisonment on current charges)
- currently being on probation may cause your application of name change to be denied or postponed pending further investigation (fear that a person is only changing their name to avoid being limited by the conditions of their parole)
- If you are at least 16 years old, you can apply to change your given names, surnames, or both. Between the ages of 16 and 18, you must provide the written consent of the person(s) who have lawful custody of you, which is sometimes a challenge for trans youth who have kicked out of their parents' home, or for those youth who are crown wards
- If you are under 16, you cannot legally change your own name
- If you have lost your ID, or had it stolen, you will need to replace it first before you can apply for a name change. It's important to understand why so many street-involved or sex-working trans people don't have legal identification:
 - they're mugged by their tricks
 - sometimes it's stolen from them in the shelter and hostel system

- sometimes they “lose” their ID (on purpose) in order to avoid police confrontations about previous criminal charges or probation orders

As well, not everyone who lives in Ontario is born in Ontario. Toronto, specifically, is a hub for migration and immigration from all across the globe, especially for trans people since Toronto is known as being one of few cities in Canada that provides support and service for trans people. Certain countries/jurisdictions (and even certain provinces, like Quebec) don’t use “common law”, but the “civil code”, which basically means they consider a person’s birth certificate to be an immutable document, unchangeable, except under “extreme circumstances”. Other countries using “civil code” law are France, Belgium, Luxembourg and Portugal, to name a few.

Changing the designated sex (either an F or an M) on our birth certificates is not an easy process for transsexuals in Ontario. It’s important to understand the process by which that change of sex designation occurs. In Ontario, in order to change one’s sex-designation on a birth certificate from an M to an F (or vice versa) you must have undergone an “irreversible sex reassignment surgery”. But what does it take to GET sex-reassignment surgery in Ontario? Money. Ontario’s health insurance, OHIP, does not currently cover any “transsexual” or “transition related” costs. According to the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health Gender Identity Clinic, the average MTF surgery cost \$27,000 and FTM costs \$17,000, and that’s not including the cost of post-op care, or the cost of being unable to work during the recovery period.

Women’s-only organizations are the acknowledged leaders in providing services to women who are homeless, street-involved, needing drug and alcohol treatment, and who have experienced violence and sexual assault. If we attempt to use “legal identity”, either a person’s legal name, or their sex designation on their birth certificate as a determining factor of their status as women, we are excluding an enormous number of the most marginalized and stigmatized transgender, Two-Spirit and transsexual women from accessing these services. Many trans and Two-Spirit women are unable to change their names to reflect their lives as women, and cannot change their legal sex designation to reflect their female identities. If not legal identity, then how can we determine who is allowed into women’s only space? Only by respecting a person’s stated choice, and by extending services to all those individuals whose safety and welfare depend upon them, and not by policing identities.

Resources for addressing Trans and Two-Spirit Legal Issues:

Meal Trans Legal Clinic

Program Coordinator: Kyle Scanlon
The 519 Church St. Community Centre
519 Church St., Toronto, Ont., M4Y 2C9
416-392-6878 x104
mealtran@the519.org

Meal Trans offers a legal clinic during it's regular weekly drop-in every Monday night. The legal clinic runs from 6pm to 8pm most weeks. It's an opportunity to access resources, information and referrals.

Legal Clinic for homeless or people living in poverty

Replacement applications for lost, or stolen identification. Includes birth certificates, social insurance cards, health cards, status cards, records of landing. Free of charge. Tuesdays from 6:30 to 7:30 pm.
The 519 Church St. Community Centre
519 Church St., Toronto, Ont., M4Y 2C9
Contact Gaetan 416-921-8668 x230

TransEqual (TG/TS rights group)

165 Ontario Street
St. Catherine's, Ont., L2R 5K4
(905) 688-0276

Canadian Task Force for Transgender Law Reform

P. O. Box 47060
Ottawa, Ont., K1B 5P6

Prisoners with HIV/AIDS Support Action Network (PASAN)

A free service for prisoners, ex-prisoners, and young offenders with or affected by HIV/AIDS and their families. PASAN provides advocacy, counselling, prevention education, needle exchange, support in accessing community supports, social services, housing and medical care.

Contact 416-920-9567

Email: PASAN@interlog.com

Maggie's, Toronto Prostitute's Service Project

Maggie's offers a Peer resource centre and drop-in, support for victims of violence or sexual assault, information on legal issues surrounding sex trade, promotion of safer sex practices and materials, and referrals to legal and other community services. Staffed by working prostitutes. Publishes Bad Trick Sheet, Boys Town Trick Sheet, Bad Call Sheet which are regularly updated listings of men who abuse sex workers.

Contact: 416-964-0150

Downtown Legal Services (DLS)

Providing legal assistance and referrals. Some students trained in trans issues. For appointments call 416-978-6447.

Community & Legal Aid Service Programme (CLASP)

Providing legal assistance and referrals. Some students trained in trans issues. For appointments call 416-736-5029.

Pardons Canada

A federal non-profit organization which assists individuals in removing a past criminal offence from public record.

Confidential Telephone support line. Remove obstacles affecting your employment, career advancement, ability to be bonded, Canadian citizenship, adoption/child custody, volunteer work, apartment rental, educational opportunities and volunteer opportunities. Help avoid problems with travel to the USA, and prevent being arrested, deported, seizure of property and vehicle when in the USA.

Phone: 416-929-6011 24 hours a day

Walk in – no appointment req. Mon to Fri. 8:30 am to 5pm. 45 St. Clair Ave West. Suite 901. Toronto (just west of Yonge)

Internet Website: www.pardons.org email: info@pardons.org

Violence against Trans and Two-Spirit People

Statistical research for violence towards the transgendered population is still in its infancy, but there is no shortage of anecdotal evidence cited by trans and Two-Spirit people about the kinds of violence they experience every day. In Arlene Lev's article "Sexual Assault in the Transgender Communities", she comments on violence against transgendered and transsexual people. She says "*Transgendered people are the targets of the most vicious and blatant forms of violence. They are routinely abused by the police and medical professionals, in addition to being subjected to random street violence and domestic partner abuse*".

When we consider the violence that occurs against trans and Two-Spirit people, we often think of hate crimes. According to the organizers of the Remembering Our Dead project, in 2002 an average of two people are reported dead due to anti-transgender violence every month in North America. Eyler and Witten (1999) have begun a longitudinal study of violence against the transgendered community, and the preliminary data clearly show physical and sexual violence perpetrated on those who express cross-gender behaviour. Trans and Two-Spirit people are often sexually targeted specifically because of their transgendered status. The sexual perpetrator will stalk them, or attack them, infuriated by their cross-gender behaviour. Wilchins (1998), in the video "Transgendered Revolution" says, "*Trans people are never killed from 300 yards away with a high-powered rifle; they're always killed up front and personal ... People want to see us die ... there is a level of almost unhinged deranged violence about gender hate crimes.*" Lower-income trans people who are unable to access the tools of transition (such as surgeries and hormones) are particularly vulnerable to this kind of hate crime because they are continually "visible" in society.

But the violence against trans people also comes in a more "familiar" way. Arlene Lev writes "*Intimate partners, often appalled to discover the gender transgression, can verbally, psychologically, physically and sexually abuse the person.*" In one study of trans-identified individuals, 31% percent of the total sample identified themselves as survivors of domestic violence, when explicitly asked (Courvant & Cook-Daniels, 1998). The preliminary data of another study of trans, Two-Spirit and intersexed individuals gathered by the Gender, Violence and Resource Access Survey found that 50% of respondents had been raped or assaulted by a romantic partner (Courvant and Cook-Daniels, 1998) Trans and Two-Spirit people who do pass may be threatened with being "outed" if they attempt to escape an abusive relationship or seek support. Family members – parents, siblings, grandparents, foster families and step-families – may emotionally, physically and sexually

assault children and youth who draw attention to themselves by being atypically gendered according to societal expectations. Despite these rates, there has been historical "extraordinary low rates of reporting among transgender-identified victims of domestic assault" according to Emily Pitt, MSW, domestic violence advocate at Boston's Fenway Community Health, an affiliate of the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs in the United States. The low-reporting may be attributable to the perceived or actual lack of appropriate resources to serve them.

Violence against trans and Two-Spirit people comes not only from loved ones and strangers, but also from the authority figures we are told we are supposed to trust, like police officers and medical professionals. Medical personnel respond with judgment and have been known to withhold care to people they perceive to be cross-dressing. Trans elders are often at high risk for elder abuse in nursing home and clinical care settings. The criminal justice and the legal systems often re-traumatize victims. People in the sex-trade are often told "they asked for it" when they are sexually and physically assaulted.

Societal discomfort with trans identities has rendered trans victims of sexual assault, gay-bashing, and domestic violence without necessary services. Rape Crisis Centers and domestic violence shelters are often unprepared to address the issues of transgendered and Two-Spirit people. Trans women are often turned by women's services, as are trans men. The complexity of issues facing the trans and Two-Spirit person who is sexual assaulted can only be addressed by broad changes in the delivery system and extensive education regarding the needs of this community.

Resources for Trans and Two-Spirit Survivors of Violence:

The 519 Anti-Violence Programme

Our services are for those who are targets of hate-motivated violence based on sexual orientation or gender identity, people who have experienced or are currently experiencing violence/abuse in a same-sex intimate relationship, and service providers of all kinds.

519 Church Street

Toronto, ON

M4Y 2C9

416-392-6878 x 117

avp@the519.org

Bashing Reporting Line: 416-392-6878 x 337

TIP(Trans Inclusion Policy)

Supporting trans survivors of abuse and violence.

This Project is a partnership between Education Wife Assault and The 519 Community Centre.

It exists to assist anti-violence agencies in making their services accessible to trans survivors of abuse and violence.

Contact-416-392-6878 Ext 332 or E-mail transaccess@the519.org.

Toronto Rape Crisis Centre / Multicultural Women Against Rape

TRCC/MWAR provides crisis intervention, culturally sensitive counselling, support and referral for survivors of rape/sexual assault/incest. They provide support for families and friends of survivors, self help groups for sexually assaulted women, and information on alternatives to the legal justice system, court support, accompaniment and advocacy programmes. TRCC/MWAR has been very supportive of TS/TG/2-S identities and are adept in dealing with issues that might be complicated due to multicultural barriers.

Call: *Office/Administration* (416) 597-1171

Crisis Line (416) 597-8808

Maggie's, Toronto Prostitute's Service Project

Maggie's offers a Peer resource centre and drop-in, support for victims of violence or sexual assault, information on legal issues surrounding sex trade, promotion of safer sex practices and materials, and referrals to legal and other community services . Staffed by working prostitutes. Publishes Bad Trick Sheet, Boys Town Trick Sheet, Bad Call Sheet which are regularly updated listings of men who abuse sex workers.

Contact: 416-964-0150

The Sexual Assault Squad of Toronto Police Services

They are mandated not to arrest any sex workers who call to report incidents of sexual assault. (However, caution pays. If police do attempt to arrest a sex worker who has reported an incident of sexual assault, get the badge numbers of the police officers and report the incident to the 519's bashing reporting line at 416-392-6877.)

(416) 808-7474, Detective Wendy Leaver, Sex Crimes Unit Coordinator

TORONTO POLICE SEX CRIMES UNIT.
SEX CRIMES ANONYMOUS TIPLINE.

Another Bad Date.

Contact 416-808-0000.

Collect calls are accepted.

This phone line is totally anonymous and you don't have to leave your name or any contact information if you do not wish to do so.

Trans and Two-Spirit Inclusion for all Services and Policy Recommendations.

"When I see all these agencies who are being funded all this money to do transgender prevention, and provide transgender services, I really find it hard, when I see that some of these agencies are funded to hire four and five outreach workers. And they hire all these outreach workers, and not one of them is transgender." Trans woman, 27.

"I've had clients come from an agency, and they're talking about the staff calling them 'boy' and 'he', and asking them questions, like why they want to do that. If they're going to be serving transgender persons, they should be obligated to make sure that their staff is trained on transgender sensitivity issues, and that their staff is transgender." Trans man, 24.

- Staff/volunteer TRAINING on TS/TG/2-S issues need to become mandatory
- Hire openly Trans and Two-Spirit staff, involve trans and Two-Spirit people at a Board level, and as volunteers.
- Consult the trans and Two-Spirit communities about their needs and priorities.
- Add categories to paperwork which includes for more identities than just male and female. (I.e., FTM, MTF, Transgendered, Transsexual, Two-spirited, Intersexed.) Allow people to self-define and check more than one box.
- Empowerment is everything. Allow trans and Two-Spirit people to make important decisions about what facilities they use according to their own safety concerns and comfort levels.

- Make specific policies around allowing TS/TG/2-S men and women to use the public washrooms in which they feel they belong. If possible, also allocate one washroom as unisex or single occupancy
- If diversity training sessions are offered to staff members, make transsexual, Two-Spirit and transgender issues part of that curriculum.
- Have trans-positive flyers, books, posters, etc in plain sight in offices and on shelves - stock up on the Happy Transsexual Hooker
- Hold workshops for TS/TG/2-S people to help them develop strategies to deal with societal stigmatization and discrimination. Host anger-management workshops, stress-management workshops and self defence courses.
- Press other organizations that you deal with regularly to become trans and Two-Spirit inclusive.
- If you offer needle exchange programmes, have needles that are the gauge TS people have to use to inject their hormones intramuscularly – its 3CC and 21 gauge.
- Be involved in advocating for trans and Two-Spirit rights at all levels – within your own organization and outside of it.
- If you have medical staff available, train them to be trans-positive so they can give out prescriptions for hormones, perform medical exams without being squeamish, and respect a person’s chosen identity
- Investigate how trans-positive an agency is before making a referral to a detox center, shelter, or hostel. FOLLOW UP to let that agency know you are watching.
- ZERO TOLERANCE must be a policy when it comes to discrimination, harassment, and violence against trans and Two-Spirit people – and that should trickle from the top down – doctors, counsellors, receptionists, and participants in group counselling sessions too.
- Remember that trans and Two-Spirit people deserve the same access to services as any other community member.
- Treatments for depression and associated conditions should not attempt to enforce gender stereotypical behaviour and should come from a trans-affirming place instead.
- Remember that transgendered and transsexual people come from every culture, race, religion and experience, and will face compounded stressors resulting from transphobia and racism and classism.
- Be aware that assault – physical, verbal, sexual – is often directed towards Two-Spirit and trans-identified people in both the domestic and public spheres.

- Practitioners acting as advocates may have to be prepared to do trans-education and outreach to immediate family, extended family, places of employment, service organizations, religion and community organizations.
- Clinicians should be aware that transgendered, Two-Spirit and transsexual people may be employing strategies for survival that involve substance use and working in the sex trade. Harm reduction methods – rather than enforced abstinence – should be utilized.
- Push your local trans support groups to get behind supporting lower-income, sex-working, and homeless trans and Two-Spirit people.
- Offer your professional skills to agencies that work to assist and support sex workers.
- Send letters to your government representatives to let them know you are in favour of decriminalizing sex work.
- Send letters to your government representatives to let them know you want your tax dollars used to help build more affordable housing, provide more programmes for lower-income, street-involved and homeless people.
- Support anti-hate-crime legislation which includes gender identity as a protected category.
- Write local shelters and hostels and ask them about their harm reduction policies. Make certain services are offered judgement free when it comes to alcohol, drugs, and sex work.
- Don't just work towards making the world safe for trans and Two-Spirit people, but also for people of colour, people in the sex trade, queer people, straight people, people with different ability levels, and people of different classes!

Trans and Two-Spirit Pride

The 519 is a big believer in transsexual, Two-Spirit and transgendered PRIDE. In a community that has been historically poorer and having a much smaller population than that of the gay and lesbian communities it may seem sometimes like we are all alone, but that isn't true. TS/TG/2-S men and women are artists, actors, mechanics, accountants, stock brokers, painters, film makers, models, proud prostitutes, sculptors, squeegee kids, feminists, musicians, and many MANY other things.

We are extremely diverse and come from a variety of abilities, cultures, and countries from all around the world. We come from every economic background and we identify in a number of ways to others and ourselves – whether we are out about our TS/TG/2-S identity, or personal about it to ourselves and close loved ones. We have a diverse and unique sexuality in that we are gay, straight, lesbian, bisexual, queer, polyamorous, monogamous, non-monogamous, lovers, partners, friends, and companions. However we are united by our common ground and we stand TOGETHER!

It is important to remember that it can feel good to come out as being Two-Spirit or trans! Once a person comes out about who they are, they can lead healthy positive lives! There are lots of great reasons to be proud of being Two-Spirit or trans! Proud trans and Two-Spirit people may:

- Have more control over their future!
- Feel more connected with their bodies!
- Fight for their rights!
- Teach others about their lives!
- Begin to have more open and honest relationships!
- Feel more confident!
- Inspire others to be honest too!
- Feel more connected to their cultural heritage!

Trans Voices:

“Trans Pride is not feeling ashamed of what I am, and not feeling afraid in public, even though not everyone is supportive.”

“Trans Pride is being proud of the positive experiences and community of transpeople.”

“Trans Pride is both a sense of community and a sense of self. As an individual I feel proud of being able to feel comfortable living as a woman. As a community, we are proud to come together and share our common bond.”

“Trans Pride is standing up and saying ‘Yes I am trans’ when people say I’m just confused. Trans Pride is educating the misinformed when they say something completely wrong or stereotypical about trans people. Trans Pride is just being me.”

“Trans Pride is being proud of defining and expressing and being non-traditionally gendered. Trans pride is being proud of being transgressively gendered. Trans Pride is being proud of being different!

Support Resources for Trans and Two-Spirit People at all stages of Transition:

Support Groups and Clubs

Trans Programming at The 519 Church Street Community Centre

This site lists many of the peer-run trans programmes available in Toronto, Canada at The 519 Church Street Community Centre. It also includes a link to the “Happy Transsexual Hooker”, an HIV/AIDS resource for trans sex workers, and “TS/TG/2-S 101 Training Manual for Service Providers”, a document which provides terminology, information on transition, and addresses access to service barriers for trans and Two-Spirit people. A must-read for service providers!
www.the519.org/public_html/programs/trans/

MealTrans (lower income and street involved trans/Two-Spirit people)

Program Coordinator: Kyle Scanlon

The 519 Church St. Community Centre
519 Church St., Toronto, Ont., M4Y 2C9
416-392-6878 x104

Meal Trans at the 519 is a multi-service programme primarily for lower income and/or street-active transsexuals., Two-Spirit and transgendered people. We run a weekly drop-in every Monday night from 6 to 9:30pm at The 519 Church Street Community Centre. It’s a place to get together over a healthy meal, access resources, information and referrals, discuss issues relevant to our lives, learn with and from each other and build a stronger community. mealtran@the519.org

Trans Sex Worker Outreach Programme

Outreach Worker: Monica Forrester

The 519 Church St. Community Centre
519 Church St., Toronto, Ont., M4Y 2C9
416-392-6878 x305

The Trans Sex Worker Outreach Programme distributes free condoms and lube to transsexual, Two-Spirit and transgendered sex workers. The outreach worker also provides safer sex information on HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections, peer support, advice and referrals. The programme also developed *The Happy Transsexual Hooker: a healthy resource guide for transsexual and transgendered sex workers*, which is distributed free of charge.

2-Spirit People of the 1st Nations

43 Elm Street, 2nd floor (Bay and Dundas area)

Weekly drop in (call for specific information)

416-944-9300

Asian Community Aids Services (ACAS)

33 Isabella St. Suite 107 (Buzz 526)

Call Shannon at 416-963-4300 ext 65 or email fsoropia@yahoo.com

Trans of Colour Support Project

Looking for support, activism or an outlet for your artistic juices?

Contact JD or Rupert by leaving a message at (416) 392-6878 x325.

Transition Support (TS support) for transwomen and transmen

The 519 Church St. Community Centre

519 Church St., Toronto, Ont., M4Y 2C9

416-925-9872 X2121

The Transition Support Group meets on the 2nd and 4th Friday of each month at 7pm at The 519. The group is a place where transsexuals, Two-Spirit and transgendered individuals can find support and discuss issues and subjects relevant to their lives in a safe and secure environment. Both Female-to-Male and Male-to-Female TS/TG/2-S people are welcome.

FTM and Trans-men Support Group

The 519 Church St. Community Centre

519 Church St., Toronto, Ont., M4Y 2C9

416-392-6878 x 325

The Female-to-Male and Transsexual Men's Support Group meets on the first and third Friday of each month from 7:30 to 10:00pm. For more information please contact (416) 392-6878, extension 325.

Trans Youth Toronto (transgendered, Two-Spirit and transsexual youth aged 26 and under)

Weekly drop in on Wednesday nights from 5pm to 9pm.

The 519 Church Street Community Centre (at Wellesley)

Trans Youth Toronto is a place to get together, access resources, hop on the internet, and surf trans-youth websites for free, get information and referrals, chat about issues relevant to OUR lives as TS/TG/2-S youth and have a lots fun!

Trans_Fusion Crew (for trans and Two-Spirit youth aged 26 and under)
(sponsored by Supporting Our Youth)

Trans_Fusion Crew is a grass-roots activist project that creates social and political spaces that speak to the concerns, struggles, and victories of transgendered, transsexual, Two-Spirited, intersexed youth and allies.

Scheduled monthly meetings – please call Elisa at 416-924-2100 ext 259 for specific dates or email coordinator@soytoronto.org

Transformations (for trans youth age 26 and under)

A closed psycho educational support group. Please call to register for next scheduled session.

Contact LeeAndra Miller 416-924-2100 x259 or email leeandra@ctys.org

FLUID (queer and trans youth age 26 and under)

Fluid is a group for bisexual, bi-curious, pansexual, gender queer, questioning and other queer youth who don't fit neatly into categories. Come join others to explore, express, connect and have fun!

Call: Dino @ (416) 924-2100 x 243 or Email: paoletti@ctys.org

The Triangle Programme

For teens that have been targeted at their schools or have suffered incidents of homophobia or transphobia, the Triangle Programme has become a safe alternative. Curriculum includes a detail look into queer history, including TS/TG/2-S.

Call (416) 406-6228 x169 or email triangleprogram@hotmail.com

Transceptance

A Peer-Support Group for **Parents** of Transsexual and Transgendered youth.

Contact: Catherine transceptance_group@yahoo.ca or Rupert Raj rraj@sherbourne.on.ca; 416-324-4174

SOFFA Voices for significant others, friends and allies of FTMs,

Is a support group for spouses of FtM Transgendered and Transsexual Men? The group meets on the 3rd Friday of the month from 7:30 to 10:00pm.

Contact info for SOFFA voices:

soffatoronto@yahoo.ca

Jill or Eliza

Supporting our Spouses Club (for significant others of MTF trans people)
(Support for Partners of Transsexuals)

Supporting Our Spouses (S.O.S.) is a support group for spouses of MTF Transsexual and Transgendered people. Meetings are the 4th Friday of each month. Please email for specific times.

sosclub@idirect.ca

Xpressions – Toronto Transgender Support Club

<http://www.xpressions.org/>

Xpressions is a social and support club for cross-dressers of all sexualities. Contact the facilitator at 416-410-6949 for more information!

Canadian Crossdressers Club (Wildside)

161 Gerrard St E, Toronto, Ont. M5A 2E4
(416) 921-6112

<http://www.wildside.org>

TG Aesthetics (Richmond Hill)

Provides transformation services and helps guide emerging trans women in the areas of appearance and presentation.

Phone 905-737-3050

Email: meow@tgaesthetics.com

THE 416@416 Dundas ST E.

Trans only Drop-in on each Thursday of every month between 5-9 pm.
Scotty.

Web Resources:

Web listing of online Multicultural Trans Support Communities

(including Asian, Black, Deaf, Latino/a, Muslim, Arab, First Nations and Jewish communities)

<http://www.amboyz.org/resources/culture.html>

Cross-dressing Resources in Canada

This site lists a number of different resources for crossdressers and transvestites across Canada, listed by province.

<http://www.ncf.carleton.ca/ip/sigs/life/gay/xdress/xdr>

The Transsexual Menace Toronto

This site includes information on Toronto-based trans support groups, human rights advocacy and news items. Very interesting!

<http://www.themenace.net/>

Trans Canada: Transgender Resource Advocacy and News Service

TRANS-Canada seeks to positively change the way society and the medical and legal communities, view transsexual, transgendered and other gender variant people.

<http://www.trans-canada.org/>

Canadian and International Links

This site lists a variety of links to other sites detailing everything from surgery information to academic papers on trans issues.

<http://www-hsl.mcmaster.ca/tomflem/transgender.html>

Recommended reading List

This site lists some of the best reading material available written by and about transgendered and transsexual people as well as offers ordering information for these books.

<http://www.ts-ottawa.ca/books.htm>

TS Successes

This site contains hundreds of pictures of transsexual men and women who are successful. They aren't "successes" because of how much money they've made, or how pretty some of them are. These are the successes of women who have survived and corrected their earlier transsexualism, and gone on to find joy and comfort and peace in their lives.

<http://ai.eecs.umich.edu/people/conway/TSsuccesses/TSsuccesses.html>

FTM International

This site is the internet contact point for the largest, longest-running educational organization serving FTM transgendered people and transsexual men.

<http://www.ftm-intl.org/>

Transsexual Road Map

Transition is simply a journey. Just like a trip, you decide on your destination, the time you'll need to get there and the money you'll spend. This site is a travel guide to set priorities and choose your route. It's about making informed purchasing decisions and setting realistic, achievable transition goals, as well as offering links to support sites for youth, adults,

<http://www.tsroadmap.com>

Gender Psychology

The personal experiences of a transsexual psychologist and a scientific critique of the psychopathology of gender identity disorder:

<http://www.genderpsychology.org>

Transsexuality

Jennifer Reitz' exploration of what it is, and what to do about it if you think you are trans.

<http://www.transsexual.org>

Transgender Employment Links

The following web sites contain information about transitioning on the job and other issues transsexual and transgendered workers and their employers may face.

<http://www.gendersanity.com/resources.shtml>