

Welcome and thank you for joining us for our #LookCloser session on:

# Safeguarding Transgender Young People from Exploitation



Holly  
Pronouns: she/her

Toni  
Pronouns: she/ they

Eleanor  
Pronouns: she / they



The Children's Society strives to be a **trans inclusive organisation**, committed to trans allyship.

We encourage participants to continue their learning outside the session and so we have developed a **resource slide** at the end, to support you in this.



# Housekeeping

- We are committed to ensuring an inclusive environment where everyone is treated with dignity, kindness and respect. We would like everyone in this session to take part without fear of discrimination, or harassment.
- With regards to language, we will be employing terms that we feel recognise and seek to respond to experiences of exclusion and racialisation, including intersectional forms of discrimination.
- We have received support from Gendered Intelligence and Good Vibes to ensure that we are using appropriate trans inclusive language throughout the session.
- Please complete our feedback form at the end to receive slides and resources.
- Your participation is important. Please engage with the interactive elements of this session.
- Please do not share any confidential information relating to any specific children or vulnerable adults during this session



# Instructions

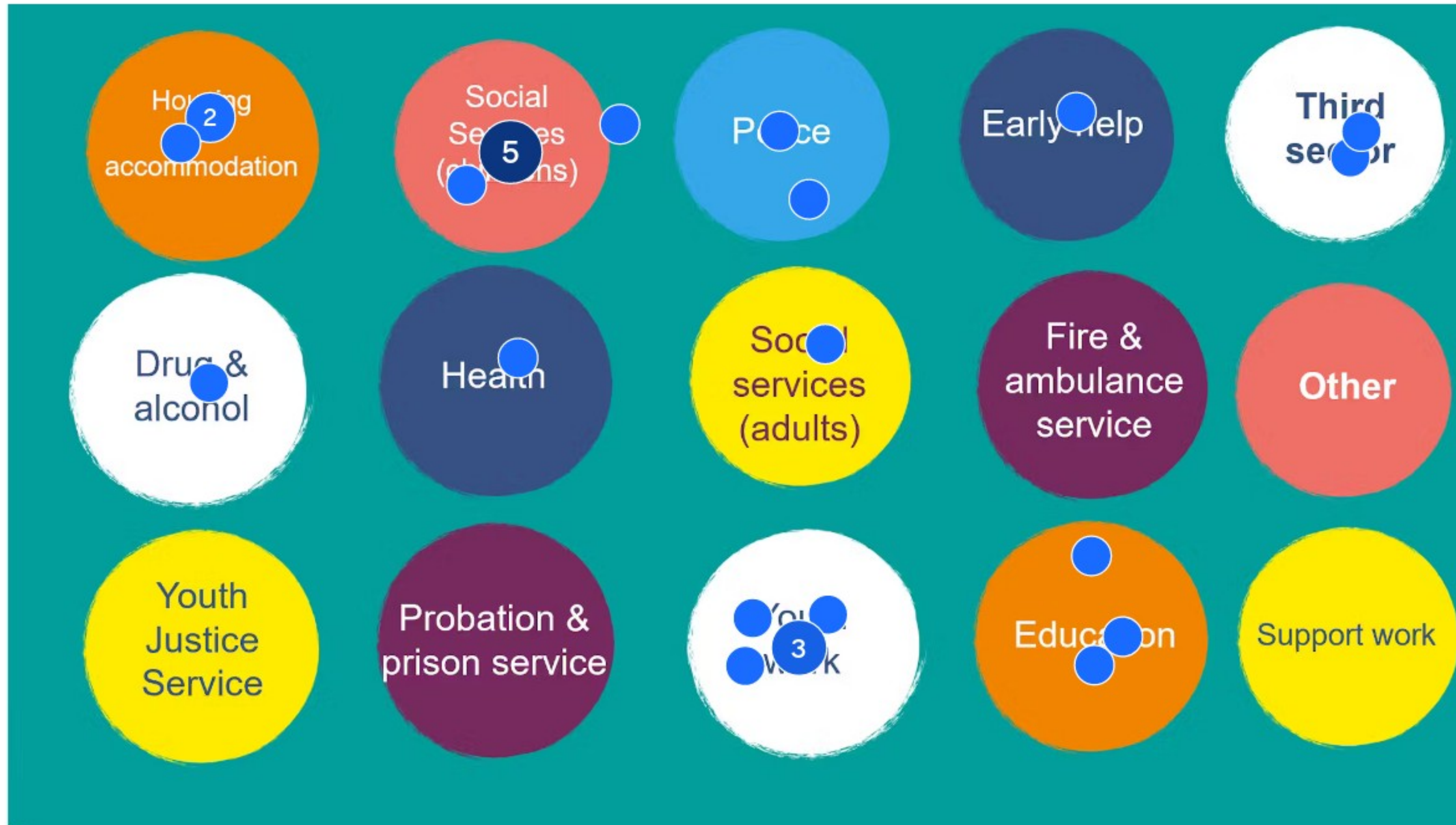


## In today's session we will:

- Support professionals to understand transgender identities and how to respect these in their work with children and young people
- Explore the specific risks faced by transgender children due to discrimination, disadvantage and other systemic failings
- Consider trans inclusive approaches to identifying, assessing, and supporting children and young people
- Demonstrate the value of a person-centred, holistic and inclusive approach to understanding and responding to exploitation and abuse



# What sector do you work in?



# Exploitation & Grooming



# What is Child Exploitation?

Child Exploitation is a form of abuse. It occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to encourage or compel a child or young person under 18 into an activity that benefits the perpetrator or facilitator. The perpetrator(s) might coerce, control, manipulate or deceive the young person. This includes, but is not limited to, sexual and criminal activity, wider forms of labour, forced begging and domestic servitude. -

The Children's Society (2024)





# Grooming

## Can happen anywhere

- Online
- In public spaces (parks, on transport, at train stations)
- In organisations
- At home

### Target

- Observing, identifying vulnerability, gaining trust

- Strangers or people known to the child or young person

### Test

- Ask to recruit others, sense of belonging, ask for favours, create dependency

- Age gaps can be small

### Trap

- Physical, sexual and psychological violence, debt bondage, isolation from friends, family and professionals, trafficking, extortion, control

# Trans Identities



## What does it mean to be 'Transgender'?

'People may use the term 'trans' to describe themselves if their own sense of gender (their gender identity) does not match or sit easily with the gender they were assumed to have based on the sex they were assigned at birth'

Gendered Intelligence (2023)



## Examples of Trans Experiences



- Trans (binary)
- Non- Binary
- Gender Fluid
- A-Gender
- Cis-Gender



# The Gender Unicorn

Graphic by:  
**TSER**  
Trans Student Educational Resources



- Gender Identity
- Gender Expression
- Sex Assigned at Birth
- Attraction/Orientation

To learn more, go to:  
[www.transstudent.org/gender](http://www.transstudent.org/gender)

Design by Landyn Pan and Anna Moore



**“The single most important thing [an organisation] could do is ask me what my pronoun is.”**

## **Pronouns**

- He/Him/His
- She/Her/Hers
- They/Them/Theirs

## **Titles**

- Mr
- Ms
- Mrs
- Mx (pronounced Mix/ Mux)

## **Neo Pronouns**

- Xe/ Xem/ Xyr
- Ze/Zir
- It/ It's

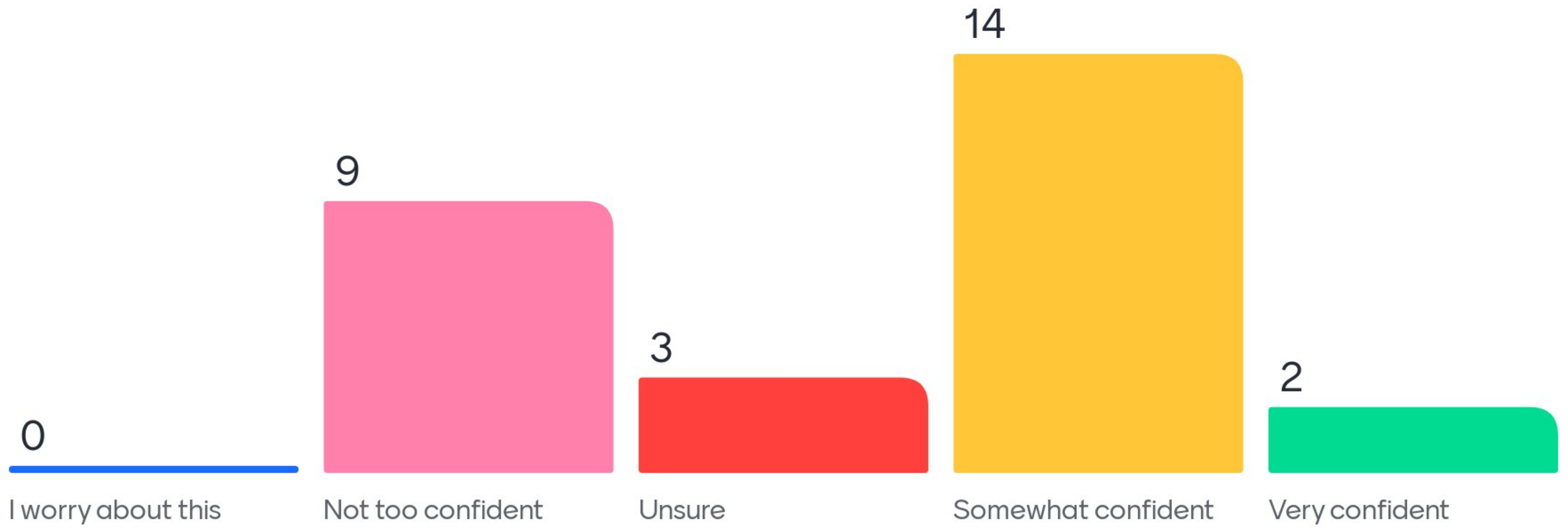


**“I had a second support worker and she kept misgendering me. When I brought it up, she denied it and got angry with me. I didn’t know how to stand up for myself or raise concerns.”**

**Harry (they/them)**

(akt (2021) lgbtq+ homeless report)

How confident do you feel at using trans-inclusive language when engaging with young people?





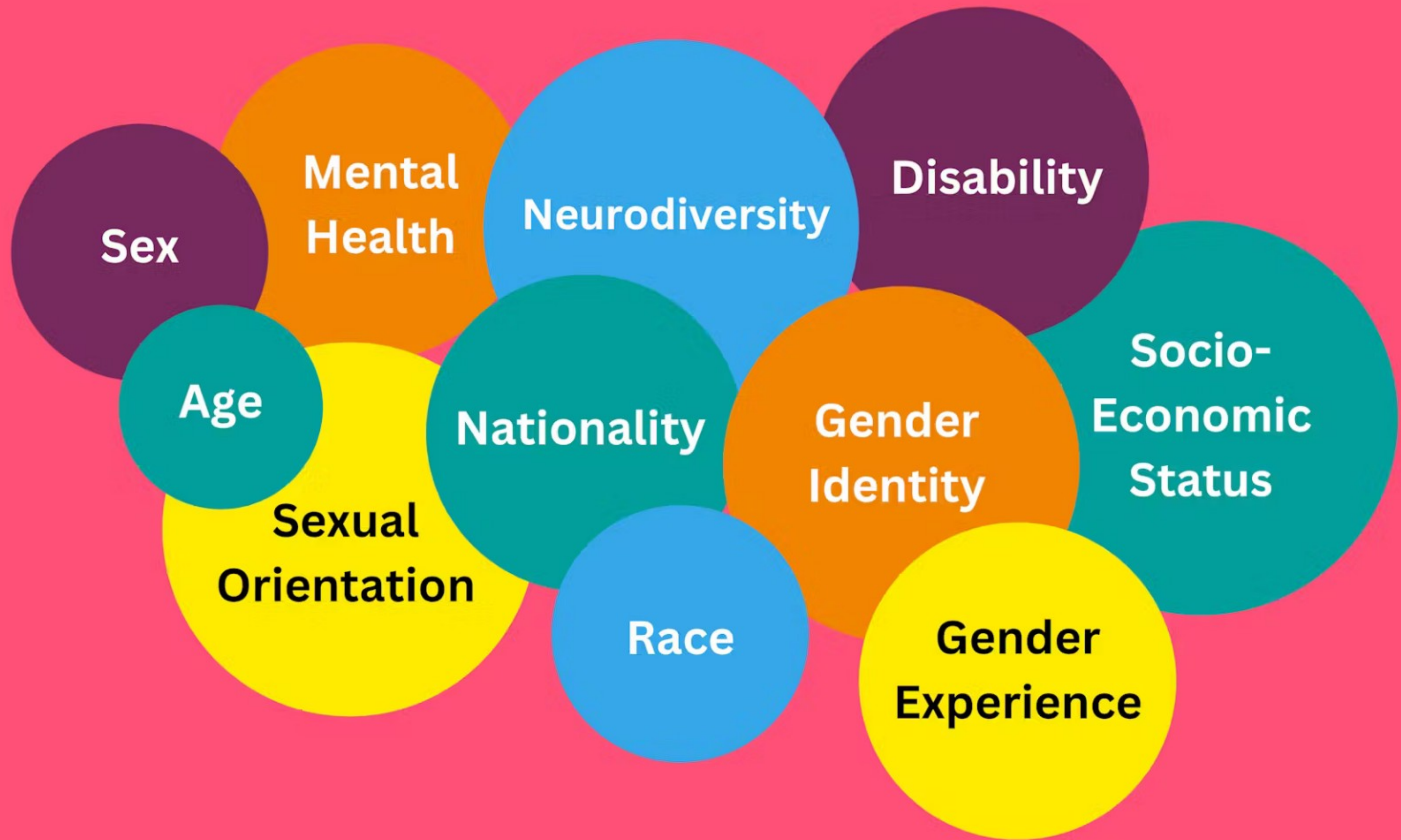
How confident do you feel in advocating for appropriate language in relation to the experiences of trans young people?

Answer



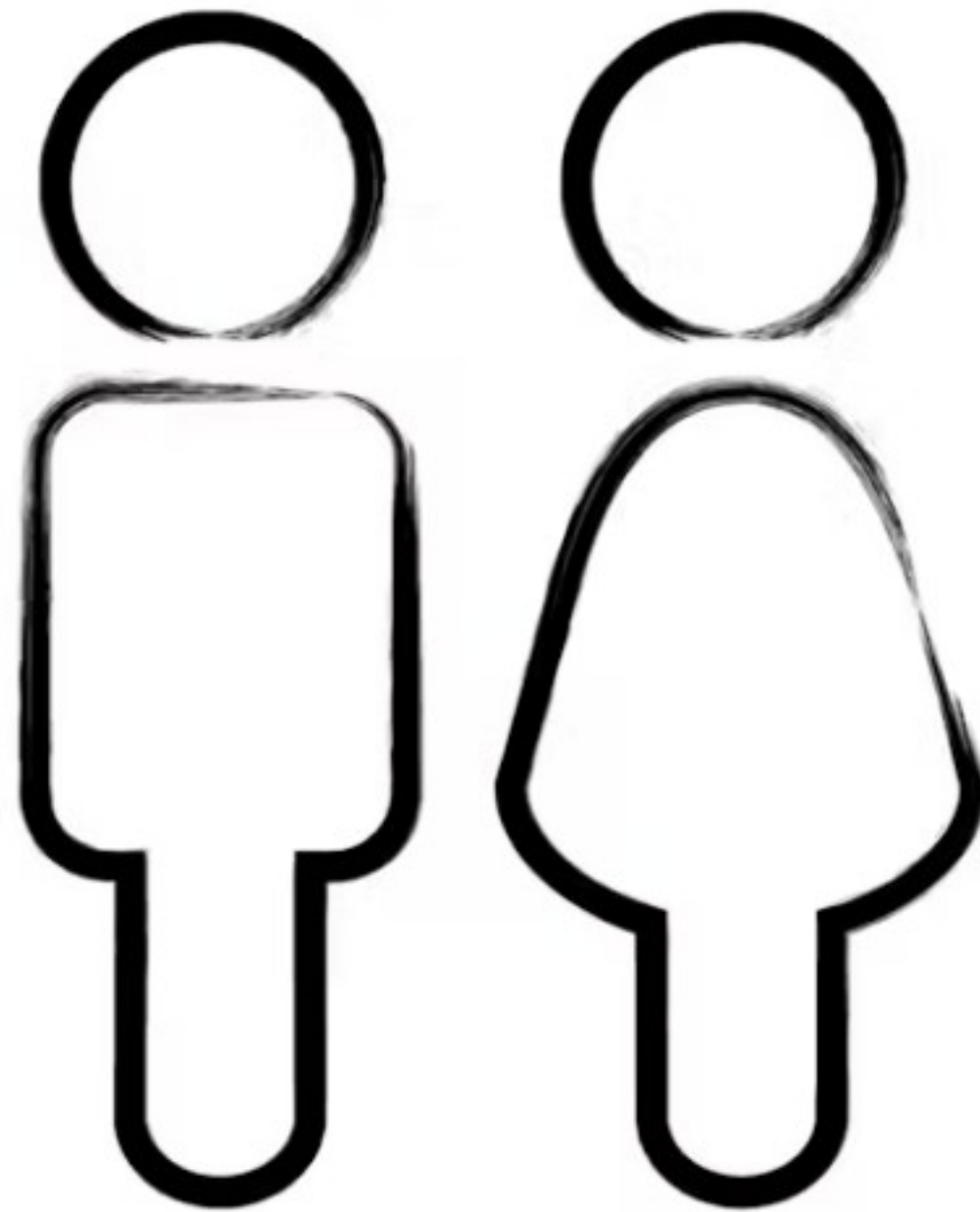
Not confident

Very confident



## The Consequences of Cis-Gendered Assumptions

- Anger & Aggression
- Criminality
- Strong and self-reliant
- Not requiring protection
- Victim status questioned



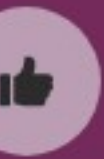
- Emotional
- Vulnerable
- In need of protection
- Victim status afforded


# Case Study: Billie

- Billie is a transgender boy who was reported missing
- Billie was at his friend James' house
- James had introduced Billie to his Mum using their masculine name and he/him pronouns
- Police called James' Mum to ask if Billie was there, using a feminine name and she/her pronouns
- Resulted in delay in confirmation that Billie was in fact the young person at James' house and that he was safe



# Risks to Trans Young People





Lack of privacy



Fear of violence  
leading to self  
exclusion

Disproportionately  
Affected by  
Homelessness



Housing Benefit  
for Under 35s



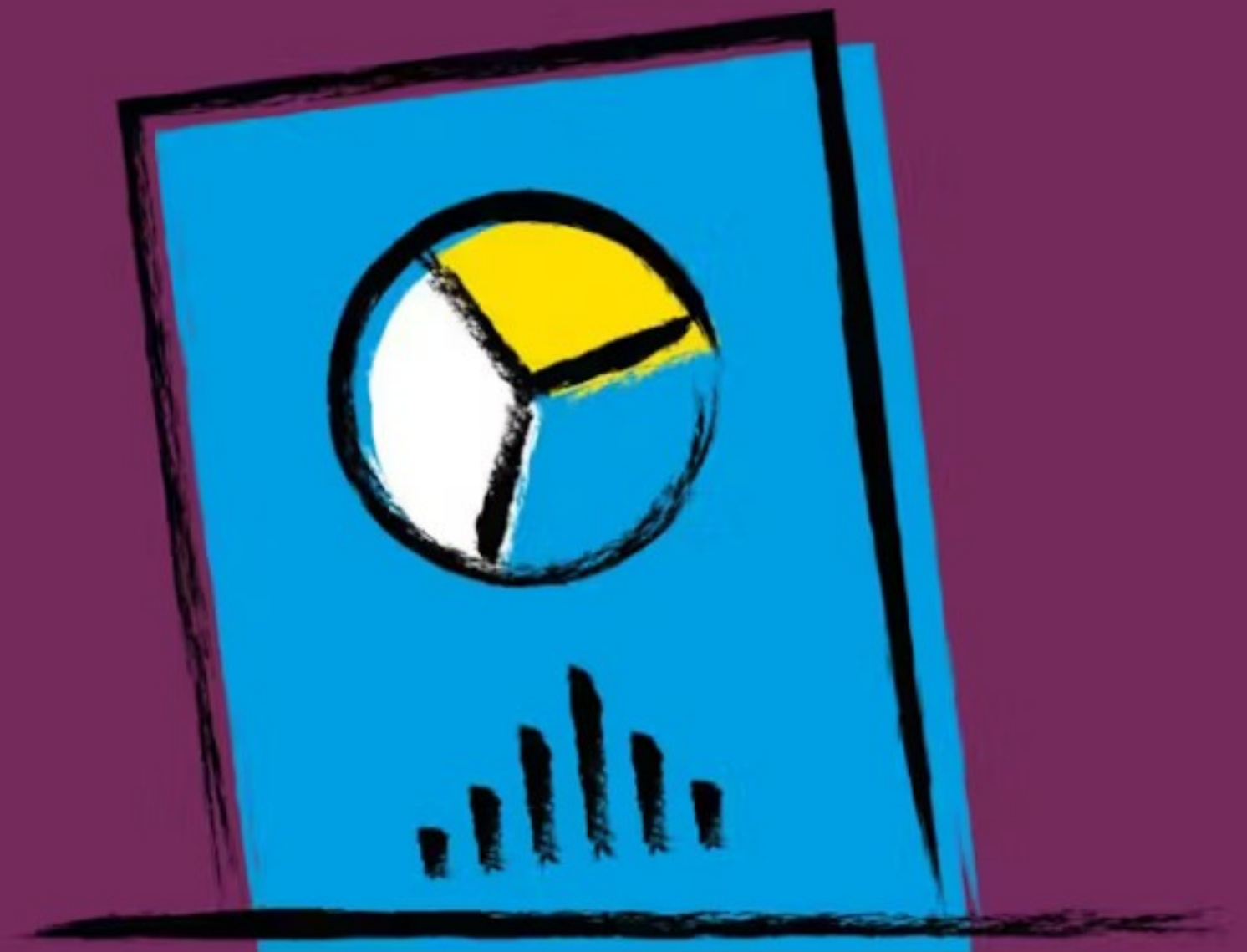
Gendered  
Provision

**Additional  
Considerations  
When  
Assessing  
Exploitation  
Risk**



A look at the stats - who is included

- Census 2021 – 262,000 answered no to “Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?”
- Homeless data – male and female
- Data is collected on the gender identity of applicants for the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) – female, male and other.



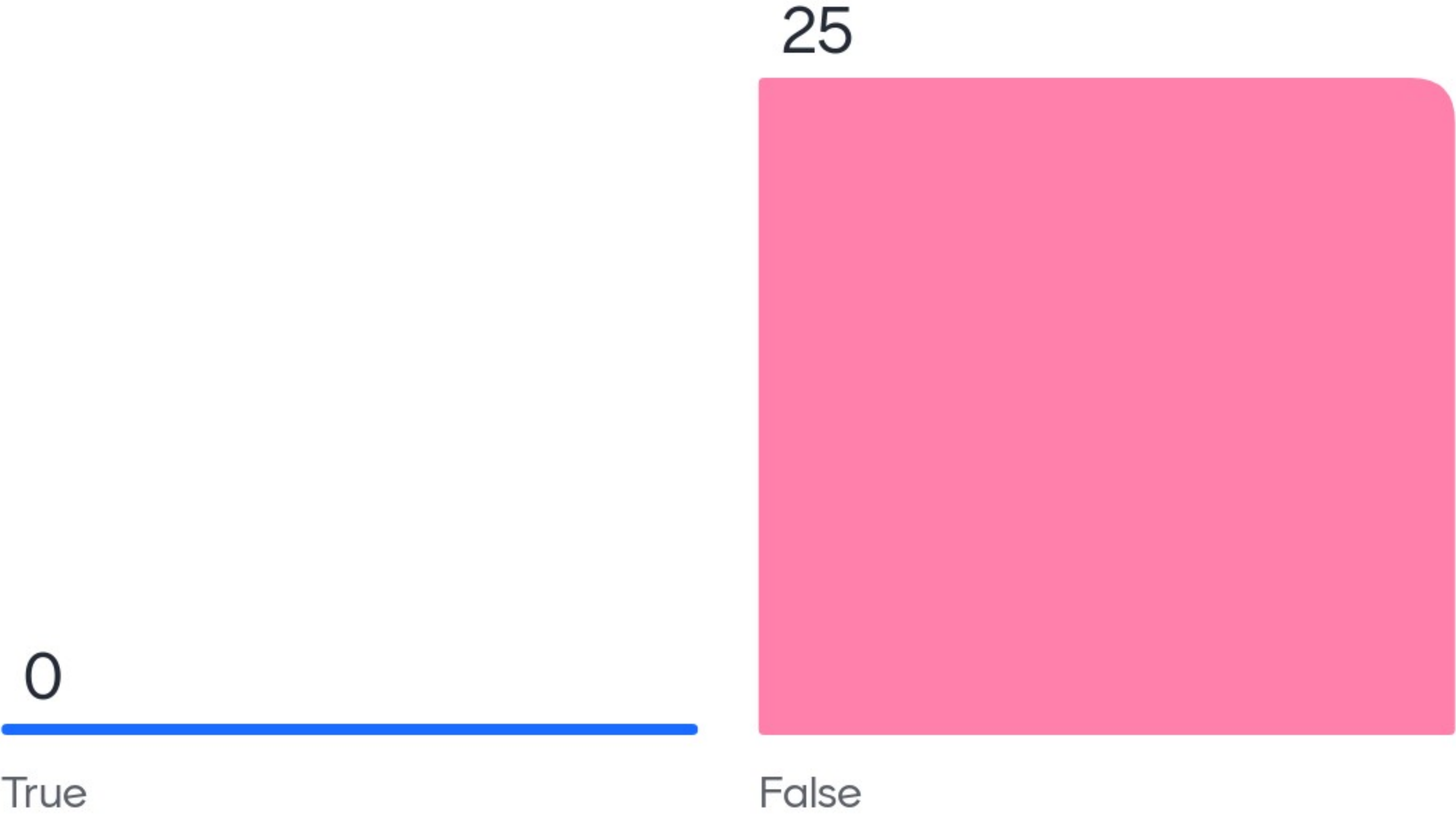
## Transitions to adulthood

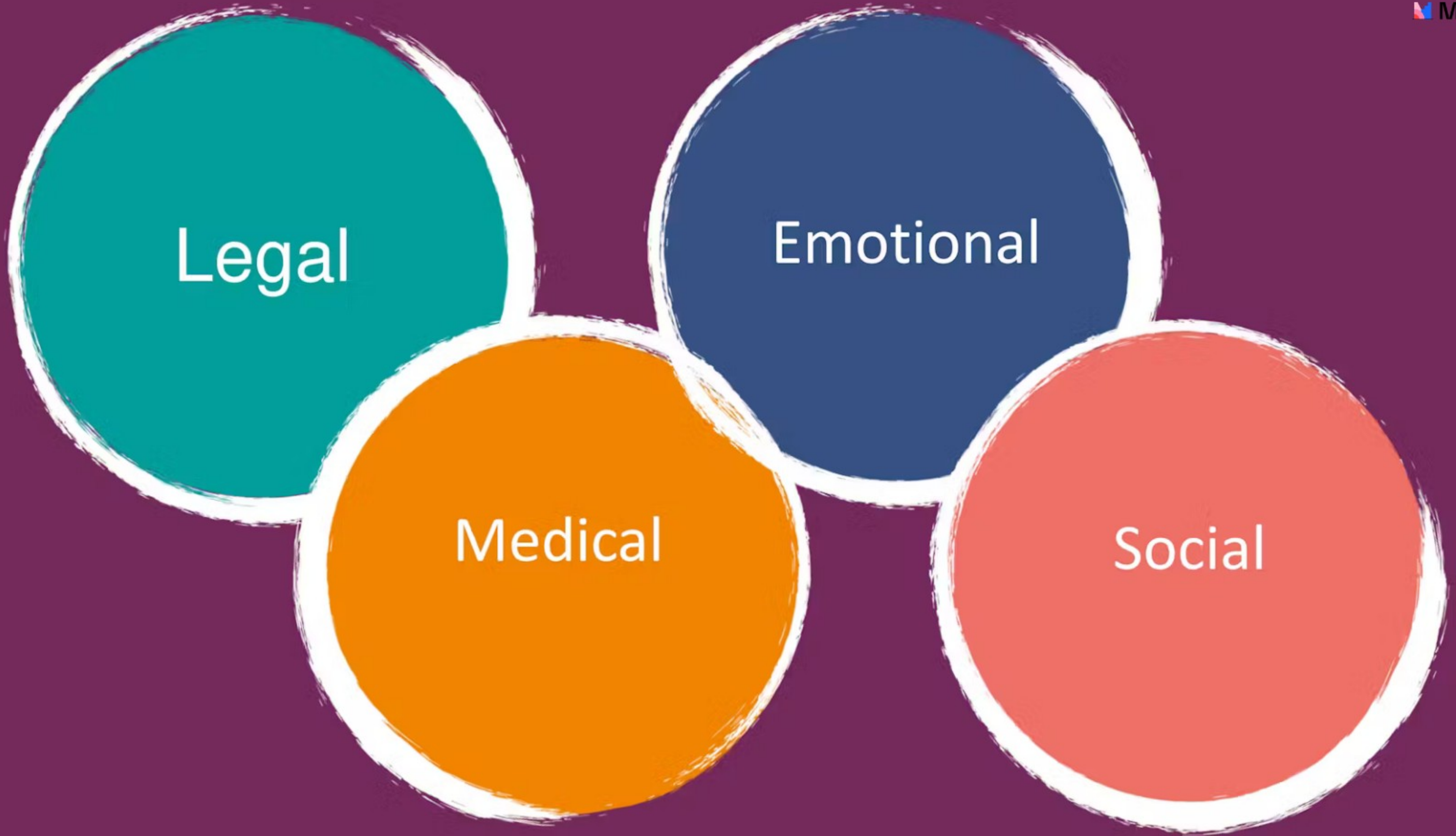
- Adolescence marks a period of growth from childhood into adulthood. During this time we experience change.
- Our brains continue to develop and mature up until our mid to late twenties.
- The period of adolescence has expanded with many young people not having children, getting married or being economically independent until their mid to late twenties.
- Trans young people are disproportionately affected by homelessness placing them at greater risk of exploitation.





# All transgender people medically transition





“Some transgender people choose to medically transition, and some don’t. Some may not be able to due to waiting times for healthcare. Some transgender people choose to legally change their names or ID documents, and some don’t. Some transgender people choose to change their appearance (like their clothing or hair), and some don’t. Likewise, some transgender people may want to do many of those things but are unable to because they can’t afford it or for safety reasons. A transgender person’s identity does not depend on what things they have or haven’t done to transition, and no two transgender people’s journeys are exactly alike.”


— **Supporting the Transgender People in Your Life: A Guide to Being a Good Ally**

## Mental Health Outcomes

- 92% of trans young people have thought about taking their own life. 84% of trans young people have self harmed and 45% of trans young people have tried to take their own life - Stonewall School Report 2017
- Trans young people are more likely to seek support from LGBT individuals or youth groups than specialist mental health services.
- Furthermore in terms of access to support services in general, where transgender young people were asked how or where they would prefer to access support, most stated they would look to access this online, whether within online forums or seeking out self-help information and resources.



# Experiences of Trans Young People in Relation to Exploitation



## Case Study: Jay

Jay is a trans young person who is 16 year old. They have very low attendance at school and came to the attention of services due to a missing episode.

The social worker wanted to close the case, but the worker who conducted the return home interview is very concerned about Jay's understanding of boundaries and relationships. Jay's partner is regularly telling them 'You are lucky that I am going out with you...'



## Specific forms of abuse

Trans young people also experience specific forms of abuse that relate to their trans identity. According to GALOP, the LGBT+ anti-violence charity, perpetrators might; (1) withhold medication or prevent treatment related to the victim's transition, (2) refuse to use correct pronouns and prevent the victim from telling other people about their trans history or identity, or (3) convince the victim that nobody would believe them about the abuse because they are trans.





## Risks in Digital Spaces

- Limited parental monitoring
- Misinformation
- Increased contact with potential perpetrators
- Online harassment

'I've constantly been the victim of online abuse and it's always anonymous. It made me feel violated and awful – it created an overwhelming sense of guilt towards being trans, and increased the hatred I had for myself.' -

Christopher, 17, sixth form college (Yorkshire and the Humber), Stonewall School Report 2017

## Value in Digital Spaces

- Community/ Belonging
- Access to information
- Opportunities to explore gender identity
- Home is not always a place of safety

"My dad is transphobic and hates anything to do with LGBT [...] I'm scared what he might do if he finds out I'm trans.' -  
Transgender female, aged 14, Childline.





Have you seen anything on....that surprised you?

Tell me how you heard about...

Have you learnt anything new on...

What did you see on ....

## Conversation Starters



Do you think you'll go on ....again?

Has there been a time when ... made you uncomfortable?

How did you access...

Are there any hints/ tricks/ game cheats to use ...

Tell me what you like about...

Do you think you'll go on...



Lack of privacy



Fear of violence leading to self exclusion



Trauma & Adversity




Health/Lack of access

Disproportionately Affected by Homelessness




**Additional Considerations When Assessing Exploitation Risk**

Housing Benefit for Under 35s



Changes to support networks/ relationship breakdown

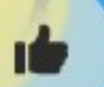


Relationship breakdown



Gendered Provision

Online Harms



# TCE Practice Principles - Toolkit



Trauma



Bias



Disproportionality



Recognise and challenge inequalities, exclusion and discrimination



## What are we hearing from professionals who work with trans young people?

- There is a lack of positive representation
- Safety and acceptance is often sought out in digital spaces
- Young trans people have been groomed to believe that being exploited is their only means of securing funds
- Responses from professionals, parents and carers exacerbate issues
- There is an increased risk of homelessness or moving from the family home into care
- The relationship model of exploitation is often employed



## GoodVibes Top Tips:

- Start with gender neutral language. Once you know, if you make a mistake apologise and move on.
- Avoid gender as a means of dividing people (such as 'boys go first') - make available options for all/neutral
- Challenge transphobic comments including jokes - this adds to transphobia and pushes at the boundaries of socially acceptable behaviours)
- Create neutral spaces such as toilets - 'all gender toilet'
- Confidentiality - only inform others with the YPs consent regarding gender and sexuality.
- Ensure forms include options for diverse genders, pronouns and sexualities.
- Respect chosen name and pronouns verbally and in records.
- Make the environment inviting - add pronouns to your emails, wear a pronouns badge.
- Be aware of micro-aggressions based on gender assumptions: *"I never would have known you were trans", "have you had the surgery", "are you male or female"*.
- If you have questions relating to sexuality and / or gender check that this is information you need to do your job to support or safeguard



## Remember:

- Being trans is not an inherent safeguarding issue.
- Not all TNB are conflicted about their identity. Equally not all are certain.
- Sexuality and Gender are different concepts.
- LGBTQ+ individuals rarely just 'come out' once - if you are cis gender, it is possible you never had to come out and define your gender or sexuality at all.
- Transition isn't just medical - emotional, social (pronouns, names, gender expression, spaces), legal and medical transitions. Most Trans people do not wish to (or in some cases are not able to) medically transition.
- Breathe - where are they at and what do they need at the moment?
- 'Individuate' – see the individual and their needs in front of you.





**“When I was younger, I wish I would have been told more often that I was right and nothing was wrong with me, that I was deserving of everything this world has to offer, and that my visions for my future were worthy of pursuit.”**

**-Janet Mock,  
Transgender Rights Activist**

To find support:

- **GoodVibes Swansea**
- **Switchboard**
- **Trans Aid Cymru**



Thank you for joining us today

We value your feedback



Please fill out the feedback form by scanning the QR code or following the link in the chat



Please put your email on the feedback form to receive a copy of today's slides



Scan the QR code to vote or go to  
<https://forms.office.com/e/T04scCMvyP>

[To work with us, email Prevention@childrensociety.org.uk](mailto:Prevention@childrensociety.org.uk)





# Resources

- [The Transgender Issue: An Argument for Justice | Shon Faye](#)
- [The LGBTQ+ Youth Homelessness Report | akt and Homeless Link](#)
- [Guidance: How Homeless Services Can Be More Inclusive and Support Young Trans People | akt and \[Homeless Link\]\(#\)](#)
- [LGBTQ+ Young People's Experiences of Residential Social Care in England | School of Social Policy: University of Birmingham](#)
- [Building Inclusive Housing Support for LGBTQ+ Communities | \[akt.org.uk\]\(#\)](#)
- [LGBT in Britain: Health Report | \[stonewall.org.uk\]\(#\)](#)
- [Disparities in Childhood Abuse Between Transgender and Cisgender Adolescents | \[National Library of Medicine\]\(#\)](#)
- [Resource for professionals to improve their trans inclusive practice | \[genderintelligence.co.uk\]\(#\) \[genderkit.org.uk\]\(#\)](#)



- [‘Mind the Gap: Transitional Safeguarding – Adolescence to Adulthood.’ Research in Practice](#)
- [Bridging the Gap: Transitional Safeguarding and the Role of Social Work with Adults | Research in Practice](#)
- ‘The age of adolescence’ | [The Lancet Child and Adolescent Health](#)
- Trans Equality ‘A guide to being a good ally’ | [transequality.org](https://transequality.org)
- Challenges young people are facing around sexuality and gender identity | [nspcc.org.uk](https://nspcc.org.uk)
- [School Report: The experiences of lesbian, gay, bi and trans young people in Britain’s schools in 2017 | stonewall.org.uk](#)
- [Trans Inclusion Schools Toolkit 2021 - Brighton & Hove City Council](#)
- [The Proud Trust - Youth Groups | theprodutrust.org.uk](#)
- [Best Practice Toolkits and Resources | stonewall.org.uk](#)
- [Transgender visibility and misconceptions | The Children’s Society](#)



- [Grounding Techniques \(Accessed on 12.10.2023\)](#)
- [Other Grounding Techniques \(Accessed on 12.10.2023\)](#)
- [TCE Practice Principles - 'Mind the Gap: Transitional Safeguarding – Adolescence to Adulthood.'](#)
- [Research in Practice](#)
- [#LookCloser Webpage](#)
- [Ygender - YouTube](#)
- [Wales Trans Resources](#)

