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## Tom-Girl, Trans Girl, Pink Boy: Finding a Support Group for All

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Our child, originally named John, was assigned male in utero. We still have the 20-week ultrasound picture on which my husband circled the penis pointed out by the technician. That first year, we dressed John in jeans, football jerseys, and baseball hats. From age 18 months on, however, he gravitated to all things “girl”—in clothes and toys. *Dora the Explorer* was a favorite, as was the color pink. He wore towels on his head for long hair and chose girls as his friends. At two and a half, John loved to wear my niece’s dress-up clothes. When she gave him her purple sequined princess dress to take home, John was in his glory. That dress was frequently worn in the house as well as outside, including our annual block party. Although his preschool picture shows him wearing a blazer and jeans, after school he would run home to his *Wizard of Oz* dress-up box. At that point, we viewed ourselves as progressive parents of a “sensitive” son. Honestly, we were more worried about his separation anxiety and sensory integration issues, particularly those related to the loud noises that often triggered major meltdowns.

As four-year-old John entered prekindergarten, we increasingly fielded his requests for pink clothes by trying to find those or other brightly colored compromises in the boys’ section. No easy feat. For Halloween that year, I selected his costume: Diego, *Dora’s* cousin. Though I thought it was a great choice, John did not. He wore it to school but immediately took it off when he got home, then improvised a witch costume for the evening’s trick-or-treating.

During that period, we began to notice that when John drew a picture of himself, it was always as a girl. He became obsessed with choosing his younger sister’s outfits each day, as well as dressing up his stuffed animals in her clothes. This was the year the bathing suit wars began. If it had been up to him, John would be in a flowered two-piece. At that point, I drew the line, mainly out of terror that he would be targeted.

My husband and I are both open-minded clinical psychologists who had some experience working with LGB teens and adults and an understanding of child development. Although I had briefly treated one college-age transgender