Gender identity is a way to describe how someone feels about their gender. For example, some people may identify as a boy or a girl, while others may find neither of these terms feel right for them, and identify as neither or somewhere in the middle. Although people often confuse them, gender identity is different from someone’s biological sex or assigned gender at birth and from [sexuality](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/sex-relationships/sexuality-sexual-orientation/) or who someone’s attracted to.

While many people identify with the gender they were assigned at birth, for others gender is more of a spectrum, with lots of different possible identities. Gender identity is a personal feeling, and a child or young person will be the best person to know what matches how they feel. Children and young people can also question or feel unsure about their gender identity, or find that their gender identity changes over time. This is sometimes called ‘gender fluid’.

Gender expression is how someone chooses to express their gender identity. This could be through the way they dress, speak or act. For example, by wearing dresses or choosing to shave. How someone looks or dresses does not always reflect their gender identity. Children and young people will feel comfortable expressing their gender identity at different ages and in different ways.