

FACTSHEET

TAKE 5: GENDER FLUIDITY AND DETRANSITION AMONG 2SLGBTQ+ YOUNG PEOPLE



On June 17, 2025, YouthREX hosted a [webinar with members of the research team leading the DARE \(Detransition Analysis, Representation, and Exploration\) study](#). [Dr. Kinnon R. MacKinnon](#), [MacGregor Goodman](#), [Ari Para](#), and [Madeline Rosen](#) discussed their recent research and care guidance to support 2SLGBTQ+ young people with fluid gender identities and expressions. Here are 5 key takeaways from the webinar:

01. Gender identities and expressions are fluid.

Gender identity and expression are fluid and expansive, particularly for 2SLGBTQ+ youth and young adults. Some people transition, detransition, and even retransition their gender. Experiencing fluid gender identities isn't necessarily a sign of regret or confusion, but instead may reflect changing needs, circumstances, or personal growth. The language and frameworks around gender are evolving, with young people often leading the charge.

02. Detransition and retransition are each part of the spectrum of gender experiences.

Detransition, defined by stopping, shifting, or reversing an initial gender transition, is not an abnormal or rare experience, but has been understudied and stigmatized, and is often misunderstood. Greater understanding of detransition and retransition through a 2SLGBTQ+ affirming lens can help to mitigate the associated challenges and bolster community-led care.

03. Detransition and retransition can be isolating, especially without affirming care.

Participants of the DARE study included individuals aged 16 or over who self-identified with experiences of detransition. Many shared feeling alienated or isolated in the experience of detransition, sometimes even losing access to the very care systems that supported them through transition. Peer support was identified as especially helpful, pointing to a gap in services that acknowledge the full spectrum of gender experiences.



04. Reasons for detransition and retransition are diverse and intersectional.

Through both survey and interview data, the DARE study found multiple pathways to detransition. The research team described both *internal* reasons (such as changes in identity, mental health, or neurodiversity) and *external* reasons (such as discrimination or lack of support). They highlighted that some participants questioned Western binary frameworks for gender, especially through an Indigenous lens.

05. Youth workers can play a role in offering non-judgemental and developmentally appropriate support.

DARE study participants noted that their mental health needs were overlooked by gender-affirming care systems, especially during periods of identity change. A key recommendation for caregivers and clinicians is to **provide affirming, age-appropriate, and holistic support**, including for social transition, identity exploration, and emotional wellbeing. This means moving beyond binary assumptions, embracing fluidity, and recognizing that regret or change does not invalidate someone's experience of transness.



LEARN MORE

- [The DARE Study](#)
- [Detrans Support](#) (provides evidence-based, community-led resources on detransition and retransition, available in English and French)