

# wife.

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"I used to be Jill.  
NOW I'M  
JADEN"

Jaden, 17, shares what it's  
like to be born a girl and  
undergo hormone therapy  
to become a boy.

On the outside, most people see me as an average 17-year-old boy. I wear baggy clothes and write cheesy love songs about girls which I play on my guitar, and am often caught drawing during class instead of paying attention. In many ways I am just a normal guy. But what people don't know is that underneath it

**I'm not fully a boy, but I'm transitioning to become one.** Soon the only

indication that I was ever born a girl will be old photos and the shots of testosterone I'll have to take for the rest of my life. And the first 15 years of my life; even if I wanted to, I could never erase that.

Growing up, I was a total tomboy. From the time I could get out of the dresses my mum put me in, I would. Still, I never read too much into it. **I just figured I was a tomboy.**

When I was in Year 10, I realised I was a lesbian. Coming out was surprisingly easy. My family had joked around about it already – it was like they already

knew. **I've been lucky to have such an amazing support system.**

I started going to a support group called Parents, Families & Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) and it was there I met my first transwoman, who was

43 years old. **A transperson is someone who feels their gender doesn't match their body.** When I

met her and realised she used to be a boy, I thought it was fascinating that you could actually change genders. Something clicked and I could picture myself transitioning when I was an adult, like she did.

Then, I met a 15-year-old transmale. "You can transition when you're our age?" I asked him in disbelief. "Yeah, just cut your hair, bind your breasts, and you can pass as a guy," he told me. That's when I started thinking it could be a real possibility for me.

I thought coming out as a lesbian would make me feel comfortable in my skin, but it didn't. **I knew I liked girls, but I didn't like the way I looked.** I tiptoed into transitioning by shopping in the boys' department. I went



home, put my new clothes on and looked in the mirror from the waist down. I looked just like a guy. That's what I wanted to look like, I thought.

I told my parents I wanted to become a boy one night in the car. I just blurted it out. They were both quiet and my mum said we would talk about it in the morning. The next day, my mum told me that she loved me no matter what and would always support me.

Cutting my hair was exhilarating. As soon as I saw myself in the mirror, I thought, this is who

I am. **My mum helped me bind my size 10C**

**breasts by wrapping a bandage around them, flattening them.** It was

a little painful, but when I looked in the mirror, I actually felt good.

Going to school with my new look was really scary. As soon as my dad dropped me off and I shut the door, I thought, what

did I just do? But **my friends were so supportive of my new look** and the more

compliments I got, the easier it became for me to walk around. One of my friends said, "I like your new look. It fits you." That was



the best compliment because I felt it fit me and I wanted other people to feel that as well.

I started taking hormones so my body would become more masculine. I have to take testosterone for the rest of my life, and it takes about five years to completely transition from female to male.

**The last step is getting the surgery when I'm 18.** So far, my breast

size has gone down two sizes and I've gotten a lot more hair.

Even though my friends and family have been supportive, transitioning has still been extremely difficult.

**It's hard to see one's body when**

**the parts don't match how I've always seen myself.** I shower in pitch black so I

don't have to see my body and get dressed under my covers. In the beginning, I didn't want Jill to be a part of my life. I used to say my life started when I was 16, when I became Jaden. But now, I am so proud of Jill. I will not hide her or who

I used to be. **I am a proud transman because it takes strength.** I want people to

know that I am a normal person. My brain doesn't recognise my body, but it's starting to

*I thought coming out as a lesbian would make me feel comfortable in my skin, but it didn't. I knew I liked girls, but I didn't like the way I looked.*

# "WE HAD AN INSTANT ATTRACTION"

Bridget, 19, and Shara, 18, now engaged, share what it feels like to find "the one" and how their relationship is like any other.

**Bridget says:** "I met Shara through a friend of mine when I was 17. I thought she was so beautiful at first, but as we got to know each other [I realised] she wasn't just stunning but funny and bubbly.

**I knew I was in love when I wanted to spend every second of my day with her.**

We broke up at one point because we let other people get in the way of our relationship, but we fought a lot [afterwards]. I figured that if we were fighting I was still able to talk to her and know what she was doing and who she was dating.

**Most of the friends from when we first started dating are not our friends anymore.** We

don't have too many friends [that] are not in relationships – it's harder to have time for them if they only have time for just one of us.

I know that if we keep standing up for our rights one day we will be able to have the

same rights as other couples. When we hold hands most people look at us like we have an infection that they are going to catch. But I could not care less about their

opinion, **I am so happy to have found someone I love so much. I wouldn't be anything without her."**

**Shara says:** "I was 16 when I met Bridget. She was beautiful and so down-to-earth, kind-hearted and sweet. She always made me feel amazing.

We broke up for about two months at one point. **We needed to grow up and be more serious**

about situations. I dated [other girls] for a while, but I remember thinking to myself, what am I doing with these girls? None of them could ever compare to Bridget.

We got back together when I decided that I was sick of pretending I didn't want

her, so **I just told her [that] I missed how we used to be and thankfully she still felt the same way.**

Both our families are always there for us and they are so excited that we just

got engaged. Her family is mine, and mine is hers, and they have always included the both of us in everything.

I honestly don't care about anyone's opinions. If they don't like that we are happy together, then I don't have time for them – chances are they're not very nice anyway, so it's their loss.

**Everywhere you go heterosexuals are**

**considered 'normal' and that bothers me.**

Signs advertising clothes or billboards advertising holidays always [show] a photo of a guy and a girl holding hands or kissing. Unless it's a gay event, I have never seen any sign with a

gay couple on it. **It's like, hello, get with the times, we aren't from another planet."**

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*Both our families are so excited that we just got engaged.*

