

Family shares their journey with their transgender child

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A Bay Area family is sharing their journey with their transgender child in hopes of educating others.

Lunch with Hendrix is a combination of whipped cream, cookies, crackers, more whipped cream, and given a little more time, we may have ended up with cake.

Hendrix tells me "When I start second grade, I'm going to start my own Instagram channel and I'm going to do a lot of cakes."

Those who love Hendrix described this second-grader as magical, a child who brims with energy and joy and on the day we hung out, there were lots of giggles. However, children, like Hendrix often find themselves the subject of highly-charged political conversations.

Hendrix told us that they prefer they/them pronouns explaining, "I was born with a boy body and then I was a girl. And then I wasn't either." I asked Hendrix how they knew which pronoun felt best and they said, "I just know, since I know that neither is usually have they them. I wanted to do they them."

We talked to Hendrix with the permission of their parents,

Hendrix's mom Miranda says, "It is scary to be a mom. It is scary to be a parent. It is scary to be Hendrix. Like, I mean, we have had to educate this child in ways that are like far beyond the bounds of what a seven-year-old should know."

However, Miranda and James say they also hope sharing their family's journey will also help educate others. This is not a journey they anticipated when they started their family.

James told us, "I think my expectation was going into it was much more like...we provide all this knowledge and support and love and, you know, kind of mold this child that we're going to have and it's how much we got in return in terms of them forming us and our...I never really expected."

Miranda told us "I think what James and I we talked about was you just worry about it being harder and like how you help with that."

Hard or not, they say they followed Hendrix's lead.

Miranda said, "I think when they were probably two, two and a half is the first time they asked for a dress."

She says, "I feel like as a human, you know what you want and you need. Like it does not matter how old you are, like, you know, but then that also kind of like goes up against like society and what society thinks and what society wants. So like, I remember calling (James), I mean, like, 'Hi, Hendrix really wants this frozen dress.'"

The two talked and she says, "It was more like a discussion not of like we wouldn't do it, but it was like, hey, like we're making a choice. Like if we do this... and you're like, yeah, cool."

She bought the dress "I put it on over the little tracksuit. We ate at Westfield mall and they got like a little macaroon after."

James says Hendrix's face lit up and Miranda wiped away tears at the memory.

"So we kind of just rolled with that," says James, "And if it was the dresses, you know, we never said, 'Hey, you should try this on.' Right. They saw that. They sought it out. And so we just kind of went this flow."

Miranda says, there was just one day when "we looked in Hendrix's closet and I like, 'huh, okay. It's like all dresses.'"

For Hendrix, being transgender also meant discovering which pronouns best fit them and that took time.

Hendrix's mom says, in the beginning "they would start to correct people that they were a boy and so like someone would say like, oh she's really cute. And Hendrix would turn around and like their thing that they would always say is, 'I am a boy, actually.' And it's like, it's like seared in my brain how they would say it."

Later Hendrix decided that did not feel right.

James says they asked Hendrix why, "It was funny is that we asked them like, hey, like, you know, how you now say you feel like a girl? Why before were you saying you are a boy? Like, what did you think that they told us?"

"Well, the only reason I thought it was a boy is because you told me it was."

Hendrix finally told their teachers what felt best.

"It was a near the end of kindergarten," explained James. "This whole cycle right before preschool, where they had went to their teachers and told me, 'Hey, like I actually feel more like a girl. I'd like you to refer to my pronouns as, you know, she, her, they, them.' Anything but boy, right? That is what they, they felt that was right. And they had mentioned there a couple of times with us beforehand."

And while Hendrix will tell you this is important to talk about that doesn't necessarily mean they want to. They said they'd rather not talk about it, but believe they need to remind people about it. Well, I don't really talk about it. Just remind. Yeah. And I can talk about it with my family."

Hendrix described their parents as "very nice."

And so they navigate this world together as a family. Miranda says, "I think the thing I am most proud of that we have done is Hendrix knows they can be whoever they are with us, right? We are very honest with them and we explain things like when Hendrix is going from being like identifying as she/her into identifying like solely as they/them like we did. We even talked about it and we said, hey buddy, as if we believe you and we know this is who you are and we will use these pronouns. But sometimes because you are a little kid, some people might think you are switching. And so we're going to roll it out a little more slowly with other people."

There are lots of challenges still ahead. Miranda says she is "more worried about adults and parents of kids that they go to school with" because, "that's the scary thing always is just like, who can you trust and who do you tell and when do you tell?"

Miranda says what she wants people to see more than anything is that, "My kid is like the most normal, sweet, loving, perfect human, truly like, they really are. And what about this magical human, is harmful, like literally nothing. They are rad as hell."

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