

# eheadspace evaluation Snapshot Report



## Young people's experience of eheadspace

### Summary

Young people accessing eheadspace services are very positive about their experiences.

**Nearly 8 in 10 indicated that they gained increased awareness of mental health and wellbeing support available to them, and many felt that eheadspace provided support they would not have been able to access otherwise:**

*"eheadspace gave me a place to confide in when I needed help but was too scared to reach out in real life. I'm scared of being judged by people but eheadspace takes that fear away and I feel free to speak my mind and get help when I need it."*  
**(gender diverse, aged 14)**

*"I feel comfortable knowing I can talk to anyone at anytime and not have to feel stressed and build things up. This has helped me make better decisions in that moment."*  
**(female, aged 23)**

This positive feedback suggests that eheadspace is delivering high-quality and effective youth-focused care tailored to the needs and priorities of young people. Almost 3 in 4 reported feeling confident in seeking future support, and the vast majority expressed satisfaction with the quality of support received.

eheadspace aims to empower young people by equipping them with knowledge, skills and strategies for managing their mental health and wellbeing. Notably, most respondents (69%) reported a better understanding of mental health and wellbeing as a result of engaging with the service.

Many also accessed additional headspace services, with over half visiting a headspace centre for in-person support and half participating in online community chats.

**Young people shared powerful stories of improved mental health and functioning, greater self-confidence, increased optimism and a stronger sense of belonging and community connection:**

*"My mental health has improved a lot after being able to use [eheadspace]. I use it to reach out when I'm dealing with tough situations in my life and to connect with people and feel less alone... [eheadspace] makes me see I'm not alone, people care about me and the world is a better place with me in it. This change to my mental health is the best thing to happen to me in a long time..."*  
**(gender diverse, aged 14)**

These positive outcomes suggest that eheadspace effectively supports sustained wellbeing and encourages future help-seeking.

## About eheadspace

eheadspace provides online and telephone mental health and wellbeing support to young people aged 12-25 years and their families. eheadspace addresses barriers to accessing support for young people and families across Australia, providing a free and youth-friendly place to connect with mental health professionals and peer workers via live webchat, group-based services, telephone and email.

eheadspace forms an integral part of headspace's integrated digital mental health programs and services aimed at supporting young people, families, and communities. This integrated suite of supports includes online tools and resources, personal toolkit spaces, interactive transdiagnostic skill building modules, and self-guided online therapy – all connected through a headspace account. Available through multiple digital modes, these services and supports complement and connect the experiences of service users across all parts of headspace, so young people, families and communities can access the right type of support when they need it and how they choose to receive it.






## The eheadspace young person experience survey

**The eheadspace young person experience survey was developed to:**

- increase understanding of why young people choose eheadspace
- explore the experience and satisfaction with eheadspace
- provide insights into what works and what could be improved
- build evidence about how eheadspace is making progress towards outcomes for young people.

The survey was part of a broader evaluation strategy developed to explore and demonstrate how and why headspace Digital Mental Health Programs (DMHP), including eheadspace, contribute to change for young people, families, and communities and to inform improvements and innovations in service design and delivery. At the heart of this evaluation strategy is an overarching Theory of Change, providing a roadmap from service activities to outcomes, underpinned by enablers that support staff to provide good care to young people and their families.

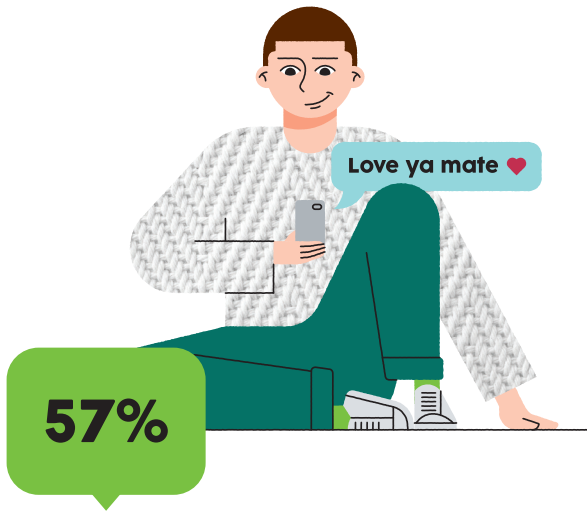
**The DMHP Theory of Change articulates the following five high level outcome domains that eheadspace aims to contribute to:**

-  increased access to and awareness of mental health and wellbeing support
-  a positive experience of mental health and wellbeing support and increased help-seeking capacity
-  increased capacity of young people to self-monitor and manage their mental health and wellbeing
-  improved mental health and wellbeing of young people
-  a strengthened and more integrated youth mental health system.

The eheadspace young person experience survey embedded stories of change methodology in its design, to gather evidence of the contribution of eheadspace to changes across these outcome domains, and to hear the voices and experiences of young people seeking mental health and wellbeing support.

Young people who had accessed eheadspace and received at least one 1:1 support service between 1 March 2023 and 29 February 2024 were invited to participate in the voluntary survey. A total of 210 surveys were completed (7 per cent response rate). Most respondents were female (68%) and aged 15-20 years old (54%). Twenty-one per cent identified as gender diverse, and 11 per cent male. Four in ten (43%) identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, asexual people, or people otherwise diverse in gender or sexual orientation (LGBTIQ+). Additionally, 6 per cent identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people, and 13 per cent identified as culturally and linguistically diverse. This is broadly representative of the general eheadspace population, except for an overrepresentation of gender diverse young people (which represented 8 per cent of all eheadspace users in FY 2024).

## What do young people tell us?



**57%**  
of young people agreed eheadspace provided support that they would have not been able to access otherwise

## Young people report increased access to mental health and wellbeing support

The survey results highlight the effectiveness of eheadspace in raising awareness and providing access to mental health and wellbeing support. Seventy-eight per cent of young people surveyed reported that eheadspace increased their awareness of mental health and wellbeing support available (Figure 1). Additionally, 57 per cent of young people agreed eheadspace provided support that they would have not been able to access otherwise.

### Stories of Change

*"I think that the idea that I can actually get help has become more solidified; because it was more accessible to me, and I was actually receiving advice and assistance, I actually came to believe that help was something that I could receive."*  
(gender diverse, aged 22)

*"More comfortable and at ease as I know there is someone I can speak to if I need to, because it is free and they seem to genuinely care."* (female, aged 18)

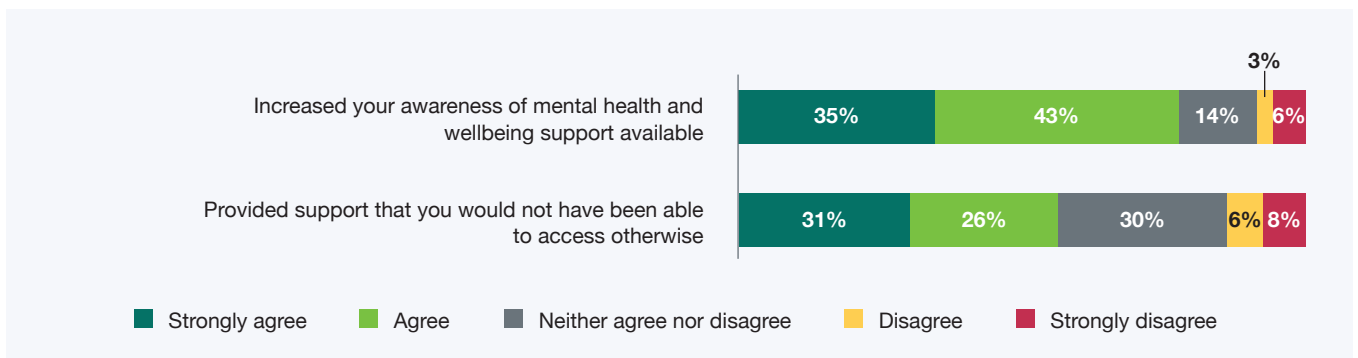


Figure 1. Access and awareness of mental health and wellbeing support following engagement with eheadspace (n=174) <sup>1</sup>

As part of the survey, respondents who reported that eheadspace provided support they wouldn't have been able to access otherwise were asked to explain why (Figure 2). One in four young people highlighted the advantage of eheadspace's online accessibility, while one in five appreciated its safe and youth-friendly environment. Additionally, respondents noted that eheadspace is a free service, along with the benefits of shorter wait times and longer opening hours compared to other services.

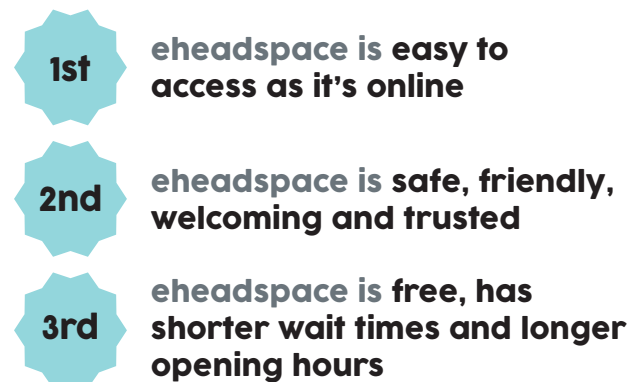
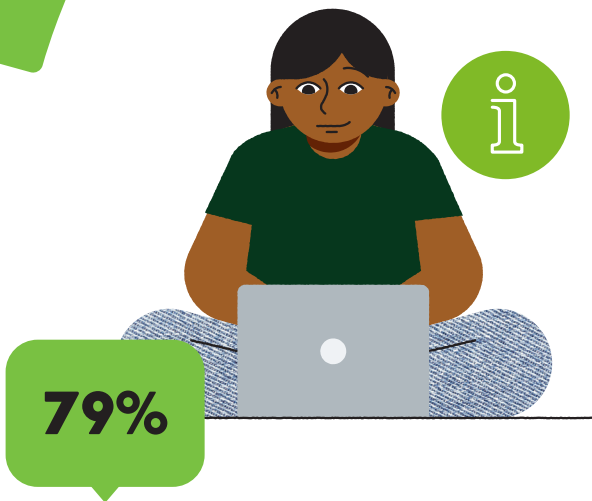


Figure 2. Highest ranked reasons why eheadspace enables young people to access support they might not have been able to access otherwise (n=98)

<sup>1</sup> Figures in these charts sometimes sum to more than 100% due to rounding.



**79%**  
**of young people rated timeliness of access as very or extremely important**

Respondents rated the importance of various aspects of accessing eheadspace (Figure 3). The survey results indicate that eheadspace plays a vital role in supporting young people’s mental health by providing accessible and timely assistance. Notably, 79 per cent of young people rated the availability of support when needed and not having to wait too long to talk to someone as ‘extremely important’ or ‘very important’. Additionally, 66 per cent reported that eheadspace offers an easy way to determine if they need support, while 62 per cent found that accessing support online is less confronting than in-person, with both aspects rated as ‘extremely important’ or ‘very important’.

*“I struggle to actually talk about my feelings and I don’t think there are many other options [like] webchat, where you can access anytime.” (female, aged 14)*

*“Online availability is very important, as I’m time poor.” (male, aged 23)*

*“It’s just really good to know that I can have support quite quickly and easily.” (female, aged 24)*

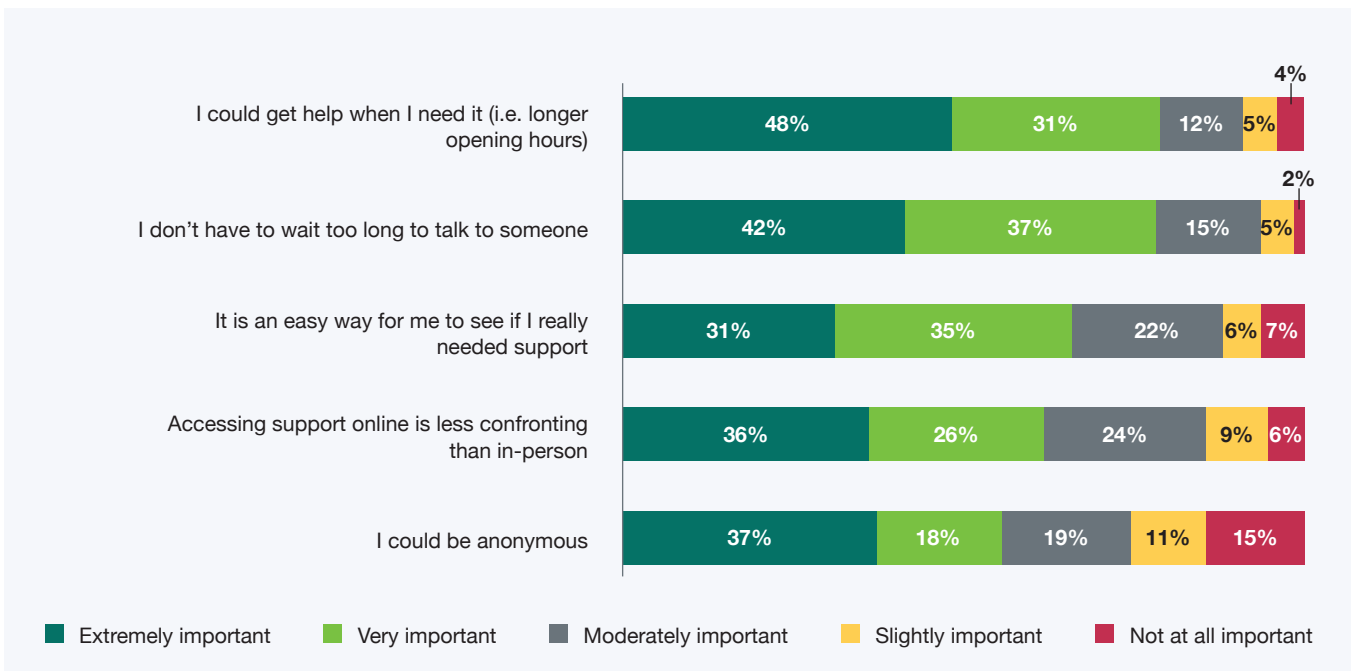


Figure 3. What was most important to young people when accessing eheadspace? (n=164)



74%

of young people agreed that eheadspace helped them feel more confident about seeking support from headspace services in the future

## Young people report a positive help-seeking experience and increased capacity to engage with support

Survey feedback highlights young people’s satisfaction with the service they received, and increased capacity to engage with mental health and wellbeing support in the future. Seventy-eight per cent of respondents reported that their overall experience of eheadspace was positive (Figure 4), and 87 per cent reported the quality of support received was ‘good’, ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’ (Figure 5). Additionally, 74 per cent agreed eheadspace increased their confidence to seek future support from headspace services, while 69 per cent agreed the service increased their confidence to seek support from other mental health and wellbeing services in the future (Figure 6).

### Stories of Change

“Being able to express my feelings without being afraid of being judged.” (male, aged 18)

“Growing confidence to ask for help about my mental health, this is important because if I don’t speak up I’ll never get better.” (female, aged 16)

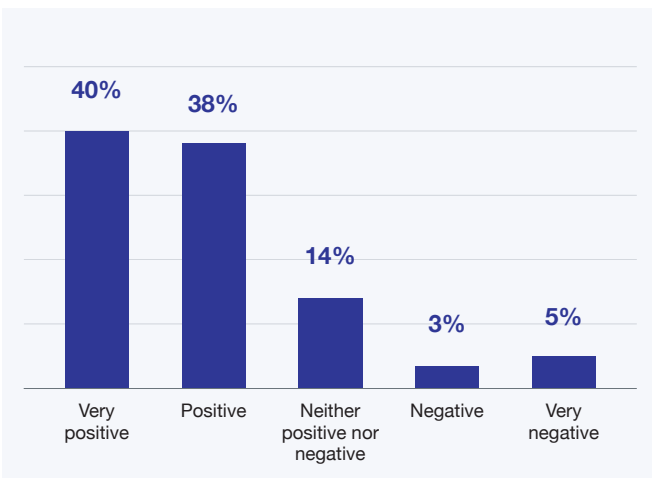


Figure 4. Overall experience of eheadspace (n=190)

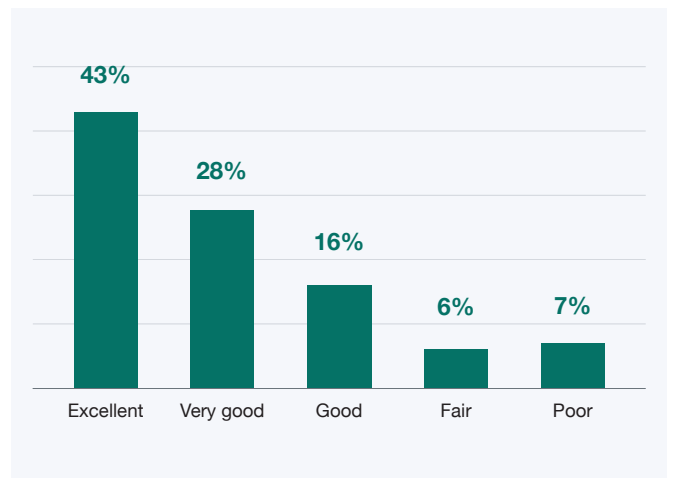


Figure 5. Overall quality of support received at eheadspace (n=155)

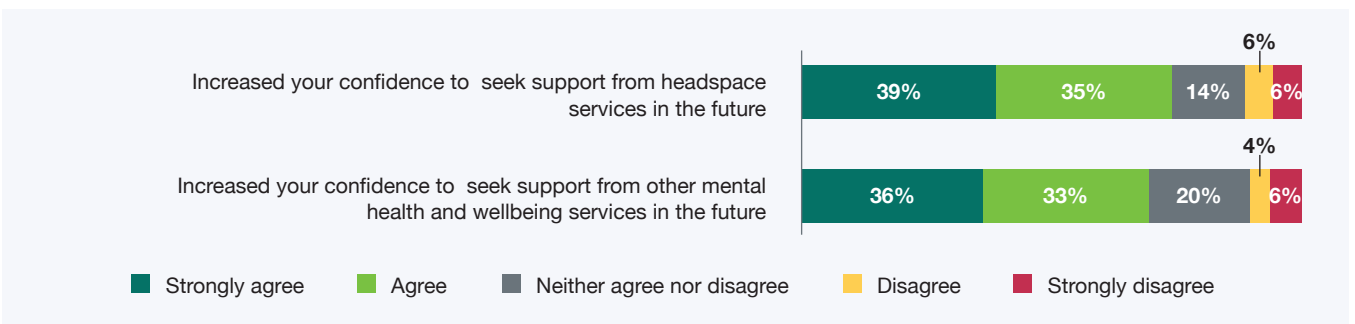


Figure 6. Confidence to seek mental health and wellbeing support following engagement with eheadspace (n=174)

**Young people report feeling better equipped to manage their mental health and wellbeing, leading to noticeable improvements in their overall mental health and functioning**

headspace aims to empower young people by equipping them with the knowledge, skills and strategies needed to effectively manage their mental health and wellbeing. Survey findings showed that 69 per cent of young people gained a better understanding of mental health and wellbeing as a result of engaging with the service (Figure 7).

**Stories of Change**



*“I have learnt how to self manage my emotions long before crisis point, I have reached crisis before and [headspace] has helped me build the foundations and confidence to self manage.” (female, aged 23)*

*“I feel that I understand my mental health better and know how to support myself more when times are tough.” (female, aged 19)*

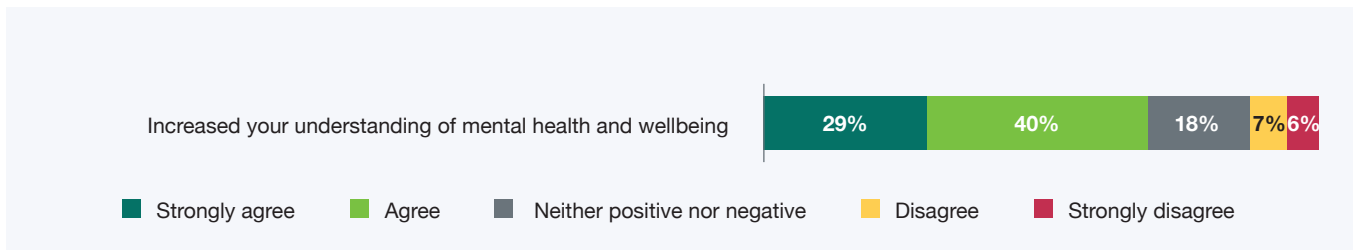


Figure 7. Understanding of mental health and wellbeing following engagement with headspace (n=174)

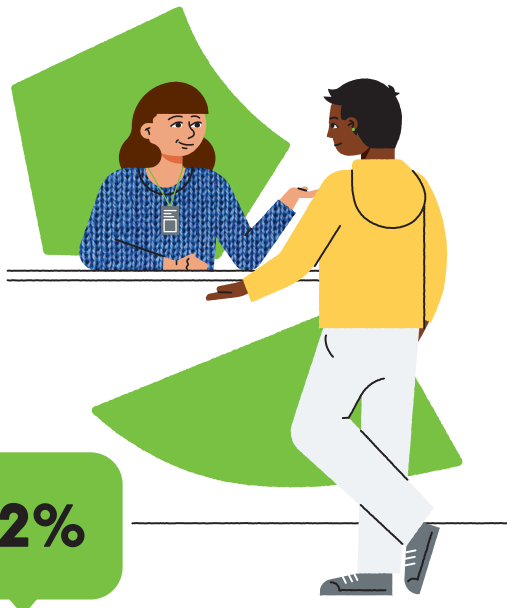
Open-ended responses highlight notable improvements in young people’s mental health and functioning, greater self-confidence, increased optimism, and a stronger sense of belonging and community connection.

**Stories of Change**

*“My anxiety is no longer ruling my life, I am able to work and function and breathe evenly. I feel like I had a lot of personal breakthroughs that I wouldn’t have had on my own.” (female, aged 23)*

*“I used to be dependent and a procrastinator, unable to get things done because of depression, anxiety or other mental and psychological issues. Being able to talk to those who feel my pain and offering support was a big lifesaver. Now I feel invigorated, ready to move on with my new and improved lifestyle, no longer bound to depression and no longer bound to low self esteem.” (male, aged 19)*

## eheadspace strengthens referral pathways and improves the integration of youth mental health support



**52%**  
of young people who used eheadspace reported accessing a headspace centre

eheadspace is a vital component of the integrated digital mental health support provided by headspace, and connects and links with headspace centres, providing young people with appropriate referral pathways to other mental health, physical health, alcohol and other drugs, and social and vocational services and supports as appropriate.

Survey results highlight the various ways eheadspace strengthens referral pathways and improves the integration of mental health support for young people (Figure 8). One in five respondents indicated that eheadspace helped them connect with a headspace centre for additional support, while 19 per cent reported being referred to other digital mental health programs. Many young people using eheadspace also accessed other headspace services. More than half (52%) reported visiting a headspace centre for in-person support, while 50 per cent of young people participated in online community chats.

### Stories of Change

*"eheadspace was the first place I contacted before going in person and it was good to understand about how important my problems were. This is important so I can understand that my problem is important too and go seek help." (female, aged 17)*

*"When I first started going to my local headspace I wasn't doing great and they recommended I use eheadspace in between sessions if I needed someone to talk to and this benefited me with a busy life with school, work and friends. As it gave me flexible times to talk to someone outside of sessions and provided me with the support I needed when I was breaking down." (gender diverse, aged 15)*

**42%** eheadspace helped young people access online resources

**21%** eheadspace connected young people with a headspace centre

**19%** eheadspace referred young people to other headspace digital mental health programs

Figure 8. Referral pathways for young people accessing eheadspace (n=210)

## Methods used

Data for this snapshot were collected from the eheadspace young person experience survey, administered through a Qualtrics online survey. Young people who had accessed eheadspace and received at least one 1:1 support service between 1 March 2023 and 29 February 2024 were invited to complete the voluntary survey. The survey was distributed via email to 3,067 young people who met the inclusion criteria, 210 surveys were completed (7 per cent response rate).

This is a Quality Assurance project covered by Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) at Royal Melbourne Hospital (QA2024034).



headspace centres and services operate across Australia, in metro, regional and rural areas, supporting young Australians and their families to be mentally healthy and engaged in their communities.



headspace would like to acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia's First People and Traditional Custodians. We value their cultures, identities, and continuing connection to country, waters, kin and community. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and are committed to making a positive contribution to the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, by providing services that are welcoming, safe, culturally appropriate and inclusive.



headspace is committed to embracing diversity and eliminating all forms of discrimination in the provision of health services. headspace welcomes all people irrespective of ethnicity, lifestyle choice, faith, sexual orientation and gender identity.