

Their future. Our responsibility.

Children, adolescents and gender identity.

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME:

Saturday 17 October 2026, Wellington NZ.



Registration from 8.30am. Speakers begin at 9am.

Each session will include time for Q&A
and an anonymous question box will be available.

Refreshments provided with vegetarian, vegan,
and gluten-free options.



Keynote Speaker: Dr Stella O'Malley

Dr O'Malley is a psychotherapist, author, and founder and director of Genspect, an international organisation that promotes evidence-based approaches to sex and gender. She also founded Beyond Trans, a professionally facilitated support programme for detransitioners, desisters, trans-identified and questioning people, and their families.

Stella holds a BA in Counselling and Psychotherapy, an MA in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, and a PhD from the University of Dundee, where her research examined parents' perspectives on gender dysphoria in childhood and adolescence. Her work focuses on parenting, family dynamics, adolescence, and mental health and she has written and presented extensively on gender-related issues for professional and public audiences.

Morning tea

The Gender Framework - Beyond Gender Dysphoria

In the first conference session Stella will introduce the Gender Framework, Genspect's guide for professionals and parents, and explore why she believes we've reached an impasse in the current "affirm versus oppose" debate. Stella will discuss the distinction between gender dysphoria and transgender ideation, the different developmental pathways that can lead to gender distress, and what this means for clinicians, educators and families. She will also explore how moving from protocols to individual clinical formulation can lead to better outcomes.





Maintain your frame: *accessible scientific reasoning in the debate on paediatric gender medicine*

Simon Tegg is a Director of Genspect New Zealand. He has worked in policy and research and now in software development for over a decade.

He will talk about the public service and puberty-blocker related health policy in New Zealand and comparisons with other jurisdictions.



Forbidden knowledge: *detrans.ai is making detransition stories and experiences more accessible to those questioning and curious.*

Peter James Steven, a Wellington local, is the creator of detrans.ai, an open source chatbot which retrieves,

quotes and summarizes detransitioner experiences from Reddit and Youtube. His goal with the project is to raise awareness about detransition, to challenge commonly held beliefs on this topic and make these stigmatised perspectives more accessible in order to help people better understand themselves before pursuing medical transition.

Lunch



Defeating oppressive regulators -
with and without law reform - a lawyer on what works and what doesn't

Stephen Franks will draw lessons on effective policy activism from 50 years as a lawyer, as a Member of Parliament and from leadership in business and community organisations.

He is currently a principal of specialist public law firm Franks Ogilvie and the chair of the Free Speech Union. Stephen has personal experience of regulatory complaints being used to muzzle dissent - a finding of unsatisfactory conduct issued against him by the Law Society was overturned in March, following a review.



Untangling the transgender web in schools

Fern Hickson is a retired teacher and co-founder of Resist Gender Education, an alliance of parents and educators that formed in 2021 to advocate for scientifically accurate and age-appropriate relationships and sexuality education (RSE).

Fern will outline the brand new curriculum and discuss whether it will provide the quality RSE that children deserve. She will take a look at some of the library books and other resources that continue promoting gender beliefs in schools and talk about what parents can do to counter them. Being well-informed is the first essential step towards challenging the hold this ideology has in education.

Afternoon tea

Beyond Trans:

What We've Learned Supporting Hundreds of Detransitioners

In her second session, Stella will explore what Genspect has learned through Beyond Trans. She will discuss the different groups it supports - detransitioners, desisters, trans-identified and trans-questioning people, and parents - and the practical lessons learned about the kinds of support that is most helpful. This session will also incorporate answers to questions from the anonymous question box.

Meeting with parents 4-5pm

The final hour will be devoted to a private meeting between Stella, parents of trans identifying children, and detransitioners or desisters. Please indicate your interest in this session at registration.