

Transgender teen finds support in family and community

“Now I feel I don’t have to hide,” said 17-year-old Matt Dawkins, who came out to his family as a transgender boy in late 2013 and to his school last fall. “I don’t have things hovering in the back of my mind. Everything is out in the open.”

In many ways, his journey has just begun. His body is only starting to change from female to male. Decisions loom on what medical options to pursue.

That he has gotten here is a testament to his determination to be who he is, support at school and home, and a mother who, despite her own sense of loss, never stopped advocating for her child.

His experience is by no means the norm. In a survey by the National Center for Transgender Equality, 41 percent of transgender people ages 18 to 35 responding had attempted suicide. Seventy-eight percent said they were harassed at school.

An estimated 0.3 percent of the adult U.S. population, transgender people are often misunderstood and marginalized, even disbelieved. Alienated from their own bodies, many plummet into desperation and despair.

When Matt started weekly testosterone shots on March 11, Grammy Faith baked a cake. The family called it his new birthday. Jada, his fraternal twin sister, agreed to administer his injections. She’s into it.

“I’m really proud I’m helping him become who he wants to be,” Jada said.

The shots can’t work fast enough, as far as Matt’s concerned. He can’t wait until people just look at him and say, “That is a guy.” When he doesn’t have to correct pronouns or explain himself.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: [A Boy By Any Name](#)