

Examining the link between autism and gender nonconformity

Traits associated with autism and gender variance co-occur even among typical children, a new study [suggests](#). The finding may ease some of the skepticism about the overlap between autism and gender nonconformity.

In a commentary published earlier this month, two physicians questioned whether the link between autism and gender dysphoria — distress over the mismatch between the gender assigned to a person at birth and the gender they identify with — is real. The commentary drew swift rebuttals in the journal from scientists who study the overlap, who argue that “perpetuating misunderstanding” about the link delays these autistic individuals’ access to care.

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Because the field is still evolving, the exact numbers for the overlap between autism and gender variance vary widely: Between 6 and 26 percent of gender-variant people meet the criteria [for autism](#); conversely, between 4 and 8 percent of autistic people are [gender variant](#).

[T]he new work reveals an association between gender variance and autism traits among 6- to 12-year-old children in the general population.

The study is the first to suggest this “more ubiquitous pattern,” says lead researcher Doug VanderLaan, assistant professor of psychology at the University of Toronto Mississauga in Canada.

Read full, original post: [Study strengthens autism’s curious link to gender variance](#)