
FTM Sonoma County 2008 Survey

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Introduction

This report summarizes the results of a survey of people in Sonoma County, California, who identify anywhere on the transmasculine continuum (people assigned female at birth who don't identify as such) and those they love. A Glossary of Terms can be found on page 4.

The FTM Sonoma County 2008 Survey was conducted from February 27 through March 10, 2008, on behalf of FTMsc (Female to Male Sonoma County). FTMsc is a confidential support network established as an informal club in 2004. Its mission is to support people who identify anywhere on the transmasculine continuum in Sonoma County and the people they love.

Although the survey was conducted on behalf of FMTsc, any shortcomings or errors that may exist in the survey tool, data analysis or summary report are the sole responsibility of the author.

The survey was conducted entirely online. A link was distributed by email to individuals, list serves, nonprofits, organizations and groups. The link was also posted online at www.GaySonoma.com, Craigslis.com discussion forums, and on the FTMsc MySpace page.

A total of 28 participants started the survey and 20 completed it. This report summarizes their responses. After running calculations, percentages were rounded off to two decimals (e.g. 0.23188 becomes 23% in this report), resulting in small discrepancies in some instances (i.e. for some questions, percentages total 99% or 101% instead of 100%). The open-ended comments submitted by participants are included unedited and in no particular order.

The sample size is quite small, and the end user is strongly urged to avoid drawing any conclusions about the transmasculine community in Sonoma County as a whole based on the results of this survey.

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Acknowledgements

Thank you to Shaun, friend and co-founder of FTMsc. His support and edits of the first draft of the survey were much appreciated.

Thank you to Robin, my wife, who supports me unconditionally each time I decide to conduct yet another survey or take on a new project in support of a community group or good cause. I love you more than hamantashen!

Finally, a very special thank you to each person who participated in the survey. Your input will allow FTM Sonoma County to develop from an informal club into an organization that better serves the community. Thank you for taking the time to participate.

Sincerely,

Colin Close
Co-founder of FTMsc

Glossary of terms

Not all readers will agree with the descriptions of these terms as presented. The descriptions are offered as suggestions (rather than as definitive) in the hopes of raising awareness, stimulating thought and encouraging discussion.

Bigender – Two independent descriptions that do not necessarily overlap: 1. Inherent sense of one’s gender as being both man and woman, either simultaneously or at alternating times and 2. Moving between masculine and feminine gender-typed behavior or expression depending on context

FTM – Female to Male. Being born in a female body (or being born intersex and assigned female at birth) while having the persistent and inherent sense of being male.

Gender – As used in this survey, gender includes sex indicators (male, female or intersex) and gender identity indicators (for example FTM and MTF).

Gender Identity – The inherent and persistent sense or experience of being a man or a woman (or neither or both) that exists independent of the gender assigned at birth. NOTE: Gender identity does not predetermine or indicate one’s sexual orientation.

Genderqueer – Transcending binary gender assumptions. Identifying as other than exclusively man or woman

Intersex – Being born with genitalia, reproductive anatomy, secondary sex characteristics and/or sex chromosomes that are not exclusively male or female

MTF – Male to Female. Being born in a male body (or being born intersex and assigned male at birth) while having the persistent and inherent sense of being female.

SOFFA – Signification Other, Family, Friend or Ally

Transgender – Two independent descriptions that do not necessarily overlap: 1. Not identifying as the sex assigned at birth and 2. Expressing gender in ways that do not conform to socially accepted and expected norms.

Transman – Short for transgender man or transsexual man. Many transmen will identify as only one or the other (or neither)

Transwoman – Short for transgender woman or transsexual woman. Many transwomen will identify as only one or other (or neither)

Transmasculine - Assigned female at birth and having a masculine gender identity

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Summary of Results

Participants by identity – 27 responses

The vast majority of participants (78%) indicated they identify in some way on a transmasculine continuum (born “female” but don’t identify as such), and 22% indicated they are a significant other/partner/spouse or a friend.

<i>Does one of these descriptions match you?</i>		
I identify somewhere along the FTM trans continuum	19	70%
I’m a significant other/partner/spouse	2	7%
I’m a family member	0	0%
I’m a friend	4	15%
Other (please specify)	2	7%
<i>1. Transitioned awhile ago....why is the "F" still there?</i>		
<i>2. At one time in my life I would have identified as FTM. Now I think of my self as androgenous. In my brain I am more male than female</i>		

Participants by gender (select all that apply) – 28 responses

The top three descriptions selected by participants include:

- FTM (female to male) – 61%
- Transman – 50%
- Transgender – 36%

<i>Do any of these descriptions match your gender? (select all that apply)</i>		
Man born male	2	7%
Man born female	7	25%
FTM (female to male)	17	61%
Transman	14	50%
Transgender	10	36%
Genderqueer	4	14%
Bigender	0	0%
Woman born female	5	18%
Woman born male	1	4%
MTF (male to female)	0	0%
Transwoman	0	0%
Intersex	1	4%
Other (please specify)	3	11%
<i>1. Man with a medical condition = Male</i>		
<i>2. person who was born female</i>		
<i>3. Boy who was born female, don't consider myself a man yet</i>		

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Participants by age range – 25 responses

People less than 35 years old were not well represented in the survey.

- No one under age 18 participated.
- 12% were under 25.
- 36% of participants were less than 35 years old.

<i>How old are you?</i>		
Prefer not to answer	1	4%
Under 18 years	0	0%
18 to 24 years	3	12%
25 to 34 years	6	24%
35 to 44 years	4	16%
45 to 54 years	7	28%
55 to 64 years	4	16%
65 years or more	0	0%

Participants by race or ethnicity (select all that apply) – 26 responses

The top four race or ethnicity categories selected by participants include:

- White or Caucasian American – 81%
- Prefer not to answer – 12%
- American Indian or Native Alaskan – 12%
- Hispanic or Latino American – 12%

<i>What is your race or ethnicity? (select all that apply)</i>		
Prefer not to answer	3	12%
American Indian or Native Alaskan	3	12%
Asian American	0	0%
Black or African American	1	4%
Hispanic or Latino American	3	12%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0	0%
White or Caucasian American	21	81%
Other (please specify)	1	4%
<i>1. Native American mixed European</i>		

Participants by general location – 26 responses

All but one participant reported living in Sonoma County.

<i>Do you live in Sonoma County?</i>		
Yes	25	96%
No	1	4%

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Participants by Sonoma County incorporated city/town – 25 responses

The top two cities were Santa Rosa (44%) and Rohnert Park (20%).

<i>Which city do you live in (or closest to)?</i>		
Prefer not to say	1	4%
Cloverdale	1	4%
Cotati	0	0%
Healdsburg	2	8%
Petaluma	2	8%
Rohnert Park	5	20%
Santa Rosa	11	44%
Sebastopol	2	8%
Sonoma	0	0%
Windsor	1	4%

What participants want from FTMsc (in addition to current services) – 16 responses

<i>FTMsc offers monthly support meetings, occasional social gatherings, a Yahoo! Group for online discussions and speakers for events and classes. But what do YOU want?</i>
1. Support group meetings all over Sonoma County at public location
2. All of above
3. I'd like to see MCC support trans people more
4. Literature or assistance in changing behaviors that may come natural to me, but are offensive to FTMs (such as the bad habit I have of sometimes referring to my friend as "she" when I know he prefers the male pronoun. I just forget.
5. Sounds good.
6. Not ready for support group
7. As a pastor, I would like to know what you need from a pastoral position. I support my sisters and brothers in the "trans" community and their struggles and would like to be a spiritual support if I'm needed.
8. Speakers, social gatherings, support group; maybe switch off the days used for these
9. More people involved in leading, helping, planning FTMsc
10. more frequent social gatherings.....make the camping trip an annual event support groups and meetings
11. More meetings available for significant others.
12. More social gatherings!
13. The offerings above are fine with me.
14. More social gatherings.
15. Peace on Earth and a decent pecker. (Yes, Pecker, not packer!)
16. I would like more social events

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Number of FTMsc support meetings attended in past 12 months – 23 responses

More than half (52%) of participants indicated they have never attended an FTMsc support meeting.

<i>How many FTMsc support meetings have you attended in past 12 months?</i>		
0 meetings	12	52%
1 to 2 meetings	5	22%
3 to 4 meetings	3	13%
5 to 6 meetings	2	9%
7 to 8 meetings	1	4%

Level of satisfaction with FTMsc support meetings – 11 responses

All eleven participants who have attended meetings in the past 12 months reported a neutral to complete level of satisfaction with FTMsc support meetings. None indicated dissatisfaction.

- Completely or mostly satisfied: 64%
- Somewhat satisfied or neutral: 36%
- Dissatisfied (somewhat, mostly or completely): 0%

<i>How satisfied are you with FTMsc support meetings?</i>		
Completely satisfied	3	27%
Mostly satisfied	4	36%
Somewhat satisfied	2	18%
Neutral	2	18%
Somewhat dissatisfied	0	0%
Mostly dissatisfied	0	0%
Completely dissatisfied	0	0%

What participants like about FTMsc support meetings – 10 responses

<i>What do you like about FTMsc support meetings?</i>
1. Support, information, great people
2. Great community and people.
3. that they happen....that you don't feel alone and others have or are going through the same stuff...
4. friendly people
5. Great discussions; good to meet like-minded people; information sharing
6. Seeing people that share my experience. A chance to network.

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7. The nice people
8. Very good for FTMs to get together to talk, share ideas, thoughts, concerns, and socialize.
9. Hooking up with people similar to me.
10. The wide range of participants

How FTMsc support meetings could be improved – 9 responses

<i>How could we improve FTMsc support meetings?</i>
1. Bring in speakers, have topics of discussion and use survey results to improve FTMsc overall (not just meetings)
2. Held at public location.
3. have them more often
4. A little more structure would be nice. I.e., give each person space to speak so the verbally dominant don't, well, dominate the meeting
5. I really think significant others need a meeting place where they can get together and support eachother. I know that partners have just as hard a time as we do with the transitional process.
6. It's dandy just as it is.
7. Find meeting place within the community.
8. Make it more social. I'm bored with just talking about FTM stuff. Half FTM talk and half social with inclusion of significant others.
9. With more advertising

Assessing the current meeting schedule – 22 responses

The majority of participants indicated the typical schedule for FTMsc support meetings works with their schedule.

<i>The FTMsc support group usually meets once a month on a Sunday from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm. Does this work with your schedule?</i>		
Yes	18	82%
No	4	18%

Preferred day and time for FTMsc support meetings – 9 responses

<i>What is the best day/time for FTMsc support meetings each month for your schedule?</i>
1. Evenings.
2. depends on which Sunday
3. I suggest varied meeting times to accommodate other attendees. Sometimes I'd like the meetings to be earlier on a Sunday.
4. alternating days like 2nd wednesday of the month plus the regular sunday time.

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5. Sundays work for me
6. It's fine. Could be earlier too.
7. Saturday's mid afternoon.
8. I don't feel a need for a support meeting, I have several Trans friends in my life and no conflicts with family.
9. Sunday's or Wednesday's, in the afternoon or evening on either day.

Why some participants rarely or never attend support meetings – 21 responses

If you rarely or never attend meetings, can you tell us why? (select all that apply)		
Not applicable - I attend regularly	4	19%
I never knew FTMsc existed.	4	19%
I'm not old enough (under 18).	0	0%
The meetings are clean and sober.	0	0%
I feel too overwhelmed, but I want to go.	1	5%
I don't know which meetings are open to non-trans partners, friends and family members.	4	19%
I never know when and where the meetings are being held.	4	19%
I don't have transportation.	1	5%
I don't know anyone there, and that makes it hard to attend.	1	5%
I want to go, but I'm too busy.	4	19%
I'm not interested.	2	10%
I don't like the meeting location.	1	5%
I don't like the facilitated support group format.	1	5%
The meeting day/time doesn't work for me.	2	10%
I'm afraid I'll be "outed" by people if I attend.	0	0%
I worry that I won't fit in due to my age.	1	5%
I worry that I won't fit in due to my race/ethnicity.	0	0%
I worry that I won't fit in due to my gender identity.	1	5%
I worry that I won't fit in due to how I present my gender to the world	0	0%
I worry that I won't fit in due to my sexual orientation.	0	0%
I feel uncomfortable with one or more members.	1	5%
I don't feel ready to go to a meeting.	1	5%
Other (please specify)	6	29%
<i>1. I didn't even know there were meetings. Where are they? I would appreciate being educated on the issues.</i>		
<i>2. x</i>		
<i>3. The meeting is mostly for FTMs and it is uncomfortable for them and for me to be the only female listening to their personal information. Also it is hard for me to be in groups of people. I don't feel that I have anything of value to add to the group.</i>		
<i>4. Being a SOFFA ususally does not apply</i>		

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<p>5. <i>I would interested in a shorter period of structured time and the added component of unstructured social time with the inclusion of significant others/friends. I bored with talking about the same old FTM issues, etc for the whole meeting.</i></p>
<p>6. <i>No need for meetings as I have trans friends.</i></p>

New ideas for advertising FTMsc activities – 13 responses

<p><i>FTMsc currently advertises activities with email, with postings to various Yahoo! Groups, with posting to discussion forums on Craigslist, and with a MySpace page. What other ways should we be spreading the word?</i></p>
<p>1. establish a great website - a real one, 2. Find a non-residential meeting place so the meeting announcements can include location, 3. raise money and print up brochures and distribute them to Doctors, therapists, schools, at Pride, etc</p>
<p>2. That's awesome already. Maybe tabling at Sonoma County Pride?</p>
<p>3. Through MCC, They would be more supportive if they were given a chance</p>
<p>4. We the People</p>
<p>5. What about putting flyers in locations that are open to the community.</p>
<p>6. on top of rooftops:)</p>
<p>7. We the People - I guess it's only online now :(Flyers at Spectrum in Marin; maybe a mention on Spectrum's website?</p>
<p>8. www.facebook.com www.livejournal.com go to college campuses, GLBT headquarters/clubs and leave flyers.</p>
<p>9. Might I suggest an ad in the Bohemian or at least a trans friendly press so that people know we are out there?</p>
<p>10. Livejournal, flyers around colleges in the Women's and Gender Studies areas</p>
<p>11. I can't think of any other ways.</p>
<p>12. Craigslist woman to woman with a trans reference. Like the dances, etc.</p>
<p>13. A trans friendly news</p>

How FTMsc can best support the FTM trans community – 6 responses

<p><i>What else would you like FTMsc to know about how to best support the FTM trans community in Sonoma County?</i></p>
<p>1. Keep it up - it's a great start</p>
<p>2. Maybe we can fundraise to make flyers.</p>
<p>3. I don't know, I would like to give my support</p>
<p>4. That we really need each other - I need to know someone else understands...</p>
<p>5. I think it does a good job with supporting the community.</p>
<p>6. You should probably mention that there are dogs at the house, in case someone has pet allergies. Other than that, you guys are doing a great job.</p>