

The Alarming Findings of a New Study on Transgender Teens and Suicide

One in every two transgender adolescents who are born female but identify as male has attempted suicide in the past year, according to a new study.

The study, "[Transgender Adolescent Suicide Behavior](#)," was published in *Pediatrics*, the official peer-reviewed journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

It raises serious questions about how families, schools, doctors, government, and the media should grapple with the increasing number of children and teens who self-identify as transgender.

In addition to the alarmingly high rate of suicide attempts among transgender boys, the study reported an attempted-suicide rate of over 40 percent for adolescents who identify as gender nonconforming (neither exclusively male or female) and nearly 30 percent for transgender girls (children and teens who were born male but identify as female).

Researchers said they did not find any evidence that transgender youth of color were at a higher risk compared with white transgender adolescents. Higher levels of education among parents and geographical location—urban or rural—did not have a significant effect on suicide attempts.

To arrive at the results, three researchers from the University of Arizona analyzed a [survey](#) filled out by more than 120,000 young Americans between the ages of 11 and 19.

By comparison, they found that 14 percent of all teenagers had attempted suicide at least once.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, suicide is the second-leading cause of death among adolescents and young adults ages 10 to 34 in the U.S.

The study's leading author, Russell B. Toomey, focuses his work on youth who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or what they call queer—meaning that any attempts to discredit the research as “anti-LGBTQ” will likely fall flat.

Toomey describes his research in his [bio](#):

Largely, my research has examined these relationships with explicit attention to the minority-specific stressors of prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination that contribute to the disparate rates of negative outcomes experienced by sexual and gender diverse adolescents and Latinx youth, and the protective factors (e.g., family support, acceptance) that buffer these associations.

“Latinx” is a gender-neutral term that some use instead of Latino or Latina.

The new study comes on the heels of another alarming and controversial one examining the contagious nature of transgender ideology.

That study, published Tuesday in the journal PLOS One by Brown University's Lisa Littman, looked at “rapid-onset gender dysphoria”—that is, gender dysphoria not present in early youth but that manifested within days or weeks in teens and young adults.

Littman found that exposure to peers who identified as transgender and transgender-positive content online may contribute to development of this rapid-onset gender dysphoria.

Within days, Brown University [pulled down](#) an article promoting

Littman's study. The university said it removed the article in order to conduct an academic review, but it's clear the decision had more to do with political correctness and uncomfortable results.

Unlike "Transgender Adolescent Suicide Behavior," Littman's study wasn't peer-reviewed. Littman herself concluded that her study "raises questions for more research."

"One of the main conclusions is that more research needs to be done," she said.

The study by Toomey and fellow University of Arizona researchers Amy K. Syvertsen and Maura Shramko provides further evidence that research institutions should encourage more studies in this area—not shut them down. At this point, we don't just know that lives are at stake—we know how many lives are at stake.

And those numbers deserve repeating: One in two biological girls who identify as boys tried to kill themselves in the past year. Two in five gender-nonconforming adolescents tried to kill themselves. And three in 10 biological boys who identify as girls tried to kill themselves.

In discussing these results, Toomey described an "urgent need to understand why transgender, female to male, and nonbinary adolescents report engaging in suicide behavior at higher levels than other adolescent transgender populations."

He's right. But that's just the first of many questions this study begs to be answered.

There's no excuse. You can't be an ally of the transgender movement and reject this research. You can challenge it. You can debate it. You can encourage more of it. But you can't suppress it.

Doing so is harmful to the cause you claim to defend.

Every day, more and more children and teens are identifying as transgender. That's a fact that [The Atlantic](#) captured well:

In June 2016, the Williams Institute at the UCLA School of Law estimated that 1.4 million adults in the U.S. identify as transgender, a near-doubling of an estimate from about a decade earlier. As of 2017, according to the institute, about 150,000 teenagers ages 13 to 17 identified as trans. The number of young people seeking clinical services appears to be growing as well. A major clinic in the United Kingdom saw a more than 300 percent increase in new referrals over the past three years.

With more teens identifying as transgender, and attempted-suicide rates for this group between 30 and 51 percent, this has become a national epidemic. The time for political correctness has passed.

Families, schools, doctors, government, and the media have an obligation to figure out how to differentiate between celebrating differences and encouraging dangerous behavior. Because if being transgender poses such a grave risk to adolescent lives, it's hard to understand why any sane society would embrace the trend.

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