

My Daughter Went Transgender. I Was Powerless to Stop Doctors From Harming Her.

I am a mother whose daughter has identified as transgender since the age of 14. I love her, and I care deeply about her and other kids who identify as transgender.

There are young people, like my daughter, who are in turmoil, and who are not getting the compassionate care that they need and deserve.

I'm going to explain to you what happens when parents seek out expert advice to help their transgender-identifying children explore their feelings and discomfort with their sex.

The current standard of treatment promoted by medical and psychological associations is called "affirmative care." While this sounds nice, affirmative care leads directly to putting children on the path to medical transition with little chance of turning back.

Let me explain to you how this works.

If you take your child to a clinic to seek help, affirmative care means the therapist must follow the child's lead. The professionals must accept a child's professed gender identity. In fact, this is the law in many states.

Under "conversion therapy" bans, questioning a child's professed gender identity is now illegal.

So, if a little boy is 5 years old and believes he is the opposite sex, affirmative care means going along with his beliefs.

Parents are encouraged to refer to him as their “daughter” and let him choose a feminine name. Teachers are told to let him use the girls’ bathroom at school. Therapists will reassure parents that social transition is harmless and reversible.

Is it really harmless to tell a child who still believes in the tooth fairy that he is the opposite sex? Isn’t it quite likely that this child is just confused?

If a 10-year-old girl is uncomfortable with her developing body and suddenly insists she is a boy, affirmative care means blocking this girl’s puberty with powerful drugs.

Doctors will tell parents this is a perfectly safe and reversible way for her to explore her gender. Affirmative care does not help this child get to the cause of her discomfort.

Medicating her with these drugs is not safe. In fact, her future fertility, sexual functioning, and bone development may be negatively impacted.

Once the teenage years begin, affirmative care means giving young people cross-sex hormones. Girls as young as 12 are prescribed testosterone for lifetime usage, while boys are given estrogen.

These are serious hormonal treatments that impact brain development, cardiovascular health, and may increase the risk of cancer.

There are no long-term studies to prove this is necessary, safe, or prudent—but there are many known hazards to using these same hormones when medically treating adults.

What does affirmative care look like?

For girls, one standard procedure is called “gender-affirming top surgery,” also known as a double mastectomy. They are performed on girls as young as 13 years old—otherwise healthy girls who believe they are transgender.

Jazz Jennings is an example of affirmative care. His life has been documented in the TV drama "I Am Jazz."

Jazz was born a boy, but raised as a girl since the age of 5. He was treated hormonally since age 11. Last year, at the age of 17, Jazz had surgery to remove his penis and create a simulated vagina out of his stomach lining.

After surgery, Jazz's wounds began separating and a blood blister began to form. An emergency surgery was performed.

According to Jazz's doctor: "As I was getting her on the bed, I heard something go pop. When I looked, the whole thing had split open."

This is a medical experiment on a child that has been playing out on television for the past 12 years. No one knows what might happen next.

There are also teenage girls undergoing radical hysterectomies in the name of gender identity.

It's not acceptable for doctors to remove healthy limbs from children, so why is it acceptable for doctors to remove healthy reproductive organs from children?

I'm writing not just because I care about children who identify as transgender, but because I also care about their parents and other family members.

Parents are doing everything they can to help their kids lead healthy, happy, and fulfilling lives. Yet when parents seek out experts for help, they receive a one-size-fits-all narrative that has no basis in science, common sense, or compassion.

The "experts" tell parents that it is harmful to question their children's beliefs, that they must support their children's medical transition, which includes a lifetime dependence on hormones, and that if parents do not comply,

their children will be at higher risk of suicide.

These parents are being lied to as their children are harmed and their families are torn apart.

Why not help children learn to love the bodies in which they were born? Isn't that what the body-positivity movement is all about?

Transgender-identifying children need our compassion, and they need our help. They need responsible adults to gently question their beliefs, not blindly affirm them.

They need proper therapy and guidance, not drugs and surgeries. And the medical practices that are abusing them need to be shut down.

Please speak out for these children.

I am speaking out because I love my daughter. And it is because of her that I know what I have told you is true. She has been a victim of "gender affirming" medical procedures, and I was powerless to stop doctors from harming her.

Someday, I hope she will realize that I'm advocating for her health, and for her future. She has incredible courage, strength, and tenacity, as do many transgender-identifying youth.

We, as parents of these young people, advocate for our children because we love them. Many of us are going through unimaginable grief because we love them.

We are standing together, and we will never back down, because we love them. We parents have formed our own support groups and a new coalition—the [Kelsey Coalition](#)—to help spread this message and change the systems that failed our children.

Will you please stand with us?

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