

The Center for LGBTQ+ Health Equity, comprised of LGBTQ+ scholars, community leaders, and health advocacy experts strongly opposes Governor Greg Abbott's letter on February 22, 2022, ordering licensed providers to report parents of transgender children and adolescents to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) for child abuse. The state of Texas's position is dangerous and firmly against the best practices outlined by the [American Medical Association](#) and the [National Association of Social Workers, Texas](#). Furthermore, there are human and financial costs for false reports, and Governor Abbott's effort has the potential to detract from the vital work of DFPS personnel by creating baseless claims to clog an already overstretched system. We fiercely support transgender and nonbinary (TGNB) children, adolescents, and their families, and we commit to uphold the values and ethics of licensed professionals providing life-saving health care.

TGNB children, adolescents, and their families face toxic social and political climates regulating their gender expression and identity. Research clearly demonstrates the protective and life-saving benefits of gender affirming health care and the importance of parental support for child and adolescent gender affirmation and wellbeing (Bockting et al., 2019; Grossman et al., 2019; Hidalgo et al., 2017; Johnson, et al., 2020; Klein et al., 2016; Olson et al., 2011; Olson et al., 2016; Priest, 2019; Ryan et al., 2009; Simons et al., 2011; Weinhardt et al., 2019). Research also shows that acceptance and support, particularly from mental health and health care providers, schools, and most importantly, parents, are related to improved mental health and decreased risk for suicidal thoughts and behaviors for TGNB adolescents. In addition to supporting their child's gender affirmation and ensuring their TGNB child's wellbeing and safety, parents are now tasked with figuring out which health practitioners to trust and how to protect their children from state-sponsored discrimination and violence. Governor Abbott's insistence that licensed providers, including social workers, report families as child abusers illustrates how partisan political figures continue to intrude on personal lives, in ways that enable and justify dangerous social climates for TGNB children and adolescents. We are particularly concerned for Black, Indigenous, and other TGNB children and families of color, as these families have increased risk of simultaneous trans-related and racially motivated discrimination.

We want to be absolutely clear: *Parent support and gender affirming health care are lifesaving for transgender and nonbinary children and adolescents.* As a coalition of practitioners, educators, researchers, and activists, our duty is to uphold the dignity, self-worth, and human rights of all people, especially those who are targets of oppression and violence. We are committed to stand in resistance, loudly and boldly, to the dangerous social climate that Governor Abbott is stoking for TGNB children, adolescents, and families. We stand in solidarity with parents and caregivers of TGNB children as they strive for what all parents want: for their children to be safe, healthy, and affirmed in who they are.

Standing with TGNB children, adolescents, and families,

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