

In Solidarity with Transgender and Nonbinary Youth and Their Families

We, the faculty, staff, students and alumni of the University of Southern California's Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work, are taking action to show support of transgender and nonbinary youth and their families. Despite the progress that has been made, there are nearly 200 anti-LGBTQ+ bills in states all over the country, many targeting transgender and nonbinary youth. Most recently, Florida passed a bill restricting inclusion of LGBTQ+ related curricula in schools. According to the ACLU, these bills seek to criminalize healthcare, deny access to safe restrooms, restrict full participation in schools and sports, allow religious discrimination, and create obstacles for obtaining identification documents.

The actions of Texas Governor Greg Abbott are especially egregious. On February 22, 2022, Abbott signed a letter 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 values and ethics of licensed professionals providing life-saving health and mental health care. We join our colleagues from the [Center for LGBTQ+ Health Equity](#) in strongly opposing Governor Abbott's action.

We strongly oppose any legislative effort that does not uphold the dignity, self-worth, and human rights of all people, especially those who are targets of oppression and violence. We are particularly concerned for Black, Brown, Indigenous and other underrepresented transgender and nonbinary youth, as they have increased risk of simultaneous trans-related and racially motivated discrimination.

Statements of opposition express support yet are insufficient for creating change. Change starts with our efforts to create a welcoming and inclusive community for trans and nonbinary students, staff and faculty at the Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work and at USC at large. There are many additional ways we can all take action to demonstrate respect and support transgender and nonbinary youth and their families.

❖ We can take action by:

- Increasing our awareness and knowledge
- Showing respect and encouraging sharing of personal pronouns while respecting the choice not to disclose
- Showing gender-affirming support through listening, acknowledging, and growing from our mistakes
- Increasing our skills and working in a gender affirming and respectful way
- Increasing our effort to intervene against discrimination, harassment, hurtful speech and actions
- Increasing our advocacy for policies that affirm the rights and welfare of trans and nonbinary communities.

We can all pledge to [take action and show support](#) for transgender and nonbinary youth and their families.