

SSSS Statement of Support for Transgender, Gender Non-Conforming, and Gender Expansive Youth

In the wake of the increased volume of legislation targeting transgender youth, including laws banning access to gender-affirming healthcare, the Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality (SSSS) would like to unequivocally voice our condemnation of this structural oppression and violence towards transgender people.

In April 2021, Arkansas became the first state in the nation to effectively ban gender-affirming care for transgender and gender diverse youth. The law, H.B. 1570, prohibits youth under age 18 from receiving transitional or puberty-blocking hormones and surgery, allows private insurers to refuse gender-affirming care, and exposes healthcare providers serving transgender youth to potential lawsuits. Regrettably, Arkansas is not alone, as 15 other states are currently considering similar bills aimed at undermining the rights of transgender people. This trend is alarming and concerning. As an international organization dedicated to the advancement of sex science, we condemn these legislative efforts, as they are not based on scientific fact but on political fearmongering (Liebowitz et al., 2021; McDowell & Dowshen, 2021; Mehringer et al., 2019). These legislative actions and efforts are harmful not only because they directly block transgender people from accessing healthcare, but also because they contribute to increased marginalization, violence, and discrimination towards transgender people (Dowshen & Garofalo, 2009; Hughes et al., 2021; Janssen & Voss, 2021; Kidd et al., 2021).

We urge legislators to be informed by and to consult with healthcare professionals and experts regarding the latest scientific advancements in transgender care. A set of resources below can be consulted to support grass-roots advocacy efforts and promote gender-affirming care.

Callen-Lorde:

<https://callen-lorde.org/transhealth/>

Gender and Sexuality Development Program at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia:

<https://www.chop.edu/centers-programs/gender-and-sexuality-development-program>

Lambda Legal: https://www.lambdalegal.org/blog/20210407_1l-condemns-state-legislature-overriding-veto-of-youth-medical-care-ban

University of California San Francisco Transgender Care Program: <https://transcare.ucsf.edu/>

References

Dowshen, N., & Garofalo, R. (2009). Optimizing primary care for LGBTQ youth. *Contemporary Pediatrics*, 26(10), 58-66.

Hughes, L. D., Kidd, K. M., Gamarel, K. E., Operario, D., & Dowshen, N. (2021). “These Laws Will Be Devastating”: Provider Perspectives on Legislation Banning Gender-Affirming Care for Transgender Adolescents. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 69(6), 976–982.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2021.08.020>

Janssen, A., & Voss, R., & Written on behalf of the Gender Development Program at the Ann and Robert H. Lurie Children’s Hospital of Chicago. (2021). Policies sanctioning discrimination against transgender patients flout scientific evidence and threaten health and safety. *Transgender Health*, 6(2), 61-63. <https://doi.org/10.1089/trgh.2020.0078>

Kidd, K. M., Sequeira, G. M., Paglisotti, T., Katz-Wise, S. L., Kazmerski, T. M., Hillier, A., Miller, E., & Dowshen, N. (2021). “This could mean death for my child”: Parent perspectives on laws banning gender-affirming care for transgender adolescents. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 68(6), 1082–1088. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2020.09.010>

Leibowitz, S., Green, J., Massey, R., Boleware, A. M., Ehrensaft, D., Francis, W., Keo-Meir, C., Olson-Kennedy, A., Pardo, S., Rider, G. N., Schelling, E., Segovia, A., Tangpricha, V., Anderson, E., & T’Sjoen, G. & WPATH, USPATH, and EPATH Executive Committee and Board of Directors. (2020). Statement in response to calls for banning evidence-based supportive health interventions for transgender and gender diverse youth. *International Journal of Transgender Health*, 21(1), 111-112. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15532739.2020.1703652>

McDowell, A., & Dowshen, N. L. (2021). Measuring and addressing inequities in health care access for transgender and gender diverse youth in the US. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 68(3), 431–432. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2020.12.125>

Mehringer, J., Dowshen, N. L., & Mehringer, J. E. (2019). Sexual and reproductive health considerations among transgender and gender-expansive youth. *Current Problems in Pediatric & Adolescent Health Care*, 49(9), N.PAG <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cppeds.2019.100684>