



POLICY STATEMENT

On January 15, 2020, the Colorado State House of Representatives introduced House Bill 20-1114: Protection of Minors from Mutilation and Sterilization. Envision:You, Colorado's LGBTQ+ behavioral health initiative, along with several mainstream medical associations and public advocacy organizations that include One Colorado, warns of the dangers of interference in the care of transgender youth. A hearing on the legislation will be held on February 13th.

If enacted, HB20-1114 would force doctors to violate existing standards of medical care for transgender patients—standards that are endorsed by the American Academy of Pediatrics and other leading medical authorities.

According to Steven Haden, co-founder of Envision:You, “we are strongly opposed to this dangerous legislation that deny evidence-based medical interventions to transgender youth in Colorado.”

Research shows that transgender youth whose families support their gender identity have a 52% decrease in suicidal thoughts, a 48% decrease in suicide attempts, and significant increases in self-esteem and general health.

Best practice medical care for transgender youth simply delays puberty until they are old enough to make their own decisions about their lived gender. This bill aims to take away young people's choices and attempts to prevent them from fulfilling their right to live as the gender they know they are inside. Denying best practice medical care and support to transgender youth can be life-threatening. It has been shown to contribute to depression, social isolation, self-hatred, risk of self-harm, suicidal behavior, and more.

According to the What We Know Project, a Cornell University-based program that compiles and assesses research on various LGBTQ topics, out of 56 studies covering the impact of

transitioning on transgender individuals since 1991, 52 — or 93 percent — showed positive outcomes.

According to the analysis, transitioning typically results in “improved quality of life, greater relationship satisfaction, higher self-esteem and confidence, and reductions in anxiety, depression, suicidality, and substance use.” Not only do trans people benefit from transitioning, but those benefits have increased over time “as both surgical techniques and social support have improved.”

“Research consistently demonstrates that gender diverse youth who are supported to live and/or explore the gender role that is consistent with their gender identity have better mental health outcomes than those who are not.”

– **American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry**

“Unfortunately, many of the claims being made about gender-affirming care for transgender and gender-incongruent individuals are inaccurate. Policies concerning the diagnosis and treatment of transgender individuals should be based on science, not politics. Claims that a transgender child would receive surgical or irreversible hormonal treatment do not reflect the reality of medical practice.”

– **Endocrine Society**

“The AAP recommends taking a ‘gender-affirming,’ nonjudgmental approach that helps children feel safe in a society that too often marginalizes or stigmatizes those seen as different. The gender-affirming model strengthens family resiliency and takes the emphasis off heightened concerns over gender while allowing children the freedom to focus on academics, relationship-building and other typical developmental tasks.”

– **American Academy of Pediatrics**

The Envision:You mission is to support, educate and empower Colorado’s LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer/questioning) community living with a mental health or substance use disorder. Furthermore, we work to inform the public—including elected officials and policymakers—about the disparities in care facing LGBTQ+ people. Finally, we support partners and allies to enhance training, research, education, and resources to assist LGBTQ+ people. To learn more please visit: www.envision-you.org.