



Reproductive Rights Include Bodily Autonomy for Trans and Intersex Youth

Why it matters.

- Gender justice and reproductive rights movements are intersectional—and should ensure people of all genders can make their own decisions about their bodies and their futures.
- Protecting the right to self-determination of gender identity and bodily autonomy [is part of reproductive justice](#).
- We know that people of all genders need access to comprehensive reproductive health care that includes abortion and contraception, *and* they need policies that support parents and families.
- Trans youth also often need access to gender affirming care to make their own medical decisions about their bodies and futures—including their reproductive futures.
- [Gender affirming care encompasses](#) a range of social, psychological, behavioral, and medical care designed to support and affirm a person's individual gender identity. For trans youth, this includes treatment like hormone therapy or culturally and medically competent counseling.
- Gender affirming care is medically necessary and supported by all major medical organizations. Gender affirming care gives youth the right to be their most authentic self.
- Intersex youth need the same freedoms—but too often are unnecessarily sterilized or subjected to genital surgery as infants or young children, when they are too young to participate in decisions about their own futures.

Legislative attacks on trans and intersex youth:

- The same politicians who have long worked to take away our fundamental decisions related to reproductive health have also actively worked to take decisions away from trans and intersex youth—permanently.
- Politicians should have no role in interfering with decisions, like gender-affirming care or abortion care, that are best left to patients, their supportive families, and their medical providers.

- * **Current bans on gender-affirming healthcare:** As of August 2022, three states—Arizona, Arkansas, and Alabama—have enacted bans on some or all gender-affirming medical care for trans youth, going against medical best practices¹ Two other states, [Florida](#) and [Texas](#), have announced administrative policies that seek to do the same.
- * **Proposed federal bans on gender-affirming healthcare:** Multiple federal bills that would ban or limit access to gender-affirming care have also been introduced in Congress.²
- * **Bills that allow non-consensual intersex surgeries:** In the same bills banning gender affirming care, politicians are *allowing* genital surgeries and sterilization of intersex infants and children. This kind of provision has [appeared in nearly all of the bills](#) banning gender-affirming care, including all three enacted state laws and both federal bills.

The same anti-abortion groups are backing the politicians that put forth these efforts:

- These attacks on trans and intersex youth are being led by well-funded anti-abortion organizations Alliance Defending Freedom, the Heritage Foundation, and the Family Policy Alliance³—organizations who have long worked in the courts and statehouses to ban abortion and who see this as part of the same fight to enforce strict gender roles.
- These three organizations’ “Promise to America’s Children” campaign is a platform for consolidating opposition to abortion and LGBTQI+ rights. It calls for politicians to commit to “protecting” children from “the promotion of abortion, and politicized ideas about sexual orientation and gender identity.”⁴
- The extremist anti-abortion medical groups—the Christian Medical and Dental Association and the American College of Pediatrics⁵—are also central to the attacks on trans and intersex youth.
- These groups are trying to define the American family as a heteronormative, White, cis-, nuclear and able-bodied unit that leaves no room for anyone who does not conform to this oppressive view of families.

What gender equity and reproductive health and justice advocates can do:

- Build relationships with LGBTQI+, trans, and intersex groups and advocates in your state.
- Explore possibilities for joint actions, events, messaging, and organizing.
- Frame, message, and educate on abortion, trans, intersex, and other reproductive health bills as a slate.
- Learn about and lift up the voices and stories of trans and intersex youth of all genders.
- Understand the [common legal underpinnings of these fights](#), and coordinate on legal work.
- Promote and propose measures to support trans and intersex youth.

Finding partners in your state:

- Equality Federation member directory: <https://www.equalityfederation.org/federation-members>
- Centerlink: The Community of LGBT Centers member directory: <https://www.lgbtcenters.org/LGBTCenters>
- ACLU affiliates: <https://www.aclu.org/about/affiliates>

More information from national partners:

- Movement Advancement Project: [Efforts to Ban Health Care for Transgender Youth](#)
- NCTE State Action Center- <https://transequality.org/state-action-center>
- interACT: Advocates for Intersex Youth: [FAQ: What is intersex?](#)
- interACT: [Anti-Transgender Legislation Affects Intersex Kids, Too!](#)

FOOTNOTES

- 1 Movement Advancement Project, Healthcare Laws and Policies: Medical Care Bans, https://www.lgbtmap.org/equality-maps/healthcare_laws_and_policies/youth_medical_care_bans.
- 2 S. 788, 117th Cong. (2021-22); H.R. 1926 117th Cong. (2021-22); H.R. 8012, 116th Cong. (2019-20).
- 3 Alliance Defending Freedom, Defending Parent's Rights (Accessed May 2, 2022), <https://adflegal.org/issues/parental-rights>; Jared Eckert & Jay W. Richards, Heritage Foundation, State of the Union: An Annual Review of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Legislation (April 20, 2022), <https://www.heritage.org/sites/default/files/2022-04/BG3701.pdf>; Family Policy Alliance, Transgenderism & Gender Dysphoria (Accessed May 2, 2022), <https://familypolicyalliance.com/issues/sexuality/transgender/>.
- 4 Family Policy Alliance, Introducing the Promise to America's Children (Feb. 22, 2021), <https://familypolicyalliance.com/press-releases/introducing-the-promise-to-americas-children/>.
- 5 Christian Medical & Dental Ass'ns, Position & Public Policy Statements: Transgender identification (May 2021), <https://cmda.org/policy-issues-home/position-statements/>.