



Dear Affirming Providers,

We, the parents and caregivers of transgender youth, want to express our gratitude to affirming providers across the country and around the world for your commitment, compassion and care. Our families have benefitted from your life-saving guidance when we needed it the most, and for that, we say “thank you.”

We thank you for remaining firm in your commitment to do right by all patients, especially in the current political climate where politicians and anti-LGBTQ extremists are trying to dictate the health and wellbeing of our children.

We thank you for joining the growing ranks of those professionals working to understand trans identities and conducting the studies that will ensure our children have long, healthy futures.

We thank the hospitals that are opening more clinics and the therapists who are leading support groups across the country.

We thank the providers in small towns who are choosing to embrace inclusive care because they have a young trans person in their office and don’t want to turn them away.

Affirmative care is life-saving care. We know, because we have seen it with our own children. From four-year-olds who said they wanted to die, eight-year-olds who resorted to self-harm, to 12-year-olds who became withdrawn and sullen and 15-year-olds who turned to alcohol to cope; we have seen their spirits reborn when they were finally seen and acknowledged as their authentic gender. Sadly, headlines highlight the stark reality that children younger than 10 are taking their own lives because of rejection they face in their communities.

By supporting and affirming a child or teen as they figure out who they are, we are offering them the gift every young person deserves -- living without judgment, sadness, fear or shame. As the American Academy of Pediatrics has noted, “transgender children fare much better when they feel supported by their family, school and larger community. Shaming children based on their gender identity or expression is harmful to their social-emotional health and may have lifelong consequences.”

Part of the joy and challenge of parenting a gender-expansive child is that we know the starting point, but we don’t know the path our family’s journey will take. With affirmative care, families are comforted in knowing that we are pointing our children toward love, health and wholeness. When we stop imposing on our children notions of who they

“should” be, we are able to empower them -- and us -- to live healthier, more authentic lives.

Your reputations, your funding, your licenses and sometimes even your lives may be under attack because of your affirming and inclusive practices. But know that as you have had our backs, we parents have yours.

Some would like to see our kids disappear, to retreat into the closet and not live as boldly and unapologetically as they do. Transgender children do exist in large numbers; they aren't going anywhere. And neither will we. We stand with you, as well as our youth.

Signed,

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