



**For Immediate Release**

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**The Texas Transgender Nondiscrimination Scholars (TXTNS) statement on Gov. Greg Abbott's Feb. 22, 2022 Directive about Transgender Children**

Recently Governor Greg Abbott issued a directive that gender affirming treatment for children under the age of 21 is considered child abuse. Parents and professionals who are engaged in the transitioning process with children should be prosecuted and Child Protective Services (CPS) would be required to remove the children from the violating family or relatives.

This directive is based in stereotypical belief systems and not on best practices. Also, the religious right is strongly persecuting trans families unjustly. Science clearly indicates that transitioning children have a lower suicide rate, depression, and/or anxiety issues. The radical religious right is ignoring the following Biblical scriptures Isaiah 56:3-5, Matthew 19:12, and Acts 8:26-40.

Science and religion are two very different areas, however, they both tend to influence the transgender children who are transitioning. A hypothesis based in existing theories such as Epigenetic Systems Theory (EGST) suggests that a person can be born with a latent condition requiring an external stimulator to initiate. Such a condition could theoretically be a latent gender confirming behavior resting quietly until the child is made aware.

Another important distinction is the difference between sex and gender. Sex is an anatomical construct, which includes the 23<sup>rd</sup> chromosome pair. Sex is anatomical as in what can be seen or observed physically. Whereas, gender is a biopsychosocial construct that requires a number of influences (biological, psychological, and sociological conditions) in order for a child to identify who they are. By interchanging the words sex and gender a state of confusion becomes an issue from an institutional perspective.

Therefore, with these explanations it is important that people understand the needs of children who have come to realize that their gender (EGST) does not match their sex. Child abuse is a strong term that disrupts families and destroys trust in government and society. CPS, currently in Texas, is understaffed and over stressed which leads to errors in judgements. Many CPS agents are not trained social workers. Transitioning children under professional guidance with gender conforming behaviors is the best practice for avoiding destructive outcomes.

TXTNS does not support Governor Greg Abbott's directive concerning transitioning children and the actions against those who support the transition. TXTNS is available to help with positive policy programs to insure the best care for our children in Texas.

Thank You

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