

January 14th 2016

Press Release from Transgender Trend re Proposed Legislation

We recognise the importance of legislation to protect and ensure equality for transgender people but we are concerned about the new government report on transgender equality in terms of how it impacts on the rights of women and children.

The report notes "gender variance" under the trans umbrella term:

"the term "gender variance" is also used (often in respect of children or adolescents) to refer to behaviour and interests that are outside what is considered "normal" for a person's assigned (biological) sex"

Judging a child's sex by his or her behaviour and interests only serves to validate the gender stereotypes which are already forced on children by extreme gendered toy marketing. We should be giving children the opposite message: that it's 'normal' for boys to play with dolls and girls to play with trucks so that children develop tolerance and acceptance of any 'gender expression.' Schools should not be required to collude in the re-sexing of children who play with the "wrong" toys, nor teach them in PHSE lessons that it is possible to change sex.

We don't believe that children and young people need to change their sex to fit their interests.

We are concerned that the government advocates lowering the age when a child can legally change their gender from 18 to 16, and the consideration to reduce the amount of time required for assessment before puberty-blockers and cross-sex hormones can be prescribed. The claim that delaying treatment risks more harm than providing it is unsubstantiated. The suicide risk figure for transgender youth is shocking, but as the age group studied was 'under the age of 26' this does not provide any evidence that the reason for suicidality is a delay in treatment; factors of co-morbidity such as depression or psychological difficulties are not taken into account, nor the effects of the cross-sex hormone treatments themselves.

The government also states that puberty blockers are 'reversible' when we have no idea of the effects on a child's brain. Blockers prevent children from maturing and almost inevitably lead on to cross-sex hormones, setting children off on a path of life-time medication with some irreversible effects such as sterility. We think there should be more caution in the early treatment of children and young people, not less.

We are also concerned about the recommendation to amend the Equality Act so that women and girls effectively lose the right to single-sex toilets and bathrooms. If the basis of trans identification is to be "self-declaration" this clearly puts women and girls at risk from any man who may say he is a woman in order to access women's spaces.

We are glad that the government is "very cautious about recommending gender recognition in respect of children aged under 16"

We would like to see evidence of thorough research into the 'treatments' proposed for children, and their long-term effects; proper investigation into the documented high rates of co-morbidity amongst trans-identifying young people (autism, Aspergers syndrome etc); an examination of the psychological and societal pressures to conform to gender stereotypes, an investigation into the online trans forums and the part they play in convincing young people (especially girls) that they are trans; and a thorough study on the young people who realise they made a mistake and subsequently 'de-transition.'

We would also like to see evidence of measures to ensure the safety of women and girls in public toilets and changing rooms.

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Transgender Trend is a UK based organisation of parents who are concerned about the current trend to diagnose 'gender non-conforming' children as transgender. We are also concerned about legislation which places transgender rights above the right to safety for girls and women.

We have no religious or political affiliations, we are not 'anti' transgender and we support equal rights for all. We are concerned about the global rise in the number of children referred to gender clinics over the past few years. Our aim is to provide research-based resources for parents and all those concerned with this issue.

www.transgendertrend.com

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