

# Banning Conversion Therapy - Government Consultation

## Statement from Transgender Trend

- The government's public consultation on conversion therapy has been published. It's vital that everyone concerned about the 'transition' of children responds to this consultation to express their views.
- The government has produced a set of proposals in good faith in an attempt to protect everybody. But the language is not clear and there is too much room for confusion - not a good thing in government legislation.
- The consultation shows the problems when 'gender identity' is added to 'sexual orientation' in a ban, when they are two completely different things. It is impossible to force them to co-exist in a blanket ban as if they are the same.
- The government has been pressured into the impossible task of legislating to ban something which is a subjective, contested concept and not defined in law.
- Although, as the Times reports, the proposed bill may impact on organisations such as Mermaids, it could also affect parents who are honest with their children that you can't change sex. The proposals attempt to protect 'both ways.'
- Unless the bill builds in specific protections for parents, therapists, GP's, teachers, social workers etc. and specifically includes examples of what is NOT conversion therapy, it will leave many people afraid of how to treat a gender dysphoric child. This will put children at risk.
- Protection and safeguarding of vulnerable young people - such as Keira Bell - must be the priority in a government ban on conversion therapy and this needs to be explicit.
- If the government doesn't get this right, it will be gay and lesbian young people who are most put at risk of 'conversion therapy' through medical transition. That would be a disastrous unintended consequence.