



STATEMENT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF LOUISVILLE YOUTH GROUP
June 12, 2023

Louisville Youth Group (LYG) is a non-profit organization that has served thousands of LGBTQIA+ youth and their families in Kentuckiana for over thirty years. Our goal is to provide LGBTQIA+ young people with a safe and affirming space where they may grow into healthy and resilient leaders through community connection, life skills education, and social advocacy. We, the collective board of directors, write the following statement in rage, horror, and disbelief.

This Spring, the Kentucky General Assembly adopted vile legislation, over the veto of Governor Andy Beshear, that is profoundly and adversely affecting LGBTQIA+ youth and their families. Despite the strong opposition of every major medical and mental health association, the new law prohibits parents, healthcare professionals, teachers, and clergy from working together to lovingly and privately provide support to transgender youth. The legislation prohibits gender affirming medical care for minors, limits teachers' ability to discuss sexual orientation and gender identity in the classroom, requires schools to report gender non-conforming behavior to parents, and bans minors from changing the name or gender listed on their birth certificate.

The General Assembly has demonstrated great hubris by asserting that it knows better than the expert consensus and trans youth themselves. Our experience at LYG has shown that trans youth and the parents, educators, and healthcare professionals they turn to for guidance are in a far better position to make appropriate decisions. We trust them – and legislators should, too.

Adolescence is a challenging time for all, and societal stigma makes adolescence especially difficult for trans youth and their families. Trans children read and listen; they know they are the target of people in power and these "debates" negatively impact their mental health. We believe that there are far more urgent matters affecting Kentucky's children – including LGBTQIA+ children. The State experiences high levels of childhood poverty and is ranked number one in the country for child abuse. Instead of addressing these crucial issues, the General Assembly spent their time on legislation to erase transgender children from the public sphere and disempower those who support them.

With one voice, we disavow every single vote for this appalling legislation. Our hope is that the state and federal judiciary will swiftly invalidate these harmful laws, leaving trans children and those who love them to seek the affirming care and support they need to thrive.

Signed by Louisville Youth Group Board of Directors,
Casey Wagner, President
Hannah Worsham, Treasurer
Kate Vance, Secretary
Robert Curran
Angela Champion Sprowl
Dr. Ryan Combs
Beth Giesel
Dr. Bobbie Glass
Dr. Vicky Harris
Jennifer Kling
Basel Oakley
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