

What is gender affirming care?

Gender Affirming medical care is any mental or medical health care that seeks to affirm someone's gender identity, whether that is a transgender person or a cisgender person. This can include someone's transition from one gender to another or somewhere in between, depending on the person's gender identity and assigned sex at birth. Gender transition is a process that includes more than just medical intervention.

Despite the emphasis on medical care in media reports on transgender adults, gender transition for children who have not reached puberty is entirely a social process. The steps a family and community take to affirm a child's gender identity are called social transition. **Social transition is completely reversible if the child determines it's not right for them and is always the first step in the process.**

It's important to remember that gender identity is a spectrum of experiences and gender transition will look different for everyone!

What's the process for youth affirming care?

Gender affirming care is always an interdisciplinary process, especially for minors.

Therapists, parents, and medical providers work together to determine which changes to make at a given time that are in the best interest of the child. Most children who experience significant gender dysphoria in early adolescence (or who have undergone an early social transition) will continue to have a transgender identity throughout life.



Gender affirming care has been shown to improve mental health outcomes and lower suicide risk for transgender and non-binary youth.

Commonly Asked Questions:

What are puberty blockers and how are they used?

Healthcare providers may use medications that put puberty on hold to prevent the consequences of going through a puberty that doesn't match a transgender child's identity.

These medications, known medically as GnRH inhibitors but commonly called "puberty blockers" or simply "blockers," are used when gender dysphoria increases with the onset of puberty, when a child is still questioning their gender, or when a child who has socially transitioned needs to avoid unwanted pubertal changes. Giving families time to make these personal decisions is an important part of the process.

Is gender affirming care based on medical guidance?

Gender affirming care is well documented and accepted medical guidance.

Gender-affirming medical care is recommended for transgender youth by the American Academy of Pediatricians and the Endocrine Society and is recognized by the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP) and the American Psychiatric Association (APA) as evidence-based patient care. All major associations support gender affirming care.

Do people regularly regret or de-transition back to their assigned sex at birth?

De-transitioning stories make headlines because they are extremely rare and often part of a longer process.

In a 2015 survey of nearly 28,000 people conducted by the U.S.-based National Center for Transgender Equality, only 8 percent of respondents reported de-transitioning, and 62 percent of those people said they only de-transitioned temporarily.

The most common reason for de-transitioning, according to the survey, was pressure from a parent, while only 0.4 percent of respondents said they de-transitioned after realizing transitioning wasn't right for them.

Why can't a minor just wait until they're 18 for gender affirming care?

For a minor experiencing gender dysphoria social support can be lifesaving, and medical interventions like puberty blockers can help give families more time to process and understand their options. Ultimately, parents should be able to make informed medical decisions with their children and their doctors. Legislation banning affirming care removes that option entirely.