



Count Us In — Trans Youth Pledge

As America’s leading health, education and human services associations and organizations, we feel compelled to reaffirm our commitment to the LGBTQ+ community, specifically transgender and non-binary youth and individuals, as states across the country have enacted legislation that directly harms the LGBTQ+ community.

We strongly believe all of our nation’s children deserve equal treatment and opportunity when attending school, accessing healthcare, and when interacting with other systems of care. The threats to the safety and well-being of LGBTQ+ youth, particularly transgender and non-binary youth, are relentless and they are increasing every day. Since 2015, state lawmakers have introduced more than 1,700 pieces of anti-LGBTQ+ legislation, with more bills enacted each year – currently, over 80 have passed in 2023, alone.

Youth-serving professionals, from pediatricians to classroom teachers, are facing increased backlash fueled by anti-LGBTQ extremists for standing in solidarity with the young people and families whom they serve. The overall climate for LGBTQ+ youth, and for many adults who support them, is hostile and dangerous. Specific legislation, such as medical care bans and censorship bills, such as “Don’t Say LGBTQ+ Bills,” put millions of LGBTQ+ youth at risk. These bills are in direct opposition with our duty and obligation as professionals to “do no harm,” and to ensure that all youth are supported and safe.

As reported by The Williams Institute (in [“How Many Adults and Youth Identify as Transgender in the United States?”](#)), there are more than **300,000** high school-aged (ages 13-17) transgender youth in the United States today, many who need gender-affirming care. Many trans youth (**44.1%**, or 132,300) live in states in which transgender youth have lost access to, or are at risk of losing access to, gender-affirming care, because of discriminatory laws and policies (more information on methodology below).

- Three in ten (**30.9%** or 92,700 total) trans youth aged 13-17 live in states that have passed bans on gender-affirming care.
- An additional **13.2%** (39,600 total) trans youth are living in states that are considering bills and policies that will deny more trans kids access to life-saving gender-affirming care
- 270,000 LGBTQ+ youth ages 13 to 17 are living in states where “Don’t Say LGBTQ+” bills have passed

So it is with urgency and resolve as professionals, and as allies to the LGBTQ+ communities we serve, we pledge that in whatever capacity possible we will:

- Foster Safe, Inclusive Environments: support policies to create safe and inclusive healthcare and educational environments for LGBTQ+ youth by implementing policies that protect against discrimination and enhance safety and well-being.

- Advocate for Legal Protections: advocate for legal protections that safeguard the rights and well-being of transgender youth, including advocating for inclusive policies in schools, and supporting legislation that prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender identity.
- Support access to Healthcare for Transgender youth: research has shown that when transgender youth have access to gender-affirming services, competent care and affirmation, their risk of depression, anxiety and other negative mental health outcomes is greatly reduced.

We strive to create a world where all LGBTQ+ youth feel validated, supported, and empowered to live their authentic lives. We invite all health, education, and human services organizations to stand with us to protect transgender youth. #CountUsIn

Signed:

AACTE

Active Minds

Advocates for Youth

**American Association of School Librarians
(AASL)**

American Counseling Association

American Medical Women’s Association

American Public Health Association

American School Counselor Association

BOOST Collaborative

**Council of Administrators of Special
Education**

FIRST

**GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing
LGBTQ+ Equality**

Healthy Teen Network

Illinois Public Health Association

Mental Health America

MENTOR

**National Association of School
Psychologists**

National Education Association

Prevent Blindness

School Social Work Association of America