



NATIONAL FOSTER YOUTH INSTITUTE

**MEDIA ADVISORY**  
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## NATIONAL FOSTER YOUTH INSTITUTE OPPOSES TEXAS DIRECTIVE TO INVESTIGATE GENDER-AFFIRMING CARE AS CHILD ABUSE

*Former foster youth share both personal experiences and hard data about why the Texas directive is poised to cause extensive harm to families and youth.*

**Background:** Last month, lawmakers in Texas issued a statewide [directive](#) to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services instructing staff to investigate all reports of youth receiving gender-affirming treatments and care as child abuse. NFYI [pushed back](#) with a short statement that gender-affirming care is not child abuse and to classify it as such is to use the child welfare system as a tool to threaten and sanction supportive families of LGBTQIA+ youth.

The Biden administration has also responded with a [statement](#) strongly condemning the order, and [reaffirmation](#) of HHS guidelines for LGBTQIA+ rights and protections, including gender-affirming care. After a Texas judge [blocked](#) the enforcement of the Texas order, the issue is headed to the Texas Supreme Court. Despite this, the investigations have continued, with families in Texas [reporting](#) that they are terrified. If upheld, the order threatens to further overwhelm the state's child welfare system, which is already [straining](#) to meet the needs of its current foster care population.

**NFYI's Response:** LGBTQIA+ rights are unequivocally a child welfare issue; The Human Rights Campaign [found](#) that more than 33% of US foster youth identify as LGBTQIA+, and there are large disparities in quality of life (including rates of [attempted suicide](#)), [housing stability](#), and [success in school](#) between LGBTQIA+ youth in foster care and their counterparts who grow up outside of the foster care system.

"The move to classify gender-affirming care as child abuse not only harms transgender children, but risks separating youth from their families simply for receiving medically necessary, ethical, and evidence-based gender-affirming care. Texas lawmakers are attempting a discriminatory, legally tenuous use of executive power that sets a dangerous precedent," said NFYI Senior Policy Manager **Scout Hartley**.

"NFYI's mission is to ensure that foster youth voices, opinions, and experiences inform any and all child welfare policy. NFYI stands in support with the LGBTQIA+ youth community, their rights, and their protection," said NFYI's Communications Director **Jacqueline Burbank**. "I know what it is to be a queer teenager placed in an anti-gay household, and no child should grow up that way—but if this order stands, many kids in Texas can and will be taken from supportive families and placed in homes that are hostile to their sexual orientation or gender identity."



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NFYI will continue to monitor, speak out on, and mobilize against harmful policies like these, which threaten the wellbeing of young people, families, and entire communities.

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**About NFYI:** Launched in 2012, **National Foster Youth Institute** was created to organize foster youth and families, foster care alumni, and allies in Congress and across the country to mobilize around transforming the child welfare system. NFYI annually engages over 250 current and former foster youth across the US.

To learn more about NFYI, please visit our website: [www.nfyi.org](http://www.nfyi.org), or find us on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/NFYInstitute](https://www.facebook.com/NFYInstitute), Instagram: [@NFYInstitute](https://www.instagram.com/NFYInstitute), or Twitter: [@NFYInstitute](https://twitter.com/NFYInstitute)