The Truth About Transgender Kids and Sports

Participating in Sports Teaches Life Lessons, Helping Youth Thrive

- All kids, including transgender kids, learn important life lessons in sports: leadership, confidence, self-respect, and resilience.
- Being part of a team helps all kids feel that they belong.
- Schools across the country know that all students thrive when they’re treated with dignity and respect.

No Evidence of a Problem to Solve

- Those who say transgender youth should be banned from participating in sports cannot produce evidence of a problem to solve.
- There’s a reason those who want to ban transgender youth from sports keep repeating the same couple of stories over and over again. That’s because, in a country of more than 300 million people these are the only examples they have of transgender girls who have won these kinds of titles.
- The fact is, 99.9% of kids play sports without ever competing at any kind of elite level. And the overwhelming majority of transgender youth, like most kids, just want to play and participate in everyday school sports with their peers.
- In his decision halting enforcement of a law banning transgender youth from sports in Idaho, Judge David C. Nye noted “the absence of any empirical evidence” and found “compelling evidence that equality in sports is not jeopardized” by allowing all kids to play.

School Policies Have Been in Place for Years and are Working

- Many local schools across the nation already have policies that protect transgender youth and ensure a level playing field for all students—and those policies are working. Banning transgender students from sports undermines those local efforts.
- **25 states have had policies in place for years that allow inclusion of transgender youth in sports.** A [2021 study](#) found that these states that allow all kids to participate in K-12 sports have steady or increasing opportunities for girls in sports, while states that bar transgender kids from sports have declining opportunities for girls in sports.
We all Want a Level Playing Field

- **We all want to ensure a level playing field when it comes to youth sports.** The truth is, every child is different in different ways—which is why some girls excel at gymnastics, others at volleyball, some at basketball, and others at soccer.
- Success in school sports is about **practice, self-discipline, access to good coaches and facilities**, and resources to pay for outside training.
- The overwhelming majority of transgender youth, like most kids, don’t play at elite levels. **They just want to play their favorite school sports and participate with their friends.**

Elected Officials should Address the Many Real Challenges to Girls’ and Women’s Sports

- If we want to support girls’ sports, we should be providing more funding and more opportunities to play and **creating stronger laws to protect female athletes from harassment and abuse.**
- Banning transgender kids from participating in sports does none of these things. It only hurts transgender kids and denies them the same opportunities as their peers.
- **Title IX** is vitally important when it comes to girls’ sports. Transgender kids playing on school sports teams does not undermine the protections afforded under Title IX.
- We can celebrate girls’ sports and protect transgender youth from discrimination, helping ensure that all young people can grow and reach their full potential from the lessons and opportunities that sports afford.