

TALKING ABOUT THE JAN. 28 EXECUTIVE ORDER ON TRANSGENDER YOUTH HEALTHCARE

January 2025

Core Messages

- The Jan. 28 executive order seeking to ban access to healthcare for transgender young people continues the Trump Administration’s unprecedented, extreme, and unconstitutional attacks on transgender Americans, a tiny minority of the U.S. population. This order brings the full weight of the federal government down on transgender young people and their families.
- The political agenda behind these attacks is to make it illegal for families of transgender young people to work with doctors to make sure their child gets the medical care they need. Families don’t need or want the federal government dictating their personal healthcare decisions.
- Transgender young people, like all young people, have the best opportunity to thrive when they are supported and can get the prescribed healthcare they need, when they need it. Using a federal order to try to ban essential medical care is government overreach at its worst—and it’s going to hurt real families.
- The best way to protect the health and well-being of transgender young people is to ensure that they can continue to access essential, age-appropriate medical care from licensed clinicians practicing according to the well-established standards of care. Banning this medically necessary care puts transgender people at increased risk of serious harms, including depression, self-harm, and suicidal thoughts or behavior.
- This is a dangerous precedent and a clear example of extreme government overreach into the private lives of American families. Parents and families, not the government, know what is best for their children. Just like any other parents, the parents of a transgender young person should have the freedom to ensure their child can receive the prescribed medical care they need. This order seeks to take that freedom away from families.

Secondary Messages

- The description of the medical standards of care in the executive order is filled with disinformation and deception. This is proven care that has allowed transgender adolescents and adults to thrive—and it’s supported by the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Medical Association, the American Psychological Association, and every other leading U.S. medical professional association. This executive order attempts to overrule medical experts and impose new restrictions based on nothing but a desire to hurt transgender people.
- The majority of Americans agree: more than four in five voters (82%) believe that politicians should let parents and doctors make healthcare decisions for young people who are transgender [[Change Research, 2024](#)]
- The evidence around the safety and effectiveness of healthcare for transgender people of all ages is as strong as the evidence for treatments across other areas of medicine. There’s been decades of substantial peer-reviewed research showing that this care is safe, effective, and essential to the health and well-being of transgender young people.

- These executive orders are not just individual actions—they are pieces of a larger plan to take away our freedoms and remake the U.S. government in the image of Project 2025. This extreme far-right agenda cuts programs that kids, families, and seniors rely on; restricts access to abortion; targets immigrants and their families even in sensitive places like schools and churches; and now seeks to ban families from being able to get necessary medical care for their transgender child.

Medical Standards Messaging (Only if Needed)

If detailed questions arise about the executive order’s attacks on care for transgender youth, the following messages can be helpful. However, note that these messages can also open the door to disingenuous “questions” about the evidence backing the care. Be sure you pivot back to the Core Messages (see page 1) to make it more difficult for opponents to try and derail the conversation.

- Physicians providing care to transgender youth are subject to rigorous standards when it comes to that care. This includes extensive evaluation of the young person and their needs by a team of medical and mental health providers, ongoing monitoring, and consultation with the youth’s parents on treatment options. These expert medical standards have been endorsed by every major medical association in the U.S.—including the American Medical Association, the American Psychological Association, and the American Academy of Pediatrics.
- The medical standards for treating transgender youth include clear requirements. A minor must have experienced persistent gender dysphoria over time and undergo a comprehensive evaluation and assessment prior to any treatment. In addition, any pre-existing mental health concerns must be evaluated and integrated into the treatment plan. These standards—and the length of time it takes to follow them—ensure that parents can get their child the care and support they need while ensuring that it’s the right care for the child and adjusting throughout the process for their needs.

For information on navigating questions about the specifics of transgender youth care and the underlying medical standards, please contact Dr. Kellan Baker at Whitman-Walker Institute: kbaker@whitman-walker.org.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Don’t overstate the potential harms of the order. We don’t want to induce panic, encourage anticipatory obedience, and/or put forward interpretations that could run afoul of arguments our legal advocates might make against this order in court. That’s why the messages above are careful to focus on what the order *wants*, *aims*, *intends* or *attempts* to do—instead of claiming what it “will” do. For additional background on this issue, see [Preparing for Executive Orders: How We Communicate Matters](#).

Emphasizing the role of families in the process remains critically important. Be careful not to inadvertently play into opponents’ false claims that doctors are circumventing parents when it comes to this care. Instead, focus on how the family of a transgender youth should have the freedom to make sure their child can receive the prescribed medical care they need—contrasting that with the executive order’s attempt to overrule parents’ ability to ensure their transgender child’s well-being.

Don't get into the weeds on medical care. Talking about specific elements of this care can activate concerns about whether young people should be able to access specific types of care. Instead, focus on how this order is a clear example of extreme government overreach into the private lives of American families, and how parents don't need the federal government dictating their family's healthcare decisions.

Don't take opponents' bait around the research studies they're attacking. Instead, focus on government overreach and this order's interference with the freedom of families to make sure their child gets the care they need. If conversations get contentious or weedy, leave in-depth medical conversations to physicians and providers, which you can do by saying, *"I'm not a doctor, but what I know is that the government should not be overruling parents who are trying to get medically necessary care for their transgender child."*