

I am a former “trans” kid.

I was persistent, consistent and insistent that I was a boy.

In first grade Ms. Hicken, my teacher at Howard R. Driggs Elementary School, referred me to the school psychologist to evaluate me. Rather than affirming that I was a boy, the school psychologist came up with some simple recommendations for my teacher and parents to help address my gender dysphoria. Thankfully, my school psychologist did not affirm my transgender identity, instead, she put me on a path towards resolving my gender dysphoria.

Transgender activists insist that children with gender identity issues be affirmed and transitioned. They deny that talk therapy is helpful in managing and resolving gender dysphoria and yet, I am living proof that it is.

My transgender identity developed between kindergarten and first grade after my brother and I were abducted by two men. I was brutally sexually assaulted and my brother was not.

In my child’s mind, I thought that being a boy would prevent me from ever being hurt the way those men hurt me. If therapists had not been allowed to question my gender identity, I never would have understood that my hatred of my female body was the result it being violently violated.

I never would have realized that my transgender identity was a coping mechanism. I shudder to think at what my life would be like if I’d been encouraged to believe that I was transgender.

I would have lived my life believing the only way to be safe was to kill myself as a girl and become a boy.

I likely would never have had my three children who brought so much joy into my life because the hormones used to medical transitioning young children result in infertility and a lifetime of damaging side effects.

I have talked to dozens of others with stories like mine, girls who adopt a transgender identity as children to cope with the trauma of abuse or assault.

Talk therapy helped me because my therapists did not affirm my trans identity. My therapist did not accept that it was better for me to dissociate from myself and create a new persona. She recognized my gender confusion was a symptom of a deeper issue.

I am so thankful that my school psychologist put me on a healing path.

Those who develop gender confusion as a symptom of underlying issues have a right to access mental health services that help them explore behaviors, beliefs, and feelings that are causing dysphoria and dysmorphia. Mental health providers should not be required to “affirm” a dissociative identity that is the result of trauma, internalized homophobia, autism, or even the result of someone not confirming to regressive sex-based stereotypes.

Please vote no on House Bill 2458

Thank you,  
Erin Brewer