

Gender-affirming care may aid mental health in trans youth

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Access to gender-affirming care is associated with improvements in

mental health symptoms among transgender and nonbinary (TNB) youths, according to a study published online Feb. 25 in *JAMA Network Open*.

Diana M. Tordoff, from University of Washington in Seattle, and colleagues investigated changes in mental health during the first year of receipt of care among 104 adolescents and [young adults](#) (ages 13 to 20 years) seeking gender-affirming care from August 2017 to June 2018.

The researchers found that at baseline, 56.7 percent of participants had moderate-to-[severe depression](#), 50.0 percent had moderate-to-severe anxiety, and 43.3 percent reported [self-harm](#) or suicidal thoughts. Two-thirds of youths (66.3 percent) had received puberty blockers (PBs), gender-affirming hormones (GAHs), or both interventions by the end of the study. When adjusting for temporal trends and potential confounders, there were lower odds of depression (adjusted odds ratio, 0.40; 95 percent confidence interval, 0.17 to 0.95) and suicidality (adjusted odds ratio, 0.27; 95 percent confidence interval, 0.11 to 0.65) among youths who had initiated PBs or GAHs versus youths who had not. No associations were seen between PBs or GAHs and anxiety (adjusted odds ratio, 1.01; 95 percent confidence interval, 0.41 to 2.51).

"These data add to existing evidence suggesting that gender-affirming care may be associated with improved well-being among TNB youths over a short period, which is important given [mental health](#) disparities experienced by this population, particularly the high levels of self-harm and suicide," the authors write.

More information: Diana M. Tordoff et al, Mental Health Outcomes in Transgender and Nonbinary Youths Receiving Gender-Affirming Care, *JAMA Network Open* (2022). [DOI: 10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2022.0978](#)

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