

Sports participation by transgender youth: Providers' perspectives

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In a new study, providers of care to transgender youth were against the rising tide of legislation restricting participation of transgender youth in gender-segregated sports. Nearly all providers voiced concern that

legislation banning transgender youth from sports participation would lead to worsening discrimination and stigmatization, according to the study published in the journal *LGBT Health*.

Landon Hughes, from the University of Michigan School of Public Health, and coauthors, analyzed the responses of 103 providers of pediatric gender-affirming medical care from all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Whereas participation in organized sports can benefit physical and [mental health](#), the providers believed that restrictive legislation would increase the number of mental and physical health morbidities among [transgender youth](#). Specifically, providers believed these bills would increase the risks of suicide, depression, nonsuicidal self-injury, anxiety, and [gender dysphoria](#).

"All providers in this study believed that these bills should not be passed. Most providers believed that it was their duty to advocate against these bills and educate lawmakers and the public about their harmful effects," stated the investigators.

"This study draws attention to a critical current issue. Numerous pending state bills lack nuance and flexibility and will cause much harm if enacted. States should follow California's example in protecting transgender student athletes. While California allows for decisions to be made on a case-by-case basis, its Assembly Bill 1266 stipulates that 'a pupil shall be permitted to participate in sex-segregated school programs and activities, including athletic teams and competitions, and use facilities consistent with his or her [gender identity](#), irrespective of the gender listed on the pupil's records,'" says *LGBT Health* Editor-in-Chief William Byne, MD, Ph.D., Columbia University Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons, New York, NY.

More information: Landon D. Hughes et al, Pediatric Provider Perspectives on Laws and Policies Impacting Sports Participation for

Transgender Youth, *LGBT Health* (2022). [DOI: 10.1089/lgbt.2021.0392](https://doi.org/10.1089/lgbt.2021.0392)

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