



The Kelsey Coalition

Working to change the systems that failed our kids

Parents Speak Out: How Health Care Professionals Failed Their Daughter

In just 45 minutes, a licensed therapist determined that our 12-year-old daughter was a boy.

This occurred just two weeks after the first time our daughter ever expressed any form of interest in being the opposite sex. The therapist knew that this was a very recent statement, she knew our daughter obsessed for years about being the very ideal of femininity and that she developed a severe eating disorder. The therapist had all of that information. Yet this professionally-trained therapist told us that our daughter was in fact, a boy.

None of us even knew about the sexual abuse she suffered because our daughter had yet to tell us. The therapist didn't know because she didn't care to have any therapeutic relationship to our daughter before pronouncing that she was a boy. To that therapist and most therapists in metropolitan areas, if a girl says she is a boy, then they are and they should be encouraged to proclaim it and go get hormonal and surgical medical procedures to alter their bodies to appear male.

Our Daughter was cutting herself, suicidal, anxious, depressed and angry. She needed real help and, what she got from that therapist was a clear message: all of your problems exist because you are actually a boy and your Mom and Dad are keeping you from being your true self. That therapist made our Daughter think of us—the people trying to save her life—as her enemies because we would not call her a boy and would not immediately agree to what is called sex change surgery.

Desperate to find a place to care for our Daughter, help her overcome her pain and disorders, and find a place that would not tell her she is a boy, we had to go far out of our state. The amount of information we learned about our Daughter after six months of residential therapy at one of the nation's premier facilities for adolescent girls is staggering, more so when compared with what that therapist who called her a boy did not know.

Our Daughter has been disassociated from her body from an early age: she wanted to be Japanese instead of caucasian, wanted surgery to make her shorter; she wanted her green eyes chemically turned blue; she wanted her wrists “carved down” to the exact same size another girl in dance class.

She began researching how to starve herself and to have her hips downsized and breasts reduced: she was introduced to a site with a “test” that purported to determine whether you—a girl—are actually a boy. She took the test and began secretly chatting with grown men online who coached her toward believing she is a boy.

According to a full-scale psychological evaluation done outside her care facility with tests performed and scored by one PhD and reviewed by two others, our Daughter appears to have no developed identity at all and she suffers from severe body dissatisfaction. The baseline mood for our daughter

is depression, persistent, low-grade with high-grade anxiety. These problems are frightfully common with girls in treatment and all treated therapeutically, but only gender is ever accepted and pushed toward medicalization.

She suffered long-term sexual abuse by an older, female classmate who mocked our Daughter's early, physical development and wrote the words "fat-girl" on her breasts and "fat-ass" on pictures of our Daughter she passed through social media.

After being abused by the older girl, our Daughter's behavior radically shifted; she began trying on a series of personas: good girl, smart girl; science girl; jock girl; popular girl; juvenile delinquent.

None of these factors mattered to the therapist. Far from being outside the mainstream, that provider was acting in concert with a virtually blanket prohibition against care providers doing anything but affirming a child's declaration of gender identity, no matter the recency, timing or absence of any and all early childhood forms of gender confusion.

We learned something else at the care center: gender dysphoria has become commonplace in adolescent care centers for girls and, according to our Daughter's therapists, in 100% of the cases of gender dysphoria she has seen in the past three years the girls had been sexually abused.

Our government is involved in banning some treatments, while forcibly banning others. Medical providers have eliminated screening processes altogether.

Like other parents in our position, we have learned through painful discovery that we are not safe living in our home state. Many of us have given up our careers and homes of 20-30 years to move to a state not yet over-run with affirmation-only approaches.

In our former home state of Oregon, children as young as thirteen can be taken away by the State if their parents will not agree to seeing them hormonally and surgically altered. Also in Oregon, kids of fifteen can get taxpayer provided hormonal / surgical procedures without parental consent.

What if it was your kid? Imagine if your daughter was anorexic and you were told by a doctor that you had to validate her delusion that she was fat? How would you feel if you were told to get her "body-size-confirmation" surgery which would cut her stomach down to 15% its normal size and put her on doses of methamphetamine for the rest of her life to keep her "proper body size?" What if you were told that talk therapy to overcome her eating disorder was "dangerous" and could lead to suicide? What if teachers and doctors called your Daughter fat? What if the dominant media celebrated anorexia and called people who didn't agree bigots? That is our world, that is what we face only the words—gender instead of anorexia—are different.

What if you were us? Would you be begging for help? We are.