



Why I No Longer Trust My Child's Doctor

At age 13, my autistic daughter announced she was transgender. As her mother who knew her better and loved her more than anyone, I knew this simply was not true. Yet no one would believe me.

I learned that I could not trust her school. Because I didn't agree to call her by her new name and pronouns, I was labeled "unsupportive." My opinions were ignored. When we learned our child had purchased trans paraphernalia at school, and brought it to the administration's attention, they shrugged. My daughter joined the Gay Straight Alliance. Students — largely those who are struggling socially—are shepherded in and told that the reason they feel different is because they're actually transgender. And they taught my daughter that anyone who doesn't bow to her preferences is a homophobe, transphobe, bigot, and hater. The teachers and administration that I once trusted taught my daughter that her parents who love her more than anyone are now her enemy. I had no choice but to withdraw her to keep her safe from these lies.

I learned that I could not trust our neighbors, and even our friends. We've been cut off by friends who insist on using our child's trans name and preferred pronouns—which we do not use—even though those pronouns have changed multiple times over the past year. I've even been told that my child will probably commit suicide because of me.

I learned that I could not trust therapists. In my state, there is now a bill that would make it illegal to help my daughter accept her body. It would make it illegal for a therapist even to question that my daughter's belief that she is not really a transgender boy.

I learned that I could not trust the doctors. When I went to our pediatrician for help, I received a list of gender clinics. When I reminded him that my child is autistic, and that studies show a correlation between transgender identities and autism, he said he knew of no such information. During the annual physical the doctor and my child spoke privately about gender identity. I eavesdropped outside the door where I overheard the doctor asked her if she felt unsafe at home. She responded no. Had my child indicated we were unsupportive, we may have found ourselves in the same situation as parents in Ohio, who lost custody of their son because they would not provide him cross-sex hormones. I am now afraid to take my daughter to see any medical professional. Withdrawing her from school, keeping her away from doctors and therapists, and cutting off all internet access is all I can do to keep her safe.