




Trans

MP injured at trans protest says he'll 'take a punch for queer and trans youth any day'

Jun 13 • Written by Sophie Perry

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Joel Harden was allegedly punched in the face during an anti-trans rally (Joel Harden on Twitter)

A Canadian MP who suffered a cut to his face during an anti-trans protest has said he would take a punch for trans and queer youth “any day”.

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Joel Harden, a Democratic Party (NDP) politician who has been a member of Ontario's provincial parliament since 2018, took part in a counter protest in Ottawa on Friday (9 June), in opposition to an anti-trans rally.

A photograph of his face on Twitter shows a small cut under Harden's eye, which he claimed he suffered from a punch.

"I'll take a punch for queer and trans youth any day," he wrote.


However, Harden faced scrutiny on social media following the tweet, with some users accusing him of fabricating the incident and compared him to Jussie Smollett, who staged a homophobic hate crime against himself in 2019.

Video footage shared on social media shows a megaphone Harden was holding being pushed into his face, with what appears to be a small metal prong making contact with his skin where the cut would later be.

Speaking to [Yahoo Canada](#), Harden sought to clarify what happened at the demonstration.

The politician claimed he was attempting to defuse violence between two individuals when someone hit him.

"I felt a punch in the back and then a rabbit-punch to the face," he said. "It happened in a split second."


Luke LeBrun · Jun 9, 2023 

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This is absolute madness.

The far-right mob is not even at a school anymore, they're just standing in the middle of a residential street in Westboro chanting nonsense in the direction of random homeowners to "leave our kids alone."


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Joel Harden 

@JoelHardenONDP · [Follow](#)

And punching people in the face.

But I'll take a punch for queer and trans youth any day.

12:34 PM · Jun 9, 2023 from Ottawa, Ontario 

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The anti-trans protest was organised by social media influencer Billboard Chris.

The aim of the Education Over Indoctrination rally was to protest against "gender ideology" and, in particular, one school that advised its staff to

use they/them pronouns for students who have not declared their pronouns.

It's estimated that 1,000 people attended the demonstration.

The anti-trans attendees held signs which read "children cannot consent to puberty blockers" and wore red hats which had the words "save Canada" printed on the front.

The counter-protesters waved Pride flags, wore colourful outfits and one person's t-shirt read "protect trans kids" in rainbow writing.

Following the protest, Ottawa mayor Mark Sutcliffe said trans people "need and deserve" support.

"Schools should be a safe space for children to learn and develop, not a target for political protests," he added.

"Protests like the one today should not be allowed to disrupt children and their education. And hatred has no place anywhere in our city."



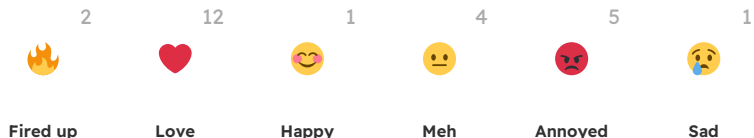
NDP leader Jagmeet Singh wrote on Twitter that he was “proud” of Harden, in reply to the image of his cut face.

“Queer and trans people - and kids - are being targeted by angry and hateful extremists,” he tweeted. “Governments must step up to protect the queer and trans community.”

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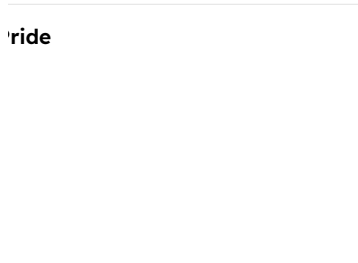
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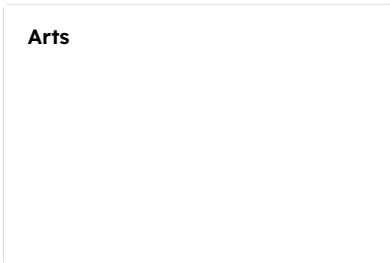




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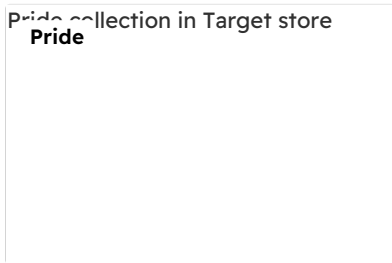
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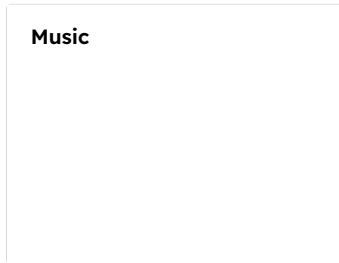
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