

Opinion

Transgender

Transgender Rights

trans rights

LGBTQ

LGBTQ rig

Stand Up for Transgender and Nonbinary Youth This Month and Beyond | Opinion

Oct 25, 2023 at 5:56 PM EDT

ADVERTISING



Newsweek 90

By **Tricia Raikes**
co-founder, Raikes Foundation



October is LGBTQ History Month. It is meant to be a time for the nation to celebrate the accomplishments of LGBTQ heroes and honor the bravery of people who live their lives fully and openly. Nearly 30 years after the first LGBTQ History Month, many across the country are now targeting transgender and nonbinary youth, with particularly devastating consequences.

The surge of anti-trans legislation nationwide is testing the core of America. Over 500 [anti-trans bills](#) have been introduced this year, and 85 have passed. These bills threaten the safety of America's safety, autonomy, and overall well-being. From schools to churches, doctor's offices, and even at home, people who are transgender are being denied their right to self-determination. And parents of transgender youth are being forced to deny their children the rights they deserve.

I recently walked alongside a close friend whose child chose to transition. While learning together and having many conversations to understand the choice better, my friend noticed a shift in her child—social anxiety decreased, her child engaged more with daily life activities, and became a more joyous person overall. My friend is horrified that many places in the U.S. are determined to take her child's rights away. As a parent, she believes she should have the freedom to work with and learn from her child and ultimately support their choice to now show up as their true self.

As a parent, I believe we have a responsibility to protect our children from political bullies who choose to single out and harass young people and their families in deeply vulnerable moments. And I'm encouraged that most Americans share that view. A [survey out this year](#)

Newsweek 90***

legislation aimed to limit the rights of LGBTQ people in America.

**SUBSCRIBE NOW FOR JUST \$1 PER MONTH**

Still, right-wing politicians are ignoring the prevailing perspective. More than 125 laws introduced this year would restrict the ability of medical professionals to do their job, preventing them from providing trans youth age-appropriate, medically necessary, best-practice health care. In 2022, legislators in [Alabama](#) passed one of the most hostile anti-trans bills, which makes providing trans-affirming health care a Class C felony, with a penalty of up to 10 years in prison. Thirty of the proposed bills this year are "bathroom bills," which harm the fundamental dignity of trans youth by restricting their ability to use public bathrooms (and those in their schools) that align with their gender identity. [Seven states have already enacted laws](#) that require or allow the misgendering of students in schools.

Now, more than ever, it is crucial that Americans come together as a community to protect the rights of LGBTQ individuals. We don't need to be seasoned activists to work together and make a difference.

 **NEWSLETTER****The Bulletin**

Your daily briefing of everything you need to know

SIGN UP

READ MORE

- In Gaza, As in My Native Iraq, People Yearn To Be Free →
- Trans People Are an Inseparable Part of the LGBTQ Community →
- I Don't Care If Politicians Are Good People and Neither Should You →
- LGBTQ Americans Must Stand Strong as the 2024 Presidential Race Heats Up →

Look no further than the moms leading [Red, Wine, and Blue](#) (RWB) for guidance about combating extremism in schools and communities. They offer multiple ways in which parents can learn how to have open conversations with fellow parents about supporting kids and organizing against the culture wars happening in our backyards. Here are a few specifics highlighted in a [podcast](#) the group hosts:

—Listen, show up, and read about LGBTQ issues—educating ourselves is a critical first step.

—Don't repeat or ignore the disinformation. Set the record straight on bad information by using facts and stories about real people impacted.



A transgender pride flag is seen.

ALLISON DINNER/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



SIGN UP FOR NEWSWEEK'S DAILY HEADLINES

—Engage in conversations with people who disagree with you—find common ground and remember many of us agree on basic values, such as the importance of families having the freedom to decide what's best for them.

—Understand where political leaders stand on protecting our children's rights, health, and education, and take action to prevent those who don't want to protect our children from getting elected.

As responsible citizens, we must engage in this fight, utilize our collective power to create fair and just communities, and elect local and national leaders whom we can trust to do the same. In these tumultuous times, one of our highest priorities should be to protect all our children, including LGBTQ children, who deserve access to gender-affirming health care, mental health, and other critical support they need to thrive as their whole selves.

...and the humanity of all our generations to come.

Tricia Raikes is the co-founder of the Raikes Foundation with her husband, Jeff. The foundation works toward a just and inclusive society where all young people have the support they need to reach their full potential.

The views expressed in this article are the writer's own.

[Request Reprint & Licensing](#)

[Submit Correction](#)

[View Editorial Guidelines](#)

About the writer

Tricia Raikes

To Read How Newsweek Uses AI As A Newsroom Tool, [Click Here.](#)

Trending



01 **Driver Rages Against Jewish Mother Biking With Child: 'You Are the Devil'**

[4 comments](#)

02 **FDA Warns Pet Owners After Dog Food Recalled Over Salmonella Risk**

[0 comments](#)

03 **Where to Find Cheap Housing as Median Prices Surge**

[4 comments](#)

04 **Joe Biden Gets Royal Rebuke Over Israel**

[98 comments](#)

05 **How Alina Habba's Confrontation With Michael Cohen Unfolded**

[75 comments](#)

THE DEBATE

The Left is Empowering Peacemakers, Not Violent Extremists

By Salam Al-Marayati



VS



The Left Is Empowering Radical Islam—Again

By Yasmine Mohammed

OPINION

Filipino American History Matters

By Alyssa Lauren Stone



Israel Is Committing War Crimes in Gaza—and the U.S. Is Supporting It

By [Omar Baddar](#)



Israel Deferred to the West on Gaza Once Before —Not This Time

By Aviva Klompas



The Tragedy of Arab Antisemitism

By [Lee Habeeb](#)



The Left Is Empowering Peacemakers, Not Violent Extremists

By Salam Al-marayati



Hamas Is Evil. Hezbollah Is Just as Evil and Better Equipped

By Daniel S. Mariaschin And David J. Michaels



The Ethics in Government Act Is Turning 45. Where Is Our Reform?

By Delaney Marsco



The Terrorists' Secret Advantage Was Israel's 'Idiocracy'

By [Dan Perry](#)



Black Leaders: Stand With Israel and Against Antisemitism, as You Once Did

By Jeremy Hunt



Don't Fall for Biden's Foolish Attempt to Tie Funding for Israel to Ukraine

By Eli Crane



An Insane Number of Gen Zers Support Hamas's Slaughter of Innocent Israelis

By [Brad Polumbo](#)



The World Paid a Stiff Price for Bad Reporting on Gaza Hospital Explosion

By Emily Harding



Premium Subscription

Digital + Monthly (Ad Free Trial)

Newsweek ^{****} 90



- ✓ Newsweek magazine delivered to your door
- ✓ Unlimited access to Newsweek.com
- ✓ Ad free Newsweek.com experience
- ✓ iOS and Android app access
- ✓ All newsletters + podcasts

SUBSCRIBE NOW

Top Stories



Donald Trump's Losing the Thing Most Precious to Him



Is Mike Johnson an Election Denier? Voting Record Explored



Hurricane Tammy 'Craziest' Spaghetti Models Show US States It Could Hit



Jenna Ellis Breaks Silence After Pleading Guilty

Newsweek



[U.S.](#) >

[World](#) >

[Science](#) >

[Culture](#) >

[Autos](#) >

[Rankings](#) >

[Health](#) >

[Opinion](#) >

[Experts](#) >

[Better Planet](#) >

[Beauty & Fashion](#) >

[Business](#) >

[Education](#) >

[Fact Check](#) >

Subscriptions

Digital+ Monthly (Ad Free Trial) **\$1.00**

Digital+ Yearly \$49.00

Premium Monthly \$9.99

Premium Yearly \$99

Tech >

Sports >

Podcasts >

Newsletters >

Unconventional >

Vantage >

Trending

Israel at War Vladimir Putin Russia-Ukraine War

Donald Trump

Newsletters in your inbox [See all](#)

- The Bulletin (Mondays to Saturdays) [See Sample](#)
- The Cover (Wednesdays) [See Sample](#)
- The Josh Hammer Report (Wednesdays) [See Sample](#)
- The Frontlines (Thursdays) [See Sample](#)
- Israel at War (Mondays to Fridays)
- For The Culture (Tuesdays and Thursdays) [See Sample](#)
- Infinite Scroll (Tuesdays) [See Sample](#)
- Pawsitively (Mondays to Fridays)
- Better Planet (Mondays)
- The Debate (Tuesdays)
- Mightier (Coming soon)

[Sign up now](#)

You can unsubscribe at any time.
 By signing up you are agreeing to our [Terms of Service](#) and [Privacy Policy](#).

In The Magazine



November 03
2023 Issue



[About Us](#)

[U.S. Edition](#)

[Advertise](#)

[Cookie Policy](#)

[Masthead](#)

[🇺🇸](#)

[Careers](#)

[Copyright](#)

[Diversity](#)

[Polska](#)

[Contact Us](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

[Announcements](#)

[România](#)

[Corrections](#)

[Terms & Conditions](#)

[Archive](#)

[Terms of Sale](#)

[Policies and Standards](#)

[Mission Statement](#)

[Leadership](#)

[Newsletters](#)

[Press Center](#)

© 2023 NEWSWEEK DIGITAL LLC