

CHILD ACCOSTED AT TRACK MEET

Girl, 9, accused of being trans at Kelowna track meet

Madison Reeve - Jun 12, 2023 / 2:43 pm | Story: 431500



Photo: Contributed

Editors note: the man accused of making the derogatory comments detailed in this story is denying the allegations. A full story on that is [here](#).

Two Kelowna moms are speaking out after their 9-year-old daughter was verbally assaulted at a track and field event on Thursday at Kelowna's Apple Bowl.

The mothers, who choose not to identify their daughter, say she was competing in a shot-put event when a grandfather of one of the other participants started yelling at her.

"She went to step up to compete for the grade four shot-put final, and right before she went to throw, a grandfather of a student said, 'Hey, this is supposed to be a girls' event, and why are you letting boys compete.' My daughter is cisgender, born female, uses she/her pronouns. She has a pixie haircut," said mom Heidi Starr.

Starr says the man then carried on to demand certification to prove that her daughter was born female.

"He stopped the entire event. He also pointed at another girl who also had short hair. He then piped in and said, 'Well, if she is not a boy, then she is obviously trans.'"

Starr said the man's wife then started calling her "a genital mutilator, a groomer, and a pedophile."

Central Okanagan School District superintendent Kevin Kaardal confirmed with Castanet that steps are being taken to ban the man from all school-related events.

"Staff intervened and actually moved the shot-put away from where he was. The gentleman was not a part of our school district. We are taking steps to ensure he is not able to be on our school property or attend events in the future."

Kaardal said the incident was "totally unacceptable."

"Adults need to govern themselves and behave appropriately," he added.

Kari Starr, the girl's other mother, says Thursday's events have rocked their daughter's confidence.

"This has destroyed our beautiful daughter's confidence, and she was inconsolably crying during this whole event and continued once it was over and we were leaving. Not to mention, she was unable to concentrate on her track and field finals and the shot-put throw for which she had qualified," Kari said.

The parents posted a photo and identity of the man on local Facebook groups, but Castanet is not publishing that information because the man's identity has not been confirmed by the school district.

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