

# What Actually Puts LGBTQIA+ Kids at Risk?



*A guide for parents who want to protect their children based on facts, not fear*

## ✓ INTRODUCTION: FOR PARENTS WHO WANT THE TRUTH

As parents, we all want to keep our children safe, especially when the world feels confusing and uncertain. For many trans and LGBTQIA+ kids, this is a particularly difficult time. They are surrounded by loud and hurtful messages that question their worth, their identity, and their right to exist just as they are. This can leave them feeling confused, scared, and deeply worried about whether they will be accepted by the people who matter most to them.

More than ever, these children need their parents to be a steady and safe presence, someone who will listen, protect, and love them unconditionally. This guide is here to help you understand what really puts kids at risk, and how your support can make all the difference.



## WHO'S MOST LIKELY TO HARM A CHILD?

Perpetrator Relationship	% of Abuse Cases (U.S., 2022)
Biological parent	77.2%
Other relatives	6.7%
Unmarried partner of parent	4.4%
Other (e.g., teachers, clergy, strangers)	< 2%



***Most abuse happens inside families — not from strangers, drag queens, or LGBTQIA+ people.***

**(Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2022)**

## 🚩 WHAT ACTUALLY PUTS KIDS AT RISK?

Research shows the most common contributors to abuse aren't identity-related at all. The biggest risks to child safety often come from everyday struggles and stress.

- **Financial stress and poverty**
- **Caregiver burnout or untreated mental health issues**
- **Substance use in the home**
- **Isolation or lack of community support**
- **Children with disabilities or behavior differences**
- **Young children (under age 3 are most at risk)**
- **Systemic issues like racism, ableism, and lack of access to care**
- **Bullying at school**
- **Political Policies**
- **Rejection From**

(Source: Sedlak et al., 2010; DHHS, 2022; Finkelhor, 2023)

## 🚫 LET'S BE CLEAR: GENDER-AFFIRMING CARE IS NOT ABUSE

Supporting your child's gender identity does not put them at risk. In fact, gender-affirming care has been shown to:

- **Reduce depression**
- **Lower suicide risk**
- **Improve family relationships**
- **Help kids feel seen, valued, and safe**

(Sources: Turban et al., 2022; The Trevor Project, 2023; Olson et al., 2016)



## 🎯 WHY IT'S DANGEROUS TO SCAPEGOAT TRANS YOUTH

Blaming gender-affirming care for child abuse shifts attention away from real issues and hurts vulnerable kids.

When we focus on banning care instead of supporting families, we:

- **Ignore real causes of abuse (poverty, mental health, neglect)**
- **Risk isolating kids who already feel unsafe**
- **Spread fear that leads to bullying, shame, and silence**

## WHAT PARENTS CAN ACTUALLY DO TO HELP

You don't have to be perfect — but you can be protective in ways that matter. Here's what helps:

- **Create a home where kids feel emotionally safe**
- **Connect with other parents or caregivers — don't parent in isolation**
- **Get help when you need it (mental health support, financial support, community programs)**
- **Learn about child development and trauma-informed parenting**
- **Speak up when policies hurt vulnerable kids**
- **Advocate for inclusive schools and youth services**

### Final Thought for Families

If you love your kids, you want them to grow up safe, confident, and supported for who they are. That means protecting them from real threats — and standing up against fear-driven misinformation.

When we choose facts over fear, we protect all kids better.

