



**Developmental
Disabilities
Planning Council**

Easy Read Edition

Barriers to Gender Affirming Health Care

**Part 10: How does this hurt
transgender and nonbinary
people?**

How does this hurt transgender and nonbinary people?



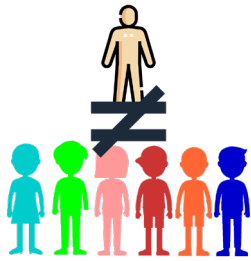
The barriers to gender affirming health care hurt transgender and nonbinary people in many ways.



Transgender and nonbinary people's gender dysphoria can get worse without access to gender affirming care.



Gender dysphoria is when someone feels like their body and their gender do not match.



Gender dysphoria can also happen when someone feels like other people see their body as a different gender than what they are.



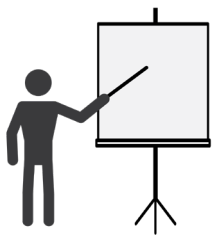
Gender affirming care helps people match their bodies to how they see themselves.



Gender affirming care can help stop gender dysphoria for some people.



Transgender and nonbinary people who do not look how a man or woman “should” can face more transphobia.



We are taught that men and women each look and act different from each other.

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We are taught that there are rules for how to be a man or a woman.



The rules about what makes someone look like a man or a woman are made up.



But these made up rules can cause real problems for real people who do not match those rules.



Gender affirming care can help someone look “more like” a man or a woman.



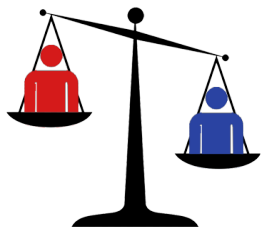
Gender affirming care can protect transgender and nonbinary people from transphobia.



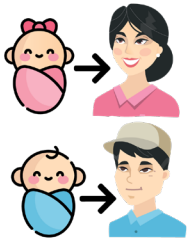
Transphobia is often based on how transgender and nonbinary people look.



People will decide someone is transgender or nonbinary based on how they look.



People will then discriminate against someone because they think they're transgender or nonbinary.



This discrimination can happen to cisgender people who do not look “enough” like their gender, too.

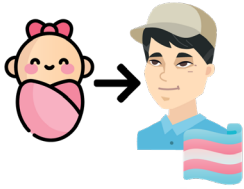


Gender affirming care can help someone better match the rules about being a man or a woman.

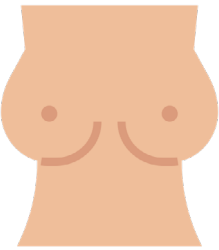


People are less likely to discriminate against transgender and nonbinary people that match what they think a man or woman should look like.

For Example:



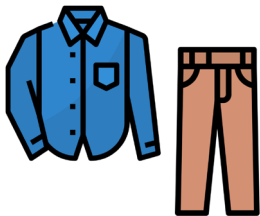
Jason is a transgender man.



Jason still has his breasts.



Jason works as a clerk in a store.



Jason wears button up shirts and pants to work every day.



Jason wears a binder to make his chest smaller.



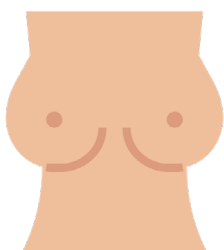
One day Jason hurts his ribs.



His doctor tells him he cannot wear his binder while his ribs heal.



Jason goes to work without his binder.



Jason's coworkers can tell he still has breasts.



Coworkers that did not know Jason was transgender now know.



Some of them start to treat Jason badly.



Jason's coworkers start calling him names.



Some of Jason's coworkers stop using "he/him" pronouns for him.



One coworker crosses out Jason's name on the staff schedule and writes "Jane" instead.



Jason is upset by this.



Jason tells his coworkers to stop but they do not listen.



Jason tells his manager about these problems.



Jason's manager tells Jason this is not her problem.



Jason's manager tells him to "deal with it."



Jason feels unsafe at work.



But not all transgender and nonbinary people want to “look like” a man or woman.



Many transgender and nonbinary people want to look more like themselves.



Many transgender and nonbinary people are gender nonconforming.

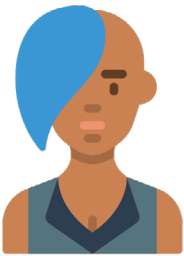


Gender nonconforming means looking and acting in ways that do not match just one gender.

Here are some examples of being gender nonconforming:



- Men who wear makeup or paint their nails.



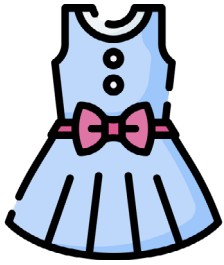
- Women who shave their heads.



- Women who do not remove their facial hair.



- Women who do not shave their body hair.

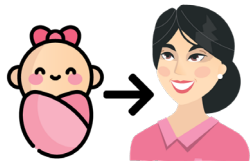


- Men who wear dresses.



- Men who wear high heels.

For example:



Connie is a cisgender woman.



Connie does not like wearing dresses.



Connie only wears men's suits at work.



Connie notices that other women at her work make more money than her.



The other women all wear dresses.



The other women all wear high heels and makeup.



Connie does not wear dresses.



She does not wear high heels or makeup.



Connie starts to wonder if she makes less money because of how she dresses.



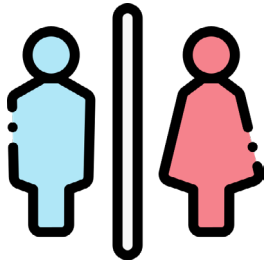
She wonders if her work is punishing her for not looking “enough like a woman.”



These examples of being gender nonconforming are based on how people in the United States expect men and women to look.

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Different parts of the world may have different rules about how men and women should look.



The truth is, there is no one way to look like a man or a woman.

Different cultures have different rules about:



- What colors are “boy” or “girl” colors.



- Who can wear clothes like dresses, skirts, or crop tops.



- Who can wear makeup.



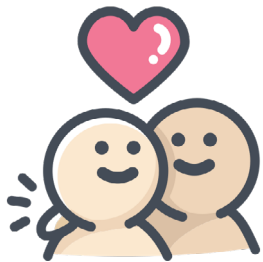
- Which chores are “boy chores” or “girl chores.”



- What kind of jobs are “for men” or “for women.”



- How men and women “should” act in public.



- How men and women “should” act in relationships.

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Even within certain cultures, the rules for how men and women “should” act change over time.



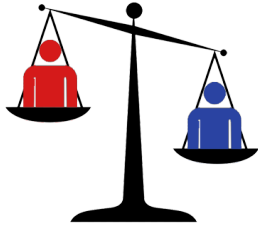
For example, for a long time, people in the United States thought pink was a color “for boys.”



It is only within the last 100 years that people started thinking of pink as a color “for girls.”



There is no right or wrong way to have a gender.



But a lot of discrimination is built on the false idea that there is a right way to have a gender.



Sexism is built on the idea that men are better than women.



Transphobia is built on the idea that you can do gender wrong.



Racism often says that white people are the only ones who get to make rules about gender.

When someone does not match how their gender is “supposed” to look or act, they can:



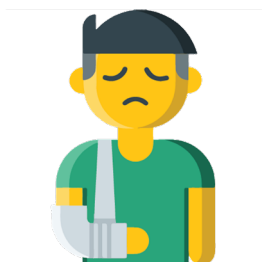
- Have a harder time finding and keeping a job.



- Have a harder time finding a place to live.



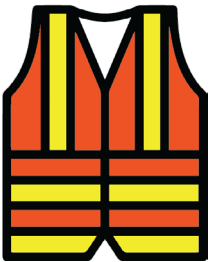
- Have people make comments on their looks telling them how to “fix” the way they look.



- Have people yell at them, chase them, or physically hurt them.



No one should have to look a certain way to be respected.



No one should have to look a certain way to be safe.



No one should have to look a certain way to be a “real” man or woman.



Transgender and nonbinary people should only get gender affirming care if they want to.

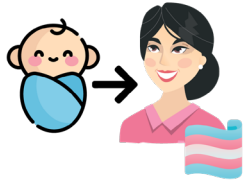


They should not have to get gender affirming care just to look “more like” their gender.



They should not have to get gender affirming care just to be safe from bad treatment.

For example:



Priya is a transgender woman.



Priya has not gotten gender affirming care.



Priya does not want to get gender affirming care.



She just wants people to treat her as a woman.



But other people do not treat Priya as a woman.



Priya's neighbors call her "that creepy weird man."



People at Priya's work say that she is "making fun of women" by dressing the way she does.



When Priya walks down the street, other people make mean comments about her body.



Priya feels really terrible about herself.



She feels like she will not be safe unless she gets gender affirming care.



Priya does not want to get gender affirming care.

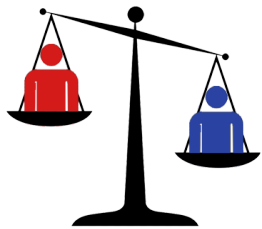


But she does anyway so people will leave her alone.

Who is hurt the most by these laws?



These laws hurt all transgender and nonbinary people.



But there are transgender and nonbinary people who face other kinds of discrimination.



These other kinds of discrimination can combine with transphobia to make life even harder.

Some transgender and nonbinary people who are hurt even more by these laws include transgender and nonbinary:



- People of color.



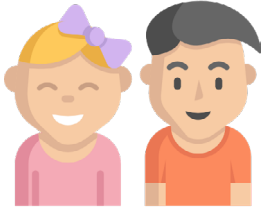
- People who came to the United States from other countries .



- People who do not have a lot of money.



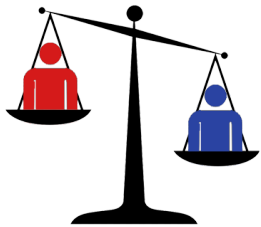
- People with disabilities.



- Children.



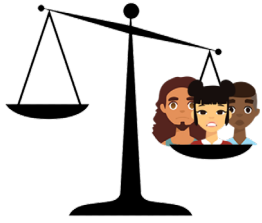
- Older adults.



Transgender and nonbinary people who are also a part of these groups face more discrimination.



These different kinds of discrimination add more barriers to accessing gender affirming care.



Racism changes how doctors treat people of color.



Doctors may not listen to people of color.



Doctors may not believe transgender people of color when they ask for gender affirming care.



Transgender and nonbinary people who do not have a lot of money have a hard time getting gender affirming care.



They may not have health insurance at all.



Without health insurance they have to pay for gender affirming care on their own.



But they may not have enough money to pay for gender affirming care at all.



Transgender and nonbinary people from other countries may not be able to get gender affirming care.

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The rules that allow them to live in the United States may make it harder to see a doctor.



These rules may make it harder for them to change their identification paperwork.



These rules may make them afraid of being forced to leave the United States if they get gender affirming care.



Older adults often have trouble getting people to listen to them.



People may not believe transgender and nonbinary older adults exist.



Many older adults need help going to the doctor.



Many of them need help taking their medications.



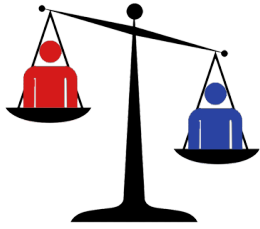
If their support workers will not help them with gender affirming care, then they may not get gender affirming care.



Doctors may not listen to older transgender and nonbinary adults.



Support workers may not listen to older transgender and nonbinary adults.



Because there are many kinds of discrimination, people can experience more than one kind of discrimination at once.



The different kinds of discrimination a person experiences make each other worse.



Different kinds of discrimination cannot be separated from each other.

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