



Just the Facts

Background

Shelters and host homes in Washington sheltering a minor, are currently required to notify the parents of their child's location unless there is a compelling reason – circumstances that would subject the child to abuse or neglect.

Washington law enables minors 13 and older to have access to chest binders, tuckers, puberty blockers, and cross-sex hormones, as well as “gender affirming” surgeries defined in RCW 74.09.675, including facial feminization surgeries, tracheal shaves, mastectomies, and breast implants.

The widely used guidelines of the World Professional Association of Transgender Health (WPATH) organization were revised in 2022 to remove age restrictions. Currently, children as young as 8 have been put on puberty blockers and cross sex hormones and girls as young as 12, have received mastectomies.

What SB 5599 Does:

Allows The State to Hide a Child's Location from Parents – SB 5599 makes seeking “reproductive health care” and “gender affirming care” compelling reasons to keep a minor child's location a secret from his or her parents.

Equates Not Using “Preferred Pronouns” To Child Abuse – Not being sufficiently supportive of a child's gender identity, including not using the child's “preferred pronouns,” would be considered the same as abuse or neglect.

Eliminates Due Process for Parents – No evidence of wrongdoing is required. If a child merely expresses a belief that his or her parents won't be supportive, that child can be placed in an undisclosed host home.

Removes Parents' Ability to Make Medical Decisions for Their Child – A state agency will be given authority to make referrals for “appropriate behavioral health services” and parents will be removed from the decision-making process for their own minor child. The bill does not specify an age restriction, which opens the possibility that these treatments could be extended to minors younger than 13 years old.

Deprives Children of Their Greatest Advocates, Their Parents – SB 5599 denies a child's right to the love, care, and protection of his or her parents. Children will be going through life-altering treatments while being cared for by strangers, instead of the parents who know and love them and have their best interests at heart.



**Reject
5599**

Moms Fact Check the Media

SB 5599 Rebrands Parents As Abusers and Hides Kids from Parents – KOMO News quoted Governor Inslee saying, “If a young person is totally estranged from their parents and has no meaningful relationship we need someone to care for that child and the way the legislation is set up is essentially, the Department of Children Youth and Families will step in to that position to care for that child so you have someone looking out for their benefit,” Inslee said. “In the real world we want these kids to be protected and not homeless and that’s basically the reason for this bill.” [Bill to protect youth seeking gender-affirming, reproductive care heads to Inslee's desk \(komonews.com\)](https://www.komonews.com/story/news/politics/2023/04/26/sb-5599-rebrands-parents-as-abusers-and-hides-kids-from-parents/11694658002/)

✔ False. Any runaway youth already has access to shelters. What the new law does is rebrand involved parents as abusers so that shelters and host homes can contact DCYF instead of the parents to notify families of their child’s whereabouts.

SB 5599 Puts DCYF In Charge of the Custody of Kids – The AP says, “The bill does not address custody and would not result in the state taking children away from their homes and parents.” <https://apnews.com/article/washington-minors-shelter-law-faa73cb08aad4b040d9c32e90ab6f8c0>

✔ False. The Bill allows host homes and shelters to contact DCYF to assist in “reunification”. If you have to get permission or approval to get your child back, your child is no longer in your custody.

Under SB 5599, Parents Have No Custody Rights – USA Today Fact Checkers wrote: “The bill referenced in the post does not allow the state to take a child from their parents’ custody, according to multiple legal experts and the bill’s sponsor. Rather, it allows runaway and homeless youth seeking protected health care services to stay at temporary shelters without immediately notifying their parents.

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/factcheck/2023/04/26/fact-check-conservatives-misstate-washington-bill-youth-shelters-parents-gender-transition/11694658002/>

✔ Semantics. Because the law doesn’t make a direct statement on the issue of custody, supporters and allies take advantage and falsely claim it doesn’t exist. But the issue of whose custody the child is in can be clearly determined by who has the rights and who doesn’t. Under the law parents lose the right to be directly notified by the host home as to their child’s whereabouts and the state is involved in deciding whether or not parents can take their own child back home. Clearly, the parents have no custody rights under this new law.