

# Doctors Protecting Children Declaration

## Psychotherapy instead of sex reassignment surgery

by Marita Brune Koch

*The feeling to be “in the wrong bod”, not clearly belonging to any gender – according to our media, many people, especially young people, are preoccupied with the question of whether they are male, female or something else. For all those who didn’t want to admit it until now, this year’s ESC (Eurovision Song Contest) has hyped the topic: The winner was the Swiss singer Nemo, a young person who identifies as “non-binary”, i.e. who defines himself as neither male nor female. This is also referred to as “gender fluidity”. Now, American doctors are calling for a reversal.*

### “Who am I?”

The hype surrounding gender identity would not be worth mentioning if such phenomena were limited to show business. However, we must assume that all our children and young people are confronted with it, at school and clubs, in church and the media. At an age when they first must find their own identity, they are often unsure of who they are or whether they are ok the way they are. If a child or young person today expresses uncertainty about their gender identity, they are very quickly reinforced in their belief that they are “born in the wrong body”.

### A new gender once a year?

Since 1 January 2022, anyone in Switzerland aged 14 and over can have their gender entry and first name changed without further ado. This requires neither a medical certificate nor a psychological report. A visit to the registry office is all it takes. This has also been possible in Germany since April 2024. For under-18s, parental consent is required. If they refuse, the family court decides.

This is referred to as “social affirmation”. The medical side of things also comes into play very quickly: Children are prescribed puberty blockers that inhibit normal sexual development. A large proportion of children and adolescents who have taken these blockers later have sex reassignment surgery.

### Stop

#### gender reassignment surgery “immediately”

A group of more than 100 paediatricians and medical organisations in the USA have now signed a declaration: They are calling on medical facilities in the US to “immediately stop” gender modification/reassignment treatments.

The signatories dispute the fundamental assumption of gender ideology, according to which gender is fluid and selectable; they state that gender characteristics are innate and cannot be changed: “This genetic signature is present in every nucleated somatic cell in the body and is not altered by drugs or surgical interventions.” They therefore also contradict the theory that someone could be “born in the wrong body”.

“Most Children and adolescents whose thoughts and feelings do not align with their biological sex will resolve those ‘mental incongruities’ after experiencing the normal developmental process of puberty”. In the declaration, studies are cited that also confirm this finding statistically.

### Adolescents

#### cannot oversee all its consequences

Despite all that, hormone treatments are often carried out after brief consultations and very quickly. The doctors and medical professionals who signed the declaration point to numerous studies that prove that this is an irresponsible practice because adolescents lack the prerequisites to make this decision in all its implications. “Responsible informed consent is not possible in light [...] the immature, often impulsive nature of the adolescent brain. The adolescent brain’s prefrontal cortex is immature and is limited in its ability to strategise, problem solve and make emotionally laden decisions that have life-long consequences.”

What’s more, the interventions don’t even deliver what they promised: Studies show that the mental health of the adolescents and young

adults has not been improved in the long term by the medical interventions.

### **Long-term serious disorders**

Puberty blockers permanently disrupt physical, cognitive, emotional and social development. Long-term risks of cross-sex hormone treatment include emotional lability, worsening psychological illnesses, impaired memory, low bone density, sterility and – although rare – pseudotumour cerebri (swelling of the brain). Other dangerous lifelong health risks include cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure, heart attacks, blood clots, strokes, diabetes and cancer. Young people are unable to adequately “comprehend the lifelong consequences of ‘gender-affirming care’ and, in some cases due to poor health literacy, neither can their parents.”

### **Psychotherapeutic help for children and young people**

Instead of “gender reassignment” or medical “modification” interventions, the signatories call for psychotherapeutic help for children and ad-

olescents who are unsure about their identity. They point out that England, Scotland, Sweden, Denmark and Finland have recognised “that social, hormonal and surgical interventions are not only *unhelpful*, but are harmful. So, these European countries have “paused” the relevant treatments and are instead focusing on evaluating and treating the underlying and preceding mental health concerns”.

The signatories call on their government and their country’s medical organisations to follow suit and “immediately stop the promotion of social affirmation, puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones and surgeries for children and adolescents who experience distress over their biological sex. Instead, these organizations should recommend comprehensive evaluations and therapies aimed at identifying and addressing underlying psychological co-morbidities and neurodiversity that often predispose to and accompany gender dysphoria.”

*Source: «Doctors Protecting Children Declaration».*

*<https://doctorsprotectingchildren.org/>*

*(Translation “Swiss Standpoint”)*