

# [***Protect All Children | Opinion***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BYY-KYH1-JBR6-900M-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Highlight:** It's time that we let anti-LGBTQ voices know that their calls to "protect children" have the opposite impact on LGBTQ young people and children of LGBTQ parents.

**Body**

Representative [*Lauren Boebert*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/lauren-boebert?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) (R-Colo.) recently [*tweeted*](https://twitter.com/laurenboebert/status/1783871120602505220), "When the Left came for our children, that's where it became very clear how serious this fight truly was. We're not going to back down."

A cursory search of her tweets shows more than 100 posts that include baseless insults for LGBTQ people like "groomer" and call for protecting children from LGBTQ content or "woke" ideology. [*The Center for Countering Digital Hate and Human Rights Campaign found*](https://www.hrc.org/press-releases/new-report-anti-lgbtq-grooming-narrative-surged-more-than-400-on-social-media-following-floridas-dont-say-gay-or-trans-law-as-social-platforms-enabled-extremist-politicians-and-their-allies-to-peddle-inflamatory-discriminatory-rhetoric) content attacking LGBTQ people as groomers or threats to children jumped 400 percent during the 2022 midterm election. That harmful volume continues during this year's presidential election.

Anti-LGBTQ rhetoric like Representative Boebert's tweets dangerously and falsely lead audiences to think that LGBTQ people or LGBTQ content can harm children. This fear tactic is a key driver of the more than [*500 anti-LGBTQ bills*](https://www.aclu.org/legislative-attacks-on-lgbtq-rights-2024) that have been introduced in states across the country since Jan. 1, 2024. That averages to more than 25 per week.

While only a small percentage of these bills become law, the messages overtly or subtly implied by this influx of discriminatory legislation is that LGBTQ people are not to be trusted with our own autonomy, and that our existence in public life poses a dangerous threat. Even aside from the real world restrictions on medical care and our access to public places, our humanity is being debated in front of our elected officials and neighbors.

Moms like me and so many others prioritize the safety of our children, and our children's friends, and our friends' children. There is an urgent need to protect children from violence, predators, age-inappropriate content, and ugly rhetoric, but the calls from anti-LGBTQ activists to "protect our children" ignore what this actually means for LGBTQ parents like me who have children and the LGBTQ children themselves who will one day grow up to LGBTQ adults.

The Trevor Project recently released its [*2024 U.S. National Survey on Mental Health for LGBTQ Young People*](https://www.thetrevorproject.org/survey-2024/). Alarmingly, 39 percent of LGBTQ youth have seriously considered attempting suicide in the last year. Ninety percent of LGBTQ young people said their well-being was negatively impacted due to recent ***politics***, and nearly half of LGBTQ young people reported being bullied in the past year. Even if a small number of the hundreds of anti-LGBTQ bills introduced become law, the adverse health effects on LGBTQ youth is staggering (and perhaps, something from which our children actually deserve protection?).

All of this talk about protecting children has created a dangerous environment for far too many of our children. LGBTQ people have been battling this false narrative all our lives, and it's why we often feel a responsibility to speak out against lies and misinformation about our existence and to take action to show LGBTQ young people that they belong.

It's time that we let anti-LGBTQ voices know that their calls to "protect children" have the opposite impact on LGBTQ young people and children of LGBTQ parents. It's time to show the world that LGBTQ adults were once children, equally deserving of visibility and protection.

GLAAD and a pro-bono team at Ogilvy launched the [*Protect This Kid*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3uV50cIsSDY) campaign to start the drumbeat of this message during a divisive presidential election.

In 2023, at the height of the proposed bans on various LGBTQ content and issues, GLAAD and Ogilvy set out to execute a brief that would counter scare tactics and baseless claims to "protect our children" used to justify such pieces of legislation.

The campaign is reaching local audiences across 35 markets via out of home donated ad space from Out Front Media and reaching countless online via donated ad credits from [*TikTok*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/tiktok?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships). LGBTQ talent including [*Andy Cohen*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/andy-cohen?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships), actress Beanie Feldstein, comedians Margaret Cho and Sherry Cola, athletes Chris Mosier and R.K. Russell, RuPaul's Drag Race Winner Yvie Oddly, and filmmakers River Gallo and Daniella Carter all tell their personal stories about growing up as LGBTQ children—to educate parents bombarded with the false idea that LGBTQ people or LGBTQ content is a threat to their children.

I'm sharing my childhood photo because when I was growing up as a closeted lesbian in Staten Island, I did not see lesbian adult women who were out, successful, and raising families. I want to tell that young girl that she deserves safety, love, and freedom to be who she is.

It's about time we ensure calls for protecting children include all children.

*Sarah Kate Ellis is president and CEO of GLAAD.*

*The views expressed in this article are the writer's own.*

[*Link to Image*](https://d.newsweek.com/en/full/2388593/holding-childs-hand.jpg)

**Graphic**

Holding child's hand

ANNE-CHRISTINE POUJOULAT/AFP via Getty Images

A parent holds a child's hand.

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