

# Human Rights Watch

## Children's Rights

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/02/08/south-dakota-embraces-attacks-transgender-kids>

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10 US States Have Introduced Athletics Bans

ryanthoreson

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After seven years of failed attempts to bar transgender kids from playing sports, South Dakota has enacted a law [prohibiting transgender girls from participating](#) with their cisgender peers.

The new law makes South Dakota [the tenth state in the US](#) to enact a law banning transgender children from playing sports, and the first to enact an anti-transgender law this year. Lawmakers in at least 26 other states [have introduced athletics bans](#) this year alone, though many are unable to point to any issues arising from transgender students participation in sports in their state.

These bans are discriminatory and misguided. Narrowly fixated on the idea that a transgender athlete might outperform a cisgender competitor, they preemptively ban transgender young people from participating at all to avoid that scenario.

As a result, countless numbers of transgender children are being [excluded from the physical and social benefits](#) that athletic competition is intended to provide. For transgender children who are already at risk of bullying and isolation in schools, that exclusion can be particularly cruel and harmful.

Worse, these athletic bans are only the tip of the iceberg. A record number of bills [have already been filed](#) across the US this year that would prevent transgender kids from accessing gender-affirming healthcare, learning about LGBT issues in schools, and even accessing bathrooms consistent with their gender identity. These bills pose serious and [well-documented risks](#) to the education, health, privacy, and safety of young transgender people.

In the face of divisive and hurtful attacks on transgender kids in schools, adults have an opportunity to model values for young people like inclusivity and respect. Unfortunately, lawmakers in South Dakota have chosen a different path.

Violence and the Human Rights of Transgender People in the United States

The Human Rights Consequences of Parental Notice of Abortion in Illinois

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