



Stop It Now!®

Together We Can Prevent the Sexual Abuse of Children

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North Carolina's "Bathroom" Bill Is Not Sexual Abuse Prevention

We've come together as researchers, educators and leaders in the sexual abuse prevention community to urge all adults committed to children's safety, especially those responsible for creating policies affecting children's safety, to make those policies evidence based rather than fear based.

Preventing the sexual abuse of children is one of the few shared needs of almost every adult and community in this country – regardless of political affiliation, faith, values or culture. Professionals and specialists in the prevention field agree that steps for prevention must include having accurate information about sex abuse.

The North Carolina bill regarding public restroom use, known as HB 2 or the "Bathroom" Bill is not about safety planning. It uses fear for our children's safety in a public bathroom to promote discrimination and inaccurate information that could potentially increase vulnerability for children. By using our concern about children's sexual safety to discriminate, effective sexual abuse safety planning is compromised.

Children are more frequently sexually abused by people who are already in their lives – not by someone waiting behind a public bathroom stall. In as many as 93% of child sexual abuse cases, the child knows the person that commits the abuse. Stating that a stranger in a public restroom, whose appearance may not match their biologically assigned gender, is a threat to public safety is simply not true.

When myths based on fear and misconceptions are presented to the public to change laws, then the public – including all those adults who want to do everything they can to protect a child – is misinformed and becomes less of a protecting force. When you are looking in the wrong places for risks to a child, you miss the opportunities to actually strengthen the protective factors necessary to prevent sex abuse.

In commitment to children's safety,

Stop It Now!
Chicago Children's Advocacy Center
Jill S. Levenson, PhD, LCSW, Barry University
Parenting Safe Children
KidSafe Foundation
Anthony P. Rizzuto, PhD, Child Abuse Prevention Consultant
California Coalition Against Sexual Assault (CALCASA)
Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape
Prevent Child Abuse Vermont
National Children's Advocacy Center