

Title of Presentation: How Media Framing Influences Gender-Affirming Care Policies in the United States

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The purpose of this presentation is to examine how media framing of gender-affirming care affects public opinion and decision making for Governors signing bills into law and the implications of these laws on trans and gender diverse youth to make policy recommendations for future bills. This research analyzed news media sources and how their political leanings influenced the narratives circulated to their readers. This research then analyzed how these narratives were related to the political party and cultural classification of the state to determine if there was any correlation between the three factors. The presenter will discuss one policy ban, one policy protection, and one state where no policies have been created for gender-affirming care to provide examples for the audience to get a brief overview of the topic. The presenter will also provide examples of common narratives related to gender-affirming care and how political affiliation of the media source affected the narrative that was presented. Media narratives can showcase gender-affirming care as a political issue as opposed to a medical issue and this can affect the way policies are framed. This research shows that trans and gender diverse youth experience more harassment, discrimination, and mental health issues than their cisgender peers, so medical, legal, and educational policy recommendations were suggested to make policies more equitable.