



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on January 3, 2017

Children's Book About Transgenderism to Be Taught in U.K. Primary Schools

A taxpayer-funded book about transgenderism is about to be rolled out in schools in the United Kingdom to children as young as seven, provoking significant controversy. The book — *Can I Tell You About Gender Diversity?* — focuses on a 12-year-old who is transitioning from a girl to a boy through drugs. Critics contend the book not only will confuse its young audiences but advocates medical interventions that are harmful.



The book begins, “My name is Kit and I’m 12 years old. I live in a house with my mum and dad, and our dog, Pickle. When I was born, the doctors told my mum and dad that they had a baby girl, and so for the first few years of my life that’s how my parents raised me. This is called being assigned female at birth. I wasn’t ever very happy that way.”

Kit begins to use puberty-blocking drugs to undergo a sex change in the book and “stop my body developing in ways that make me unhappy.”

According to the book’s publisher, Jessica Kingsley Publishers, the book’s intent is to “explain medical transitioning for children aged seven and above.”

The book’s author, CJ Atkinson, told *The Guardian* that Kit’s transition includes wearing boys’ clothes, using male pronouns, and changing the birth certificate to read Christopher instead of Kit.

Kit also discusses the possibility of taking testosterone at 16 so that her body emulates all the same puberty changes that males experience, as well as surgery. She associates with people who identify by numerous pronouns, including “they” and “xe.”

According to the *Daily Mail*, the book is set to be distributed by the government-funded organization Educate and Celebrate, for use in 120 “best practice” schools around the U.K. The book also advises teachers, students, and parents to avoid language that indicates that there are only two genders.

A spokesperson for Jessica Kingsley Publishers said the book had been commissioned because of a lack of available resources currently in schools. “The introduction of gender-neutral toilets and non-binary pronouns are important first steps, but there is a definite lack of resources out there for teachers, parents and children themselves,” the spokesperson told *The Guardian*.

“This book will spark discussion in the classroom and at home, answering difficult questions that children may have about gender diversity.”

But parents are understandably angered by the book’s placement in school curriculums, asserting that it will do nothing but confuse the vast majority of students who have no confusion about their gender identities.

The *Daily Mail*’s Sarah Vine said in her column: “In attempting to improve the lives of a vanishingly



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small minority, we are threatening the sanity of — and yes I’m going to say it — normal children. It’s time to put an end to this nonsense.”

Professor Alan Smithers of the University of Buckingham told the *Express* that the book is a prime example of “theory gone mad.”

“The vast majority of children are comfortable with being boys or girls and these are the traditional and well-understood terms for how they see themselves,” said Smithers. “There are some who are not, and they should be respected and helped to find their identities. But that is no reason for overturning something that has worked since the beginning of time.”

But the author, who identifies as queer, contends that those critics are simply guilty of “trans-panic” and “mudslinging.”

“It causes active harm. When you have a group of transgender young people, one in two will consider suicide, one in three will attempt it,” said Atkinson.

“The world is changing,” argues Atkinson. “A book like this is needed.”

Despite this contention, however, members of the mental health community do not agree. In fact, according to a report published in *The New Atlantis*, transgenderism is unsupported by science and any notion to the contrary is dangerous, especially for children.

The report, co-authored by former Chief of Psychiatry at Johns Hopkins Hospital and Distinguished Service Professor of Psychiatry at Johns Hopkins University Dr. Paul R. McHugh and Arizona State University professor of statistics and biostatistics Lawrence S. Mayer, concludes that “gender identity” is not separate from biological sex.

“Examining research from the biological, psychological, and social sciences, this report shows that some of the most frequently heard claims about sexuality and gender are not supported by scientific evidence,” reads the report’s preface.

“The hypothesis that gender identity is an innate, fixed property of human beings that is independent of biological sex — that a person might be ‘a man trapped in a woman’s body’ or ‘a woman trapped in a man’s body’ — is not supported by scientific evidence,” stated the researchers.

In particular, the authors claim that the fifth edition of the *American Psychiatric Association’s Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-5) has done a disservice to youth by diagnosing gender dysphoria in children, as most children outgrow gender confusion and efforts to advocate transgender acceptance only serve to exacerbate their confusion.

“Children are a special case when addressing transgender issues. Only a minority of children who experience cross-gender identification will continue to do so into adolescence or adulthood,” said the report.

What’s more, some of the very medical interventions addressed in Atkinson’s book are found to be particularly harmful to children.

“There is little scientific evidence for the therapeutic value of interventions that delay puberty or modify the secondary sex characteristics of adolescents, although some children may have improved psychological well-being if they are encouraged and supported in their cross-gender identification,” continued the researchers. “There is no evidence that all children who express gender-atypical thoughts or behavior should be encouraged to become transgender.”



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The report even claims that encouraging acceptance of transgenderism is counterproductive to mental well-being. "An area of particular concern involves medical interventions for gender-nonconforming youth. They are increasingly receiving therapies that affirm their felt genders, and even hormone treatments or surgical modifications at young ages," the authors write.

The report seemed to corroborate a position statement released by the American College of Pediatricians (ACPed) on March 21 entitled "Gender Ideology Harms Children," in which the writers assert that gender dysphoria is a psychological problem and should be treated as such. The position statement also raised concerns about children who use hormones to attempt to mimic a sexuality that is not their own, noting that those individuals tend to have a number of dangerous physical and mental risks. The statement unapologetically states that "conditioning children into believing a lifetime of chemical and surgical impersonation of the opposite sex is normal and healthful" can be classified as child abuse.

The authors of *The New Atlantis* study found that conditioning anyone to accept impersonation of the opposite sex via surgery or chemical influences is unhealthy, since adults who choose to have sex-reassignment surgeries have "a higher risk of experiencing poor mental health outcomes." The authors cite a study that found that sex-"reassigned individuals were about 5 times more likely to attempt suicide and about 19 times more likely to die by suicide."

Unfortunately, the politicization of this issue has undermined any efforts to help individuals struggling with gender dysphoria get at the root of their problem and reach a healthy resolution. Books such as CJ Atkinson's will not only encourage children struggling with this condition to accept it regardless of the impact it will have on their mental and physical well-being, but will likely create gender identity crises in children who otherwise never would have even considered such a thing.



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