



February 23, 2019

Dear Judicial Officers,

First, thank you for taking the time to increase your awareness of how to better support LGBTQ+ youth. Second, as an experienced advocate for youth, a foster parent, and the parent of a transgender child, I wanted to make sure that you were aware of the following resources and learning opportunities.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Erin L. Lovell".

Erin L. Lovell  
Executive Director  
Legal Counsel for Youth and Children

- (1) **The Department of Children, Youth and Families policy** on “Supporting LGBTQ+ Identified Children and Youth” was updated in July 2018 and is located at 6900 in their Practices and Procedures Guide.

<https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/6000-operations/6900-supporting-lgbtq-identified-children-and-youth>

- (2) **Gender Diversity** is a fabulous organization supporting gender diverse and transgender youth and their families. They have also had a huge impact on the development and implementation of more supportive school policies. Aidan Key is the founder and Executive Director; he identifies as a transgender male. Two of the programs available through Gender Diversity are the Gender Odyssey Conference and Family Support Groups.
  - a. **Gender Odyssey Conference:** Multi-day conference that takes place in Seattle every August, attended by people across the country and world. There is a track for professionals as well as a track for families. Aidan does everything he can so that resources are not a barrier for young people and families to attend.
  - b. **Family Support Groups and TransFamilies:** Gender Diversity organizes in-person family support groups in a few cities in Western Washington. Recognizing that people outside of the I-5 corridor also need access to supports and the community these groups provide, Aidan and his team recently launched private,

secure, online support groups for families with transgender or gender diverse children at <https://www.transfamilies.org>. If you know of any caregivers who have transgender or gender diverse children I highly recommend you connect them to this resource – bio parents, foster parents, relatives can all participate.

### **(3) Reading Builds Empathy**

Below is a list of books recommended by my child (age 11) and me. These books help to build understanding and empathy around what it means to be transgender. Many feature transgender characters.

*Red a Crayon's Story*, by Michal Hall (takes about 2 minutes to read and a great way for anyone to understand transgender kids)

*George*, by Alex Gino

*The Pants Project*, by Cat Clarke

*Lily & Dunkin*, by Donna Gephart

*The Other Boy*, by M.G. Hennessey

*Gracefully Grayson*, by Ami Polonsky

My child says, “If you only read one, it should be ‘The Other Boy’ after that ‘Lily & Dunkin,’ because they explains the hard stuff the best.”