Young People Aren’t Happy

Prepared by Nathan L Morrison for Sunday December 18th, 2022

Text: Ecclesiastes 12:13-14

### Intro

1. Young people aren’t happy. This, according to a study reported on this past summer by Psychology Today in an article by Dr. Tyler VanderWeeele.
2. At the Human Flourishing Program at Harvard they published a study to JAMA Psychiatry that they surprisingly found lower levels of well-being among young people.
	1. In times past, these annual well-being studies suggested that the relationship between well-being and age was U-shaped, with younger people and older people generally doing better than those who are middle-aged.
	2. Younger people and older people making up the top points of the “U” while middle-aged people are the loop at the bottom of the “U.”
	3. In January 2022, the data indicates that, across the various dimensions of well-being, self-reported well-being scores strictly increase with age.
	4. The left part of the “U” has essentially completely flattened.
	5. Relatively speaking, young people are not doing as well as they once were.
3. This study found that young people aren’t happy (especially those aged 18-25 years); and they reported a loss of well-being in:
	1. Happiness
	2. Health
	3. Meaning (Purpose)
	4. Character
	5. Relationships
	6. Financial stability
4. The study goes on to speculate why young people report not being happy and a loss of well-being, and even suggests some steps forward to turn back the trend.
5. However, we will focus on Meaning, or Purpose.
	1. Loss of purpose in life can affect much of one’s attitude and overall mood.
	2. The study says on this topic, “Some of the issue may also pertain to a crisis in meaning. While universities have supplied increasing knowledge, it is not clear that they have done as good a job at providing comprehensive systems of meaning and understanding. Religions and philosophies have traditionally often supplied these, but participation in religious communities has declined substantially, especially among youth, which may also alter numerous other aspects of well-being.”
	3. Once meaning and purpose is reestablished among young people who have lost their way, overall well-being may improve, including their happiness.
6. Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 (NKJV):
	1. Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all. For God will bring every work into judgment, Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil.
7. God, the Creator, says of mankind, the created, that their purpose is to fear Him and obey Him. He says this is man’s all!

#### The Meaning or Purpose of Life

* 1. Self-Help is a billion dollar industry as people spend money on self-help books, seminars and gurus (Life Coaches) to help them navigate life and give them purpose.
	2. God tells us our purpose is to serve Him.
		1. Ecclesiastes 3:9-14: Solomon recognizes that God placed mankind on earth to work and “set eternity in their heart” that they may do good and “that men should fear Him.”
		2. Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 (NKJV): “Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all.”
	3. The Jews were once told (Deuteronomy 6:5), and then Jesus reiterates it to His disciples:
		1. Mark 12:30: AND YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH.
	4. Paul tells the saints at Ephesus:
		1. Ephesians 2:10: For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.
	5. In Titus 2:11-14 Paul tells Titus to deny worldliness and to “live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age” as we look forward to Jesus’ 2nd Coming, & to be “zealous for good deeds.”
		1. As Solomon tied obedience to God as our purpose in life because of the judgment that is fixed, here Paul alludes to the same when he says we are to look forward to “the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus,” because He redeemed us from our lawless deeds.
	6. In II Peter 3:10-13 Peter says the earth will be burned up, taking away any mystery as to how the world will end, and then asks, since you know this, what sort of people ought you to be? A people of holy conduct and godliness as we look forward to the “day of God.”
		1. As Solomon tied obedience to God as our purpose in life because of the judgment that is fixed, here Peter says the same thing.
		2. We know how the world will end, burned up and the elements melted with intense heat.
		3. So, because we know this, we also know our purpose: Be holy and godly.
	7. Jesus said it this way: “If you love Me, you will keep My commandments” (John 14:15).
	8. Jesus also said how important it is to remember our purpose.
		1. In a discourse on not valuing treasure that can be destroyed or stolen, Jesus talked about food and clothing and said not to be anxious about it but have the right priority in life: Matthew 6:19-34
		2. He said God values mankind above the birds and flowers and He takes care of them so He will take care of you.
		3. In Matthew 6:33 Jesus said, “But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”
		4. Putting God first in life is our purpose, and when we do Jesus says the necessities of life will be added to you.
	9. God wants all people to become Christians and to serve Him for this is the purpose of all people!

#### Loss of Well-Being

* 1. Happiness:
		1. The study states that there could be many causes for young people to NOT be happy, such as:
			1. Economical (they are not as wealthy as their older counterparts, high costs of living and difficulty in owning houses, high inflation)
			2. War (the invasion of Ukraine most recently in February 2022, but the war on terrorism since 2001 has many young people growing up in an era of war and loss among family members)
			3. Social Media Use (young people tend to use it more and some of them develop skewed relationships from online interactions)
			4. COVID-19 (The pandemic the last two years has affected social communities & activities outside the internet)
			5. Politics (Hatred and division, blame game)
			6. Loss of Hope: for a better future because of economics and politics!
		2. If our focus is not earthly (physical) but heavenly (spiritual) as Paul says it should be (Colossians 3:1-3) then we can look beyond the world around us and know that God is in control.
		3. Jesus said war was a part of life and would continue until He returns (Mark 13:7).
		4. Paul said contentment is learned and he found it in adversity as well as prosperity (Philippians 4:12).
	2. Health & Character:
		1. The study ties these together and suggests a couple of reasons:
			1. COVID-19 and the misinformation and fear associated with it, as well as the health effects they or their family have experienced.
			2. Identity Crisis: “More prevalent crises in identity probably also does not help. In some places students are encouraged to wrestle with their own gender identity as early as kindergarten, which seems far too early to address such questions.”
		2. Meet Chloe Cole, an 18 year old young lady who is “detransitioning.”
			1. She’s a beautiful young woman who, in her own words, was mislead and mistreated at the hands of medical professionals.
			2. She gave a speech to the White House on September 20, 2022 about her ordeal and urged parents and lawmakers to not let minors make life-altering decisions.
			3. She opened her speech with a chilling statistic, “Over the past decade, there has been as high as a 4000% increase in children being referred to so-called ‘gender clinics’ across the United States. I was one of these children.”
			4. Age 11: She was just 11 years old when she was first exposed to gender ideology through online platforms. She said, “I kind of lacked female role models growing up,” and cited body image issues, early exposure to LGBTQ content, and unmonitored internet access as factors that propelled her struggle with gender dysphoria.
			5. She was also diagnosed with autism and ADHD at age 7, which she says are “common comorbidities with gender dysphoria.”
			6. She says, “I saw the unbelievable amounts of praise and attention they [LGBTQ] got online and subconsciously I yearned to have a piece of it. With every milestone in my medical transition, I was given more and more attention and celebration. It was the ultimate high.”
			7. Age 12: She was 12 when she told her parents she was a boy. It didn’t take long before medical professionals fast-tracked her into medically transitioning from a girl into a boy, a trend she says has exploded among children.
			8. Age 13: She was placed on puberty blockers and testosterone.
			9. Age 15: Her therapist lied to her parents and told them she was suicidal if she didn’t transition. They were given a false choice: “Would you rather have a dead daughter or a living son?”
			10. She says, “At 15, I went under the knife for a radical double mastectomy, the kind that breast cancer patients get.” She said of her parents’ decision, “it was a decision forced under extreme duress.”
			11. Age 16: Only one year after her double mastectomy, at 16 years old, Cole realized she had made a mistake. “I realized the beauty of motherhood was stolen from me by medical professionals who my family entrusted me to. I realized, after maturing a bit more, that a child does not in fact ‘know who they are’ at 12 years old.”
			12. Age 18: She said in an interview with Glenn Beck, “I REGRET every single step” and said that she doesn’t know if she can carry a child to term, but if she did she couldn’t ever nurse her own child!
			13. She now describes herself as a “former trans kid” and talks about how she once was celebrated but is now hated by the people whose praise she used to yearn for!
			14. She ended her speech with, “No child deserves to suffer under the knife of a gender affirming surgeon. America’s children — all children — deserve better.”
		3. God has never promised a healthy life, but He has given guidelines on our character (II Peter 1:5-11) and gender roles (Ephesians 5:22-33)!
			1. Men are to become husbands and lead their house (Matthew 19:4-6).
			2. Women are to become wives and support their husbands (I Peter 3:1-2).
			3. Both men and women are to serve God and become Christians and heirs of the promise to Abraham (Galatians 3:26-29; I Peter 3:7)
		4. Job lost everything, even his health, and he did not sin or curse God, neither did he blame God, but instead he worshiped God (Job 1:20; 42)
		5. When our focus is on God, we can weather the storms of health and know our worth to God as men and women! *Because of the hope of Heaven!*
	3. Relationships & Finances
		1. The study suggests reasons for these factors contributing to a loss of well-being among young people are:
			1. COVID-19 (the social restraints due to the virus affected relationships and relationship-building)
			2. Social Media (Mostly used by younger people – skewed relationships, false expectations, cyber bullying, jealousy, image issues, etc.)
			3. High Inflation has caused a higher cost of living, which shows a disparity between living wages and what it takes to live.
		2. Again, we can turn to Job and the apostle Paul.
			1. Job: He was wealthy – Job 1:1-5 (In one day he lost it all: his family, his house, his possessions, and even his wife turned from him)
			2. Paul: He said he suffered need and knew what it was like to go hungry in Philippians 4:12 (He said he learned the secret of being content…Christ, who strengthens him, and the brethren at Philippi who saw to his need!)
		3. God, Who wants all people to be saved (II Peter 3:9), designed the church to be a group of believers who see to their own members’ needs and take care of one another, especially when physical relationships fail!
		4. There is a great blessing in being a Christian. A relationship of brothers and sisters the world over! Even in suffering one is not alone (I Peter 5:8-9)
		5. Jesus said not to worry about riches, but to store up riches in Heaven!
			1. Luke 16:19-31: Jesus tells a story of a rich man and a poor man named Lazarus. The wealth of the rich man didn’t save him when he died for he was sent to torments. Lazarus, when he died, was carried by angels to the bosom of Abraham in Paradise. (Matthew 6:19-21)
	4. When our priorities in life are in the right order, our purpose clear, then everything else in life follows: Fear God and keep His commandments!

#### The Way Forward

* 1. The study has a section called, ‘The Way Forward.” It says:
		1. “Our data, unfortunately, do not provide solutions, but the data do make clear that there is a problem that needs to be addressed.”
		2. It goes on to place blame on social media platforms and screen times for younger people, and says we need to encourage parents, communities and corporations to do better at placing restrictions.
		3. It concludes by saying, “We need to focus on rebuilding relationships and communities post-pandemic,” and says the hope of young people is in a political system that works towards “the common good.”
	2. What it should have concluded with is, “You all need Jesus.”
	3. People who lost their purpose or meaning in life are adrift, lost, and unhappy.
		1. The study said, “Some of the issue may also pertain to a crisis in meaning.”
		2. After mentioning causes such as COVID-19, politics and war as reasons for unhappiness, it went on to say, “These issues are, of course, a concern in and of themselves, but a loss of frameworks of meaning may also exacerbate things.”
		3. The study recognized the need for meaning but offered no solutions to that end in its conclusion.
	4. Solomon did though. He spent time in the pursuit to find the meaning of life. He searched through work, pleasure and wealth, and when it was all said and done, he said:
		1. “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all. For God will bring every work into judgment, Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil.” (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 NKJV)
	5. Chloe Cole, at 18 years old, now an activist against gender-affirming surgeries or procedures, spoke with Catholic News Agency:
		1. The reporter noted about her: “She could easily stay out of the public’s eye and live a much different life. But she has a big heart and has chosen to sound the alarm of the irreversible damage being done to children at the hands of ‘trusted health care providers.’”
		2. When asked if she was happy, Chloe’s face broke into a smile as she nodded vigorously and said, “I’m a lot happier today.”
		3. She added, “Doing what I’m doing now is giving me a purpose. That’s something that I’ve been seeking for quite a while.”
		4. Here, just having a purpose, in this case, trying to save other children from her childhood has given her peace and happiness.
		5. She said, “It was too late for me and time is running out for these children. There is no second chance at childhood, so we must do our best as adults to guide our children to pathways that lead to healthy bodies and minds instead of depression and disfigurement.”
	6. Amen. Jesus is the answer!
	7. Jesus said the pathway we need to be on is the narrow road that leads to Life (Matthew 7:13-14) and He is the door or gate, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me” (John 14:6).
	8. In Jesus there is meaning (purpose) for life, there is peace and happiness (joy) and the hope of Heaven!

## Conclusion

1. My heart breaks for the young people who reported their unhappiness for that study.
2. My heart breaks for Chloe Cole (and others like her) and her parents who are being lied to for a political agenda: presented with a false choice that seemingly is the only right one for them.
3. But for those who are seeking for a purpose in life, for the truth that cuts away the error of this wicked world, there is REAL hope and a REAL way forward: Obey Jesus Christ! (John 14:15)
4. He paid your debt of sin in His own body on the cross so that in His death you may have life!
5. True happiness is knowing your sins are washed away (Both young or old).
	1. Acts 8:39: The Ethiopian Eunuch.
	2. Acts 13:48: The Gentiles.
	3. Acts 16:34: The Philippian Jailer.
	4. These went on rejoicing that they had found salvation!
6. Whatever life throws your way, you will have Jesus and nothing can take away His love (Romans 8:35-39)
	1. Being a Christian doesn’t mean you will be happy all the time or become wealthy, but it does mean that in the midst of trials there is hope and love, instead of fear and doubt.
7. Accept your purpose in life: Fear God and keep His commandments!
8. If you are not a Christian, you need to be. Repent and be baptized into His name!
9. If a Christian in error, don’t wait till it’s eternally too late. Repent and be renewed!

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Why Young People's Mental Well-Being Is in Such Decline

... and a possible way forward.

Posted August 25, 2022 | [Reviewed by Michelle Quirk](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/docs/editorial-process)

KEY POINTS

* Recent flourishing data indicate lower levels of well-being among young people.
* Life satisfaction in the United States is now strictly increasing with age.
* This is true for happiness, health, meaning, character, relationships, and financial stability.

At the [Human Flourishing Program](https://hfh.fas.harvard.edu/) at Harvard, we have been advocating more systematic [measurement of well-being](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/human-flourishing/202106/how-measure-well-being) to better assess what is going well and what isn’t, how things are changing over time, who needs help, and in what ways.

For the last couple of years, we have been reporting on [nationally representative data](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/human-flourishing/202010/national-well-being-and-during-the-pandemic) within the United States on our [flourishing assessment](https://hfh.fas.harvard.edu/measuring-flourishing), covering numerous aspects of well-being, including [happiness](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/happiness), health, meaning, character, social relationships, and financial stability. In a [report](https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapsychiatry/fullarticle/2795626) we recently published in *JAMA*[*Psychiatry*](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/psychiatry), we presented such flourishing assessment data for January 2022.

Some signs are encouraging, and for some age groups, the self-reported scores are roughly similar to the national averages we'd [reported](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11606-020-06274-3) before the pandemic. However, one particularly striking feature of this most recent data is that young adults (especially those aged 18-25 years) are not doing especially well, and they are not doing well across multiple aspects of well-being.

Age and Well-Being

The traditionally reported patterns of well-being and age have focused mostly on happiness and life satisfaction. These had suggested that the relationship between well-being and age was [U-shaped](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0277953608000245?via%3Dihub), with younger people and older people generally doing better than those who are middle-aged. Many of those who were middle-aged were perhaps struggling both with young children and aging parents. However, over the past decade or so, the shape of this pattern of well-being with age changed in dramatic ways.

In January 2022, the data indicate that, across the various dimensions of well-being, self-reported well-being scores strictly increase with age (see the figure below). This is true for happiness, but also for health, meaning, character, social relationships, and financial stability. The left part of the “U” has essentially completely flattened.

Relatively speaking, young people are not doing as well as they once were. They report being less happy and less healthy; having less meaning, greater struggles with character, and poorer relationships; and less financially stable compared to their older counterparts. The differences in well-being with age were, in fact, much larger than they were for gender or for race. There has been discussion of a [national mental health crisis](https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/surgeon-general-youth-mental-health-advisory.pdf) among youth. The present disconcerting data indicate that the crisis is much broader, embracing numerous aspects of flourishing, and with potentially dire implications for the future of our nation.

National Data on Age Gradients in Well-being Among US Adults

Source: Jama Psychiatry/Creative Commons

Speculations Concerning Causes

Data of the type we collected cannot tell us what is causing this well-being crisis. To try to tease apart causes, we generally need [longitudinal data](https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapsychiatry/article-abstract/2770562) on the same group of individuals over time (as in our [Global Flourishing Study](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/human-flourishing/202005/the-global-flourishing-study-seeking-input)). However, other data and studies might help give clues as to some of what might be occurring.

Some of the difficulty may well be economic: With housing costs ever increasing, inflation high, and substantial [education](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/education) debt, it may seem difficult for young adults to have hope for a more stable future.

Some of the issue may also pertain to a crisis in meaning. While universities have supplied increasing knowledge, it is not clear that they have done as good a job at providing comprehensive systems of meaning and understanding. Religions and philosophies have traditionally often supplied these, but participation in religious communities has declined substantially, especially [among youth](https://www.americansurveycenter.org/research/generation-z-future-of-faith/), which may also alter numerous other aspects of [well-being](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/human-flourishing/202102/how-religious-community-is-linked-human-flourishing). More prevalent crises in [identity](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/identity) probably also does not help. In some places (as I have experienced in exploring educational options for my own children), students are encouraged wrestle with their own [gender identity](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/gender) as early as kindergarten, which seems far too early to address such questions.

Geopolitical events and concerns ranging from the [COVID-19](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/coronavirus-disease-2019) pandemic itself, to [global warming](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/environment), to threats of and realities of war, all also threaten well-being but may do so especially for those who have not lived much of life in more stable times. These issues are, of course, a concern in and of themselves, but a loss of frameworks of meaning may also exacerbate things.

Some of the well-being troubles may also arise from technology and social media use. The effects of social media use on well-being do, perhaps, vary somewhat by mode of engagement. However, some of the [best studies](https://academic.oup.com/aje/article/185/3/203/2915143?searchresult=1) suggest that, at least on average, and especially for high rates of use, the effect of social media engagement on well-being is negative, and social media use is [considerably higher](https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2021/04/07/social-media-use-in-2021/) among young people.

A large part of the pattern we see with lower well-being among younger people might also have to do with disproportionate social effects of the pandemic on relationships across age groups. Those who are older, who have had established relationships and longer-term community, have perhaps been able to better weather the pandemic conditions over the past couple of years. Those with existing relationships and communities can draw upon those resources and have been able to more easily re-engage as pandemic conditions have lightened. However, younger people often do not have these pre-existing relationships and communities—indeed it is this stage in life in which relationships and communities are formed, and opportunities for such formation have been very severely impeded these past two years.

Political polarization may well be another cause. Such polarization has created hate and animosity, likely exacerbated by social media use, even to the point that political adversaries substantially [misconceive](https://perceptiongap.us/) the actual views of the other side. There seems less of an orientation to the common good. Weakening communities may also yet further be weakening a sense of the common good. A hateful, dysfunctional [politics](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/politics) does not give rise to hope.

Moreover, a proper orientation toward the common good should concern not only present circumstances, across both sides of the aisle, but also a common good oriented toward the future, toward economic and social policies that enable young people to advance, that help young people flourish, and that will sustain society for generations to come. It is not clear at present that we have this.

Youth Adrift

Source: Delphotostock/Adobe Express

The Way Forward

Our data, unfortunately, do not provide solutions, but the data do make clear that there is a problem that needs to be addressed. Data of the type we have presented also do not tell us whether the patterns of age and well-being have altered so that, under the current societal structures, young people will eventually improve with age (what would be called an “age effect”) or, alternatively, if, given what has occurred and the experiences that have taken place, the current generation of young people will continue to struggle (what would be called a “cohort effect”). Some of this may depend on the actions that are taken in the years ahead. However, regardless of which of these two explanations, or some combination of the two, is correct, the crisis at present seems clear.

We need to work on helping young people, of this generation and of subsequent generations, to thrive. We need to foster systems of meaning and deeper engagement with the most fundamental questions of life. We need greater discipline in our social media use, from individuals to communities to corporations. Parents and schools could appropriately restrict use and also help [teenagers](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/adolescence) and others to develop healthier patterns of use; corporations need to take well-being studies seriously, and design platforms that do not impede well-being. We need to focus on rebuilding relationships and [communities](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/human-flourishing/202112/how-we-can-rebuild-communities-after-the-pandemic) post-pandemic.

Finally, we need a politics more oriented toward the common good—both oriented toward the common good of the present but also toward the common good of the future, and of future generations. The well-being of our youth, and the future of our society, depend upon it.

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Detransitioner Chloe Cole Gives Powerful Testimony Against ‘Gender-Affirming Care’ At Capitol

**By**  [**Christina Buttons**](https://www.dailywire.com/author/christina-buttons)

<https://www.dailywire.com/news/detransitioner-chloe-cole-gives-powerful-testimony-against-gender-affirming-care-at-white-house>

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An 18-year-old [detransitioned](https://www.dailywire.com/topic/transgender) woman gave a powerful testimony on Tuesday against the “gender affirming” model of care that led to her irreversible medical transition as an adolescent.

Chloe Cole spoke at a press conference in front of the U.S. Capitol in support of Rep. [Marjorie Taylor Greene’s](https://www.dailywire.com/topic/marjorie-taylor-greene) (R-GA) new bill, the Protect Children’s Innocence Act, that aims to shield minors from accessing the permanent, body- and life-altering medical treatments they may later come to regret.

“How did we get to the point where nearly every pediatric institution in the country considers it best practice to remove the healthy breast tissue of children while administering drugs typically used to chemically castrate high-risk sex offenders?” Cole said of the widespread acceptance of radical gender theory in medicine driving “gender affirming care,” which effectively puts children in the driver’s seat to dictate the terms of their own sex change.

“I believe Americans deserve to know the truth about this radical and perverse ideology, marketed as necessary and ‘life-saving’ health care,” said Cole.

Cole opened her speech with a chilling statistic, “Over the past decade, there has been as high as a [4000%](https://www1.cbn.com/cbnnews/us/2018/september/4-000-explosion-in-kids-identifying-as-transgender-docs-perform-double-mastectomies-on-healthy-teen-girls) increase in children being referred to so-called ‘gender clinics’ across the United States. I was one of these children.”

A recent UCLA [survey](https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/press/transgender-estimate-press-release/) found that the number of trans-identified teens has doubled in the last five years to about 300,000 in the United States, while the rates of adults identifying as transgender have remained the same. According to the [Gender Mapping Project](https://www.gendermapper.org/), only a handful of pediatric gender clinics existed in the United States a decade ago. Now over 200 have spawned to meet the growing demand of adolescents who identify as transgender seeking medical transition.

Cole’s story documents how she was introduced to gender ideology online at 11 years old, which led to her self-identification as a transgender boy at 12 years old. Cole was prescribed puberty blockers and testosterone at 13, and received a double mastectomy surgery to remove her breasts at 15, all at the behest of “gender affirming” medical professionals who she says emotionally blackmailed her parents into giving their consent.

“The gender clinic presented my parents with the classic false dichotomy regarding children with gender dysphoria: ‘Would you rather have a dead daughter or a live son?’” said Cole. “Given these options, what loving parent wouldn’t choose to transition their child? This was not informed consent, it was a decision forced under extreme duress,” she added.

Cole divulged the shocking circumstances of a trauma she endured that contributed to her medical transition. “At 15, I went under the knife for a radical double mastectomy, the kind that breast cancer patients get. This was after I was sexually assaulted at school by a male student.”

“I told myself to ‘man up,’ but I lived my life in constant hatred of my breasts,” said Cole, adding that she attempted to flatten her chest with constrictive materials through “breast binding,” as is recommended by the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH), which led to her breasts and rib cage becoming deformed. “I was afraid, and couldn’t wait to finally protect my body from the threat of further molestation,” she said of her reasons to obtain a double mastectomy.

Only one year after her double mastectomy, at 16 years old, Cole realized she had made a mistake. “I realized the beauty of motherhood was stolen from me by medical professionals who my family entrusted me to,” said Cole. “I realized, after maturing a bit more, that a child does not in fact ‘know who they are’ at 12 years old.”

Cole reveals that unmonitored internet access and exposure to LGBTQ content on Instagram at 11 years old introduced her to gender ideology. “I saw the unbelievable amounts of praise and attention they got online and subconsciously I yearned to have a piece of it,” said Cole. “With every milestone in my medical transition, I was given more and more attention and celebration. It was the ultimate high.”

With newfound introspection, Cole began speaking publicly about her opposition to medically transitioning minors in April 2022, when she was 17. “Much of this gender confusion is based on old regressive stereotypes of men and women, which are now being reinforced with hormones and surgeries,” she said. “Women can have short hair and be interested in playing sport; men can grow their hair out and wear makeup. It does not change their biology.”

“There are many detransitioners speaking out, and they are ignored by the institutions most responsible for the search of truth,” said Cole, speaking of the [growing population](https://www.reddit.com/r/detrans/) of young adults who regret their decision to transition and claim they were not rigorously assessed before being fast-tracked into irreversible medical interventions. “Up until today, most politicians on the Left and Right have done nothing but get into Twitter fights on this issue,” she added.

Greene’s Protect Children’s Innocence Act, H.R. 8731, would make any individual in the state of Alabama who knowingly performs “gender-affirming care” on a minor — including the administering of puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones — guilty of a class C felony, facing a prison sentence of up to 25 years and a $250,000 fine.

“It is designed to protect children from abusive experimental procedures from every angle,” reads the description on the American Principles Project [website](https://americanprinciplesproject.org/policy/protect-childrens-innocence-act/). Currently, the bill has 37 Republican [co-sponsors](https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/8731/cosponsors?r=2&s=1).

“It was too late for me and time is running out for these children,” said Cole. “There is no second chance at childhood, so we must do our best as adults to guide our children to pathways that lead to healthy bodies and minds instead of depression and disfigurement.”

Cole ended her speech with a compelling plea: “No child deserves to suffer under the knife of a gender affirming surgeon. America’s children — all children — deserve better.”

<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/252376/chloe-cole-leading-fight-to-protect-children-from-transgender-surgeries>

**Meet Chloe Cole, the 18-year-old leading the fight to protect children from transgender surgeries**

Chloe Cole in her AirBnb in Washington, D.C., on Sept. 21, 2022. A self-described “former trans kid,” she de-transitioned after undergoing years of puberty blockers and an irreversible double mastectomy at the age of 15. | Edie Heipel/CNA

**By**[**Edie Heipel**](https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/author/740/edie-heipel)

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An 18-year-old woman is rapidly becoming one of the most powerful voices against transitioning children at a moment in which most politicians and media outlets lack the courage to speak out.

Chloe Cole is a self-described “former trans kid” who de-transitioned after undergoing years of puberty blockers and an irreversible double mastectomy at the age of 15.

Cole is now traveling across the country to share her story and raise the alarm about gender transition procedures on children, a growing trend she calls “child abuse” and “medical experimentation.”

“I’m planning to keep doing this until it stops,” Cole told CNA Wednesday in an interview.

Cole, who grew up in Northern California, was just 11 years old when she was first exposed to gender ideology through online platforms.

“I kind of lacked female role models growing up,” Cole told CNA, citing body image issues, early exposure to LGBTQ content, and unmonitored internet access as factors that propelled her struggle with gender dysphoria.

Cole was also diagnosed with autism and ADHD at age 7, which she says are “common comorbidities with gender dysphoria.”

The link between autism and gender dysphoria has been scientifically [**studied**](https://www.spectrumnews.org/news/largest-study-to-date-confirms-overlap-between-autism-and-gender-diversity/) and [**reported**](https://www.city-journal.org/transgender-identifying-adolescents-threats-to-parental-rights) on by independent journalist Abigail Shrier, suggesting that children on the spectrum are particularly vulnerable to the pull of transgenderism.

**A ‘false’ choice**

It didn’t take long before medical professionals fast-tracked Cole into medically transitioning from a girl into a boy, a trend she says has exploded among children.

Cole [**said**](https://twitter.com/RepMTG/status/1572261275417153536) Wednesday that her parents “were scared and desperate for answers” when she first told them she was a boy and that their decision to sign off on transitioning her was “forced under extreme duress.”

“The gender clinic presented my parents with the classic false dichotomy: Would you rather have a dead daughter or a living son?” Cole said.

Cole was put on puberty blockers and testosterone at just 13 years old, which caused a ripple of negative side effects including unbearable hot flashes and what she describes as an endless feeling of boredom.

“For me it was pretty bad, like they were making my whole body really itchy. There were certain days that I couldn’t even wear sweaters or long pants in cold weather,” Cole told CNA.

“I felt like there was this feeling of boredom that just wouldn’t go away. I would just wake up waiting for the next best thing,” she remembered.

Cole continues to experience joint pain from weakened bone density — a known side effect of puberty blockers — as well as certain allergies and ongoing urinary tract infection symptoms.

But all of this pales in comparison to the double mastectomy Cole underwent at age 15, which permanently removed both of her breasts.

**‘Adults need to take a stand’**

Cole has no plans to back down from advocating against gender transitions for children and hopes her story opens the eyes of parents of children struggling with gender dysphoria as well as lawmakers who have remained silent.

“Spend time with your kids, keep them off technology for as long as possible. Let them know they’re loved and stay in touch with them. If they’re on the internet, monitor their usage,” she urged parents.

“Adults need to take a stand,” Cole emphasized. “Complacency is what led to this happening to me in the first place.”

“If you look away for even a second, it’s very contagious,” Cole said, speaking of what she calls “skewed information” that medical professionals are sharing on the internet.

Cole referenced Dr. Sidhbh Gallagher, a gender-affirming surgeon from Miami who [**advertises**](https://twitter.com/ChoooCole/status/1571505618611216385) transition procedures to minors on her [**Tik-Tok**](https://www.tiktok.com/%40gendersurgeon?lang=en) account.

“There’s definitely a money incentive, especially for those who are doing gender-affirming surgeries,” Cole said. “Surgeons get the most money out of this.”

So far, Cole has traveled to five states across the U.S. — including her home state of California, Louisiana, Florida, Ohio, and Washington, D.C. — to bear witness to lawmakers about her experience and urge them to take a stand.

In September, Cole testified against California Democrat Scott Weiner’s proposed [**S.B. 107**](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202120220SB107), which would make the state a “sanctuary” for children to obtain irreversible gender surgeries without parental consent.

Alliance Defending Freedom and over 40 other parental rights organizations [**wrote**](https://adfmedialegalfiles.blob.core.windows.net/files/PTAPcoalitionLetterToGovNewsom.pdf) to California Gov. Gavin Newsom protesting the bill.

“This legislation allows the ‘taking of a child’ to California (without parental knowledge or consent) to obtain gender transition procedures — including puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones, and irreversible surgeries — and impermissibly gives California courts the power to strip custody from lawful and well-intentioned parents,” ADF urged.

Cole says that for the most part, politicians on both sides of the aisle have “just shied away from the issue.”

“Mostly they get into petty fights over it, but nothing has really been done about it,” she said.

CNA interviewed Cole the day after she [**testified**](https://twitter.com/RepMTG/status/1572261275417153536?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E1572261275417153536%7Ctwgr%5Ee5a58741110c7eee1c73120e6910e4e7528e5f48%7Ctwcon%5Es1_&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.dailywire.com%2Fnews%2Fdetransitioner-chloe-cole-gives-powerful-testimony-against-gender-affirming-care-at-white-house) outside Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., in favor of a bill proposed by U.S. Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, R-Georgia, that would criminalize gender procedures on minors.

Greene’s [**Protect Children’s Innocence Act, H.R. 8731**](https://www.congress.gov/117/bills/hr8731/BILLS-117hr8731ih.pdf), would make it a Class C felony to perform gender transition procedures — including mastectomies, phalloplasties, and vaginoplasties — on minors. The bill is being supported by over 40 other Republican [**lawmakers**](https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/8731/cosponsors?r=2&s=1).

“No child deserves to suffer under the knife of a gender-affirming surgeon,” Cole [**said**](https://twitter.com/RepMTG/status/1572261275417153536?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E1572261275417153536%7Ctwgr%5Ee5a58741110c7eee1c73120e6910e4e7528e5f48%7Ctwcon%5Es1_&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.dailywire.com%2Fnews%2Fdetransitioner-chloe-cole-gives-powerful-testimony-against-gender-affirming-care-at-white-house) in a press conference Sept. 21 unveiling the bill. “America’s children — all children — deserve better.”

“Chloe’s story is so important,” Taylor-Greene told CNA. “We’re so proud of her for being brave enough to come out and tell it, but her story isn’t the only one — there are many beyond her. If anyone is pushing this on children, they’re on the wrong side of history, and we will show that to be true.”

Suzanne Satterfield, a parental-rights activist based in Virginia, spent extensive time with Cole over her trip to D.C. to testify against child transitions.

“Chloe’s a ray of sunshine in the darkness that is looming over the children of today,” Satterfield said to CNA.

“She could easily stay out of the public’s eye and live a much different life. But she has a big heart and has chosen to sound the alarm of the irreversible damage being done to children at the hands of ‘trusted health care providers.’”

When asked if she was happy, Cole’s face broke into a smile as she nodded vigorously.

“I’m a lot happier today,” she said, her eyes shining.

“Doing what I’m doing now is giving me a purpose. That’s something that I’ve been seeking for quite a while.”

Edie Heipel is the Political Correspondent for CNA's Washington, D.C. bureau. She previously worked in communications for Center for Renewing America, served in the Trump White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and has been a contributor to various outlets including The Federalist and The Charlotte Lozier Institute. She is a graduate of Wheaton College.

<https://www.theblaze.com/shows/glenn-beck-podcast/de-transitioned-teen-chloe-cole>

# 'I REGRET every single step': De-transitioned teen exposes HEARTBREAKING truth of 'gender-affirming care'

[**THE GLENN BECK PODCAST**](https://www.theblaze.com/shows/glenn-beck-podcast/)

[**BLAZETV STAFF**](https://www.theblaze.com/u/theblazestaff)

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Chloe Cole says she began to be "brainwashed" by the gender ideology she saw all over social media when she was only 11 years old. By the time she turned 13, Chloe was convinced that she was a boy, and her parents didn't know how to respond. So they turned to the so-called "experts," who rushed Chloe into life-altering hormone treatments and surgeries. Not only did these experts give "no alternatives" to transitioning, but they lied to Chloe's parents behind her back to scare them into compliance.

Chloe joined "The Glenn Beck Podcast" to share her heartbreaking experience and to expose the dark world of “gender-affirming care,” which she believes no teen should ever be subject to — from hormone blockers to mastectomies: "This is all wrong. I regret every single step, and this shouldn't have happened."

She also had a warning for parents about what led her to make those decisions in the first place, and she provided some key advice on how to react compassionately to situations like hers.

Watch the full podcast with Chloe Cole below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JE6m4l1yLgo&t=6s>