

# Foster Homes

*On April 30, 2024, the Biden-Harris administration implemented a [new rule](#) to use the foster care system to advance the radical LGBT agenda. This rule lays the groundwork to seriously undermine parental rights and religious liberty.*

## Background

In 2016, the Obama's Health and Human Services (HHS) provided a five year \$10 million grant to researchers at the University of Maryland to establish a center to support LGBT children in foster care. The researchers went on to work with child welfare agencies to develop strategies to ensure "affirming" placement of LGBT youth. As part of the grant, the researchers developed the National Quality Improvement Center on Tailored Services, Placement Stability and Permanency for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning, and Two-Spirit Children and Youth in Foster Care (QIC-LGBTQ2S).

To implement this program, the researchers turned to agencies in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, Cuyahoga County, Ohio, Prince George's County, Maryland, and the state of Michigan. Of these four locations, Cuyahoga County would serve as a key linchpin in crafting the Biden-Harris administration's foster care rule.

## Programs

Cuyahoga County implemented the "AFFIRM.ME" model. This included four interventions: "Safe Identification Initiative," "Youth Acceptance Project," "Chosen Affirming Family Finding," and "AFFIRM Caregiver."

These programs would provide the foundation of the Biden-Harris administration's foster care rule.

"Safe Identification Initiative"

This intervention requires all children over the age of 13 to participate in a conversation with their caseworkers about their sexual orientation and gender identity and expression (SOGIE). In some instances, children as young as three-years-old discussed their SOGIE status with caseworkers.

During the course of these conversations children were asked pointed questions. “Do you have crushes on boys, girls or other kinds of people?” and do you “feel more like a boy or more like a girl, some other gender or maybe somewhere in between?” were the types of questions that were put to the children.

#### “Youth Acceptance Project”

The goal of this intervention is to help parents and caregivers of children already in the system or at risk of entering the system to become affirming of their children’s SOGIE status. It specifically targets parents and caregivers who do not allow their children to wear hairstyles and clothing of the opposite sex or fail to use “preferred pronouns.”

The Youth Acceptance Project has already been implemented in California, New York, Pennsylvania, Missouri, and Ohio.

#### “Chosen Affirming Family Finding”

This intervention aims to place LGBT youths with people who “affirm” their SOGIE status. While this may mean placing the youth with an “enlightened” relative who supports the LGBT creed, the placement does not have to be blood kin. Frequently teachers and LGBT activists known to the child (often the person that encouraged him to embrace the rainbow cult) are given custody of the child simply because they are more “affirming.”

#### “AFFIRM Caregiver”

This intervention attempts to increase the number of “affirming” homes available to LGBT youth. Potential foster parents must take a test designed to ascertain their ability to create a “safe space,” while another form asks how strongly they would support behaviors associated with different gender identities. Additionally, they are asked if they would “display pro-LGBTQ+ symbols” at home or allow their foster child to bring a “same-gender significant other to family events and celebrations.” These questionnaires trample all over the parents’ religious liberty rights and weed out those that are not “affirming” enough.

## **Rule Making Process**

Drawing on the “research” from the Obama administration’s grant, the Biden-Harris HHS was able to create its new rule regarding affirming homes for foster children. In fact, Julie Kruse, a senior adviser at HHS, had closely monitored the work of the agencies that received funding through the grant. Of particular interest was Cuyahoga County, and Kruse had several meetings with people at that agency. For one of these meetings the Cuyahoga County team put on a presentation explaining why its program was “a promising model for replication.”

To ensure support for this radical rule, the Biden administration turned to other activists for input. One of these activists was Alex Roque, who runs the Ali Forney Center catering to homeless LGBT youth in New York. During a webinar hosted by HHS, Roque declared that “transphobia is child abuse.” Roque went on to liken denying a child’s SOGIE status to denying them food and access to school.

Another LGBT agency that provided insight for developing the rule was Family Builders. In its public comment, Family Builders argued that offering religious exemptions was a granting a “license to discriminate and to do harm.”

In addition to relying on these “experts” for the development

of the rule, the Biden administration also promotes their work in its implementation. The rule requires that to become a “designated placement” for LGBT youth, foster parents must “be trained with appropriate knowledge and skills to provide for the needs of the child related to the child’s self-identified sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.” Although the rule does not specify what trainings are to be used, the website for the Administration of Children and Families Children’s Bureau (part of HHS) directs people to training resources developed by many of these same experts that were funded through the QIC-LBTQ2S.

## **Future Implications**

Ultimately this rule lays the foundation for declaring a parent’s lack of “affirmation” as a form of child abuse. This would then justify taking children away from their parents and denying Catholics and other faithful Americans from serving as foster parents.

In Prince George’s County, Maryland, parents lost custody of their son, who has autism, after staff at Children’s National Hospital in Washington, DC, told them he was transgender. This came as a surprise to the Christian family as the son had never displayed any transgender tendencies before his stay in the hospital. Unsurprisingly, one of the boy’s councilors was an LGBT activist. The hospital forced the parents to jump through multiple hoops to regain custody of their son compelling them to take the matter to court. According to the parents’ lawsuit, hospital officials told them to “remove passages from their Bibles that affirm traditional sexual values” and refused to release their son until “they renounced their lifetime faith.”

In Montana, a family lost custody of their daughter after a stay in a local hospital. The girl informed the hospital that she believed she was a boy and insisted on being called “Leo.” Although Montana prohibits transgender procedures for minors,

hospital staff informed the parents that “social transitioning” was a “grey area” and that was the best course for their daughter. When they refused to comply, Department of Children and Family Services (CFS) and hospital staff berated the parents. Within hours of being assured their daughter would be transferred to a comprehensive care facility in Montana, the girl was sent to a facility in Wyoming, which did not have the same safeguards in place to protect minors from gender affirming care. After her stay in Wyoming, CFS put the girl in a group home. Although her parents tried to regain custody, the girl remained in temporary legal custody of CFS until the girl’s biological mother, who has a history of physically harming children, was given custody.

In California, a mother lost custody of her daughter after being accused of emotional abuse for not allowing the girl to bind her chest or wear men’s clothing. The daughter was taken away to live in a foster home and the mother was disqualified from continuing her career as a Christian counselor. After several months of fighting in the courts, the mother cleared her name and regained custody of her daughter. Social workers required the mother to take the girl to the Los Angeles LGBT Center for LGBTQ+ youth. However, the mother believed that the center was not helping her daughter as it made the girl more rebellious and defiant. When the mother told her daughter she would have to arrange her own transportation to the center, social workers threatened the mother again with losing her daughter for emotional abuse. Ultimately, mother and daughter left California after the girl, at the age of 17, received a prescription for testosterone without her mother’s consent.

In Ohio, parents lost custody of their daughter when social workers argued that their lack of support for her SOGIE status made the girl suicidal. The girls grandparents were given custody because they “are the ones who have an open mind and will...make this sort of decision best for the child.”

In Vermont, Michael and Rebecca Gantt along with Brian and

Kaitlyn Wuoti served as foster parents. Between the two families they adopted five children. Both men are pastors in their churches, and the families hold traditional views. For years, both the Gantts and the Wuotis received top marks from state officials for the care they provided. However, when it came time for the families to renew their licenses, both were denied because they would not abandon their faith and embrace Vermont's anti-scientific proclamations regarding the ability to change their sex.

Given the confidential nature of juvenile court and custody proceedings, there are probably many more instances of parents losing their rights. Vernadette Broyles, president and general counsel of the Child and Parental Rights Campaign, warns "what the Biden administration and HHS has been putting out there as guidance for states, there's no question in my mind that this is happening in a substantial way."