

If you're trans or gender-diverse and entering the foster care system in Michigan, you might have a lot of questions about your future, identity, and support systems. The uncertainty might be overwhelming or frustrating, but you have every right to find support, feel safe, and have a sense of belonging. There are people and resources available to support you.

### Challenges Trans Youth Often Face in Michigan's Foster Care System

- **Limited Data on Trans Youth**

Michigan doesn't always collect or share data on how many youth in foster care are transgender or gender-diverse. This makes it harder for support systems to understand your needs and make sure you're seen.

- **Finding Safe, Affirming Homes**

Some foster homes are explicitly LGBTQ-friendly, but not all are. You may face misgendering, restrictions on how you dress or how you express your gender, or feel like you can't be out fully in your placement.

- **Discrimination & Bias**

Even within the system, there may be staff or agencies who don't fully understand or affirm trans identities. That can lead to harmful treatment or barriers to stability.

- **Barriers to Gender-Affirming Care**

Getting the medical or mental health care you need—like hormone therapy or trans-affirming counseling—can be complicated. You might need support from your caseworker or foster parents to access it.

- **Emotional & Mental Health Stress**

On top of all the trauma that can come with foster care, being trans sometimes adds extra stress: fear of rejection, internalized shame, or the pressure to hide who you are.

- **Worry About Aging Out**

When you leave foster care, housing, health care, and support don't always follow. That's especially scary for trans youth, who already face higher risks of homelessness and instability.

### You're Not Alone — There's Support in Michigan

Here are some trusted places and resources you can reach out to for help, community, and safety:

#### Local Organizations

- **Stand With Trans**

Offers mental health counseling, support groups, and a helpline for trans youth and their families in Michigan.

- Call: **248-907-4853** ([Stand With Trans](#))
  - Text support: Text **START** to **833-435-7798** ([Stand With Trans](#))
- **Prism LGBTQ+ Support**  
A youth-led group offering support meetings, online resources, and education throughout Michigan. ([Prism](#))
- **PFLAG Michigan**  
Local chapters that connect you (or your caregivers) with support, education, and community. ([PFLAG](#))
- **Equality Michigan**  
Works on policy advocacy, but also offers a resource hub for legal help, housing, and LGBTQ-friendly services. ([Equality Michigan](#))
- **Ruth Ellis Center**  
Located in Detroit, this organization supports at-risk LGBTQ youth with drop-in services, transitional living, and more. ([Wikipedia](#))

## Statewide & Health Resources

- **LGBTQIA Midwest**  
A resource site with health info, providers, and care guidelines specifically for LGBTQ youth in Michigan. ([LGBTQIA Midwest](#))
- **Protect Trans Youth Michigan**  
An advocacy organization working to protect and affirm trans youth across the state. ([Protect Trans Youth Michigan](#))
- **Children's Trust Michigan – Unique Gender & Sexual Identifying Families**  
Provides families and youth with resources tailored to gender- and sexuality-diverse identities. ([Children Trust Michigan](#))

## Mental Health & Crisis Supports

- **Trans Lifeline**  
A peer support hotline run by and for transgender people. (Not Michigan-specific, but very helpful.)  
Phone: **1-877-565-8860** ([ListenRing](#))
- **The Trevor Project**  
Crisis support, chat, and text counseling for LGBTQ young people ages 13–24.  
Hotline: **1-866-488-7386** ([ListenRing](#))
- **Affirmations LGBTQ+ Community Center**  
Based in Ferndale, MI — offers youth drop-in space (ages 13–18), counseling, and support groups. ([Stand With Trans](#))
- **Ozone House**  
Located in Ann Arbor, they provide crisis services, transitional living, and outreach for youth who are homeless or at risk. ([Wikipedia](#))

## What You Can Do

- **Ask for Support:** Tell your caseworker, social worker, or a trusted adult about what kind of home you need. You deserve a safe place that respects your gender.
- **Use Your Voice:** Join support groups (in-person or virtual) to connect with other trans or gender-diverse youth.
- **Reach Out for Help:** Crisis lines, therapists, and peer groups are there when you need someone to talk to.
- **Know Your Rights:** You have the right to be affirmed as who you are, to access your medical care, and to be safe.
- **Plan for the Future:** Talk with your support team about what you need as you age out of care—housing, work, health care, and more.

You deserve to be seen, supported, and safe. There *are* people in Michigan who care deeply about you and want to help you build the life you deserve