



May 13, 2026

The Honorable Brendan Carr
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
45 L Street, NE
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Comment On Further Empowering Parents To Protect Their Children And Make Informed Choices About The TV Programs Their Children Watch

Dear Chairman Carr,

As a women's organization dedicated to supporting policies that strengthen individuals, families, and children, Independent Women believes parents are the primary decision-makers regarding the upbringing, education, and well-being of their children, and that public policy should support families' ability to make informed choices consistent with their own values.

Parents and caregivers are understandably concerned about the health and well-being of children. Across the country, parents vigilantly raise concerns over inappropriate material pushed onto their children.

Television and movies are influential mediums that children consume daily. Parents are careful to screen programming for harmful material such as storylines that are violent, sexual, or graphic in nature, or with adult language and suggestive themes. Not all programming is appropriate for children of all ages. The television industry has voluntarily designed, and continues to develop, a valuable TV ratings system to give parents information about the content and age-appropriateness of TV programs. The TV Parental Guidelines are simple, easily recognizable on screens, and provide transparency and critical information before shows begin and after breaks. This empowers parents to make the best decision for their children.

While the current rating system helps alert parents to most age-inappropriate content, it is wholly inadequate at addressing newer transgender and queer themes in programs.

The Growth of Transgenderism in Children's Programming

We have seen a rise in television shows for younger audiences promoting non-binary, trans, and queer characters that expose children at too young an age to sexual themes. In [GLAAD's analysis](#) of LGBTQ programming on air from 2024-2025, it specifically details

examples of children and family shows presenting feature trans- and queer- identifying characters:

- Disney Channel: “Zombies: The Re-Animated Series” features nonbinary character A-Spen from the films.
- Disney Channel: “Primos,” an animated series, features a cousin as a pansexual character, Lita, and includes her nonbinary friend Alex.
- Disney Jr.: “Firebuds” features a nonbinary character named Cory.
- Nickelodeon: “Monster High,” season two included a nonbinary student, Frankie Stein.
- Netflix: “Heartstopper,” third season included transgender character Elle, her boyfriend Tao, and nonbinary character Darcy.
- Netflix: seasons six and seven of “The Dragon Prince,” with a number of queer characters, including Janai, Terry, Amaya, Astrid, Ethari, and Runaan. Two of those characters, Astrid and Terry, are transgender.
- Netflix: “Jurassic World: Chaos Theory,” in its second and third seasons, features queer couple Sammy and Yaz.

Other shows that include explicitly transgender, non-binary, and queer-identifying characters include:

- Cartoon Network: “Steven Universe” features Stevonnie and the Gems as non-binary.
- Cartoon Network: “We Baby Bears” features Box and Polly the Pirate Captain as non-binary.
- Cartoon Network: “Steven Universe Future” features Shep as non-binary.
- Cartoon Network: “Craig of the Creek” features Angel José, who uses non-binary pronouns.
- Nickelodeon: “Rubble & Crew” introduced River as a non-binary character.
- Nickelodeon: “Monster High” features Frankie Stein, a non-binary character who uses they/them pronouns.
- Disney: “The Owl House” featured non-binary characters, Raine Whispers and Masha.

Other instances have drawn large public backlash. In 2025, when Netflix featured a transgender character in the show “Dead End: Paranormal Park,” it triggered a sweeping [boycott](#) among parents and adults led by tech entrepreneur Elon Musk. In 2023,

Paramount+ [introduced the robot](#) character, Nightshade, on the animated show “Transformers: Earthspark” as a nonbinary character who used “they/them” pronouns, sparking public outcry.

These shows carry general audience ratings of TV-Y, TV-Y7, and TV-G. However, parents are not aware that programs with these ratings may contain the discussion or promotion of gender identity themes, because they do not provide specific descriptors about trans and queer content. Without a signal, parents are unaware that these characters and themes are embedded in the programs their children are watching until they see or hear them for themselves. This removes parents’ ability to decide if content is appropriate for their children before the program begins—unlike shows that feature violence and self-harm.

The ubiquitous nature of streaming services means that even if shows with these themes are no longer airing on cable or broadcast, they are likely available among the catalogues of shows on streaming services and apps. For children, streaming is dominant, often making up [60%](#) or more of total screen time, particularly as they get older. This leaves more opportunity for content to be viewed on different platforms and over time.

Transgenderism Is a Contagion

Transgender, non-binary, and queer content is not age-appropriate for young audiences. Including it in animated and non-animated shows for kids and teens, especially without parental knowledge or consent, may have the intended or unintended consequence of confusing children and causing them to question their own identities and sexuality at a young age. The effect of transgender themes being promoted to children is that it has become an element that fuels the social contagion of transgenderism among young people today, and far too often sets them down the path of medical transition.

Gender dysphoria, characterised by a strong desire to claim a sexual identity not aligned with their personal biology, is relatively rare among children. A 2023 [study](#) showed that “many children who show gender dysphoria before puberty do not continue to do so during and after pubertal changes occur.” When it occurs, it [tends](#) to be among young men.

Yet, transgenderism is rising in America, especially among young people and girls. The belief that your “gender identity” is distinct from your sex is leading young people under age 30 to identify as transgender or nonbinary at [higher rates](#) than previous generations. [Experts](#) find that trends among trans-identifying youth as occurring after puberty are ahistorical. They point to influences such as media and social media as drivers of this contagion among young people. The landmark independent review of NHS gender services in the United Kingdom, led by Dr. Hilary Cass, [found](#) “remarkably weak evidence” supporting the long-term benefits of clinical interventions such as puberty blockers for minors, raising serious concerns about the increasing medicalization of children and reinforcing why parents and policymakers should steer clear of cultural and

media influences that may push vulnerable young people toward irreversible medical pathways.

A Better Way Forward

Independent Women proposes that a new content descriptor be developed to indicate that programming contains transgender, non-binary, or queer content. Similar to the content descriptors marked by one more letter to indicate adult themes and content, the new descriptor should be easily identifiable, such as “TQ+” for “Transgender and queer+.”

Audience: Indicates the audience for which a television program is appropriate. →

Content Descriptor: Indicates a show may contain violence, sex, adult language, or suggestive dialogue. →

The Content Descriptors
TV Parental Guidelines may have one or more letters added to the basic rating to let parents know when a show may contain violence, sex, adult language or suggestive dialogue.

- D** - suggestive dialogue (usually means talks about sex)
- FV** - fantasy violence (children's programming only)
- L** - coarse or crude language
- S** - sexual situations
- V** - violence

With a designated descriptor for trans, non-binary, and queer content, parents will be empowered to decide whether an episode or entire show is appropriate for their children to watch. This kind of descriptor should be adopted quickly.

We respectfully ask that the above concerns be considered and changes made to the proposed rules in order to better empower parents in monitoring age-appropriate content.

Sincerely,

Carrie Lukas

Carrie Lukas
President
Independent Women