

## **Sol Howard**

Hi. I'm Sol, and I'm 15 years old. I'm just like any other teenager, I like video games, anime, art, and music. I'm also transgender, specifically non-binary. I use he/they pronouns. I've known that I am trans since I was around 10 to 11 years old.

Before I was out and open about being trans, I was depressed. Going into the wrong puberty caused me a lot of stress, and having to present as the wrong gender added on more stress. I felt that if I could not medically transition before I was 18 years old, I would kill myself. I could not see myself living as the wrong gender into high school. I recently came out in the 7th grade when I was 13, I am now a freshman in high school. After being able to transition socially, thanks to my parents being extremely supportive, my mental health has improved tenfold. I rarely ever have suicidal thoughts, and I do not feel as depressed as I was.

Yet, I still struggle with gender dysphoria since I am not medically transitioning yet. I am in the process of obtaining testosterone to medically transition, but I am not quite there yet. The longer I go without being able to transition, I begin to feel more stressed and almost depressed at times. Not allowing trans youths to have access to gender affirming care can be deadly. If I were still in my depressed mindset from years ago and the SAFE Act were passed, I feel like I would possibly attempt suicide, and my depression and self-harming tendencies would worsen. I know other trans youth who feel the same, and this act being passed could be the reason they would take their own lives.

*Does the government really want the blood of transgender youth on their hands?*