

MISSION

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empowering women and promoting peace,
justice, freedom and dignity for all.**



**eliminating racism
empowering women**
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Northwest Ohio

Proponent testimony submitted to the Ohio Senate Primary and Secondary Education Committee

House Bill 105

Rachael Gardner MSW, LISW, Director of Victim Services, YWCA of Northwest Ohio

December 12, 2022

Chairman Brenner, Vice Chair Blessing, Ranking Member Fedor, and Members of the Senate Primary and Secondary Education Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 105 on behalf of the YWCA of Northwest Ohio's Rape Crisis Center.

My name is Rachael Gardner and I am the Director of the YWCA of NWO's Rape Crisis Center, the only rape crisis center in Lucas County. I also am a social worker, a mother to 5 children, and a grandmother. I share this because I am presenting this testimony not only as a provider in my community but as a parent and guardian of children who would be impacted by the passing of House Bill 105.

As a Rape Crisis Center Director, I have the privilege of working with survivors of childhood sexual abuse as they work on healing from the trauma of abuse. Survivors often work with our center as adults of all ages to recover from the harm of childhood sexual abuse. These survivors describe that their childhood abuse has impacted their marriages, parenting, and professional careers well into adulthood. I have worked with survivors of childhood abuse that are in their 70's still seeking to make sense of the abuse they experienced at the hands of another. Our survivors tell us how they were harmed by babysitters, older siblings, parents, coaches, cousins, aunts, and/or uncles. As a Director, I see the importance of HB 105 in providing developmentally appropriate education to children and educators in safe, healthy relationships and how to help someone who is experiencing abuse.

As a parent, I know my children may have friends who have or are experiencing abuse. I want my children to have the skills and education to point another child in the direction of help. Further, while I recognize that I am my children's primary educator, I rely on the teachers, principals, and counselors who have educated hundreds of children to help me in my journey of raising my children. To me, this means having the information, education, skills, and resources that would be required with HB 105.

The YWCA of Northwest Ohio, and I, strongly encourage the passage of House Bill 105.

Thank You,

Rachael Gardner MSW, LISW

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A MISSION**

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