



The Honourable Stephen Lecce, P.C., M.P.P.  
Minister of Education  
House of Commons  
Ottawa ON  
K1A 0A6  
[Stephen.Lecce@pc.ola.org](mailto:Stephen.Lecce@pc.ola.org)

12 September 2023

Dear Mr. Lecce,

**Re: The right of youth to self-identify and the detrimental impacts of forced outings**

It saddens us to have to write this letter today regarding recent comments made when speaking to the press by members of your provincial party regarding the right of youth to self-identify in school. LGBT YouthLine has been serving the 2SLGBTQ+ communities in Ontario for over 29 years. Our flagship program is a peer support helpline for young people under 30. Over 60% of the youth we support identify as trans or non-binary, and 39% are under 15. Based on this decades-long expertise, we know that queer and trans youth often face unsupportive, unhealthy, and potentially violent home environments.

The potential changes to education policy spoken by yourself, and which were echoed by Premier Ford, will undoubtedly have a detrimental impact on the health, safety, and well-being of 2SLGBTQ+ young people across Ontario. If young people do not feel comfortable expressing themselves to their parents or guardians, they should still be protected in expressing and exploring their identities without the threat of reprisal.

We urge you to uphold school boards' current policies and practices that respect and support queer and trans youth, and to make them standard throughout the province. We sincerely hope that you will listen to our communities when we tell you what will keep us safe, and to not put 2SLGBTQ+ young people at risk.

Sincerely,

Lauren Pragg  
Interim Executive Director

Tamara Sylvester  
Board Co-Chair

Jerico Espinas  
Board Co-Chair

[www.youthline.ca](http://www.youthline.ca)  
[info@youthline.ca](mailto:info@youthline.ca)  
1-888-687-9688 / 416-962-2232

PO Box 73118, Wood Street PO  
Toronto ON M4Y 2W5  
Charity# 89756 4951 RR0001