



## Transgender School Policy Results in Young Teen Girl Being Trafficked — Twice

As a direct result of the Model Transgender Guidelines issued under former Virginia Democratic Governor Ralph Northam, a 14-year-old girl was harmed by boys within her school, sex trafficked, drugged, and raped. Even after all of that, courts following the Northam administration's order denied her parents custody and placed her in a child facility that continued to affirm her "transgender identity" against her parents' wishes, allowing her to again be victimized.

Policies have consequences. The worse the policies, the worse the consequences. When Ralph Northam took office in 2018, he put in place several bad policies. For instance, he ordered schools to facilitate "gender transition" of minor students and to do so while keeping parents in the dark, if the child asked them to. Schools were also allowed to permit students to use the bathrooms and locker rooms corresponding to their "gender identity." Readers of *The New American* will likely remember that in 2021, that policy resulted in [a boy who claimed to be a girl](#) forcibly [raping two female students at two separate high schools in Loudoun County](#).



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As bad as that was, a separate incident from 2021 just [reported by The Federalist](#) is far worse. From that report:

In August 2021, by concealing a teen's newly asserted transgender identity from her parents, Virginia's Appomattox County High School participated in a chain of events that led to that girl falling into the hands of sexual predators not once, but twice.

When the FBI found Sage (last name of the family withheld for privacy) in Maryland, where she was victimized by a sexual predator, a judge refused to return her to her parents on the grounds they were abusing her in not affirming her as male. Housed in the boys' quarters of a children's home away from her parents, she told her mother, she was assaulted again. The girl soon fled, then was brutally sex-trafficked again until her rescue in Texas by law enforcement.



Written by [C. Mitchell Shaw](#) on January 20, 2023

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Sage's story is a tragic example of what can happen when decisions for a young person facing mental health problems are made by government employees while parents are kept ignorant and out of the decision-making process. Sage's mother, Michele, is actually her paternal grandmother. After the death of Sage's father, Michele legally adopted Sage, becoming her legal mother. As The Federalist reports:

Like many gender-dysphoric children, Sage has a history of trauma from that early childhood loss. Related health problems became severe at times, requiring therapy and medical treatment. Her daughter's previous schools notified Michele when concerns arose, she said, enabling her to have Sage's treatment adjusted. But when her daughter entered Appomattox County High School in early August 2021, Michele says she was cut out of the loop.

That is when things for Sage went from bad to worse and she was thrown into a living hell. Sage had begun to wear boy's clothes, telling Michele that she was just "dressing [emo](#)." But at school, Sage was asserting that she was a "transgender" boy. As The Federalist reports, "School records, shared by the family, indicate school staff were calling Sage by her chosen male name and pronouns and at her request concealing this from her parents." Furthermore, "Sage recalls her school counselor telling her during the first week of school that since she identified as male she could use the boys' bathroom."

Boys at school bullied Sage, threatened her with "knife violence and rape," and shoved her against a wall. On August 23, 2021, a note was made in Sage's student record that students and teachers had made school officials aware that Sage had "encountered hostile boys" in the boys' bathroom. Instead of informing Michele, a school counselor "met with Sage the next day to direct her to use the nurses' bathroom for safety reasons," according to The Federalist.

After Sage stated that "all the boys at this school are rapists," school officials reviewed hallway footage and saw that several boys had entered the bathroom while it was occupied by Sage. On August 25, the counselor and school resource officer met with Sage about the incidents. Sage — a traumatized young girl with mental health problems who was experiencing severe bullying and threats of rape — "became so emotional that the counselor recorded concern Sage might be 'a risk to herself due to being so upset when leaving school,'" according to the report.

By this point, two days had passed. School records show that news of the events had reached the school superintendent. The last person to learn of what was going on was the first person who should have known — Sage's mother. But even once the school informed Michele of the bullying, rape threats, and violence Sage had endured, they deliberately omitted the salient fact that Sage was asserting at school that she was a boy. Michele learned of that firsthand from Sage when Michele found a school pass in her belongings with a boy's name on it.

Sage ran away, and was trafficked in Maryland and Washington, D.C., for "nine days of horrific, brutal sexual abuse." But instead of being reunited with their traumatized daughter, Michele and her husband, Roger, learned that a court in Baltimore had made other arrangements. After "driving through the night, their backseat full of stuffed animals and cozy blankets," they arrived in Baltimore to learn that Sage was "being held in a juvenile detention cell and that they were being summoned to a hearing late that afternoon before Judge Robert Kershaw." As The Federalist reports:

When they entered the courtroom, Sage appeared from the penitentiary remotely, on screen, with only court-appointed attorney Aneesa Khan, an assistant public defender,



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present in person. “I love you, baby!” Michele cried to her daughter, who responded “I love you too, Nana.” To their shock, Khan spoke up and alleged on Sage’s behalf that she did not wish to return home and had been “both emotionally and physically abused by his parents in connection with [his] expressed male gender identity and desire to live as a trans male.”

Michele had only found out about this claimed male identity the night her daughter disappeared. Yet Michele was willing to use any name or pronoun to bring her home. Sage later told her, Michele says, that Khan “told me to tell the judge my parents hit me, starved me.” Sage also told Michele that Khan “didn’t care how much [Sage] had to lie...but they were going to win this case” to remove Sage from her parents’ custody and place her in a Maryland foster home that would affirm her as male.

Sadly, the trauma that Sage had endured as a result of the irresponsible, ideologically driven actions of school officials in Virginia was set to “rinse and repeat” by the irresponsible, ideologically driven actions of a Maryland court. Since she “identified” as a boy, Sage was placed in a male facility. “Michele says she eventually learned from Sage that she was the only girl in male quarters and that she had been repeatedly assaulted there,” according to the report. As a result, Sage again ran away. “On Nov. 12, 2021, Sage says, she cut off her court-required GPS monitor and ran away to meet an online ‘friend’ in Texas she thought was 16.” Spoiler: the “friend” was not 16. As *The Federalist* reports:

Once more, the unspeakable happened. Sage fell into the hands of a predator who, police told Michele, raped, starved, drugged, and brutalized her. This time she disappeared for months. For the second time in less than four months, Michele had no way of knowing if her daughter was even alive. But Michele never stopped searching. Finally, a tip she discovered on social media led Texas marshals to her daughter’s rescue in Dallas on Jan. 24, 2022.

Sage eventually confided to her mom that she realized that she was never a boy. She had begun the “identity” because it was hailed as “cool” and she wanted friends. Later, she was “pressured” by counselors and doctors to continue the ruse. By God’s grace and her parents’ relentless fight, Sage survived her ordeal and later told her mom, “I don’t know who I was. I’m a totally different person now. I never was a boy. Everybody was doing it, I just wanted to have friends.”

As a result of Sage’s story and with her and her family’s support, the Founding Freedoms Law Center (which helped her parents secure custody and begin the process of healing for Sage) has worked with Republican Virginia Delegate Dave LaRock to introduce [HB 2432, “Sage’s Law.”](#) a bill designed to prevent any future harm by restoring parents’ right to know when children are being treated as a gender inconsistent with their biological sex by a school system or school counselor.

As soon as Northam left office in 2020, his successor, Governor Glenn Youngkin, began the work of scrubbing leftist policies, such as the Model Transgender Guidelines that started this tragedy. Hopefully, Sage’s story — and, if passed, Sage’s Law — will help protect vulnerable, gender-confused children even more.



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