

# Daughter of LGBT Family Pleads for Calm after Alcorn Suicide

 [americanthinker.com/articles/2015/02/daughter\\_of\\_lgbt\\_family\\_pleads\\_for\\_calm\\_after\\_alcorn\\_suicide.html](http://americanthinker.com/articles/2015/02/daughter_of_lgbt_family_pleads_for_calm_after_alcorn_suicide.html)

My heart grieves for Joshua Alcorn, as well as for his family and other loved ones. I do not have a child who identifies as being transgender, however I had a father who did. Our family faced many decisions as my dad left our home to pursue and proclaim his new identity as a woman. One of the decisions we faced was the name by which we would refer to him. His wife -- my mother -- knew him as Harold. His children knew him as Dad.

To me he was "Dad." Some have accused me of being insensitive or disrespectful of my dad's desires. Simply writing that sentence required some deep reflection and introspection. Even if I had acquiesced and addressed him (her) as Becky, doing so would not have changed his relationship to me. He was my father, the one whose seed implanted me in my mother's womb. Semantics would never change that. Neither would his hormone treatments, or even radical body-altering changes.

I was not being spiteful. I loved my dad. I loved him enough to speak the truth to him, rather than bolstering his delusion with simple compliance.

## A Name Is More Than a Mere Word

In most cases, when family members choose to continue to call their gender-confused loved one by his or her given birth name, they are not doing so out of spite. Often, parents take the job of naming their child very seriously, certainly taking into account the child's gender, but also considering other things, such as a family name they may wish to honor or pass on. I'm sure my grandparents never thought that one day they'd have to decide whether to call their son Harold or Becky.

Joshua Alcorn's parents are only one set of parents that we at Help 4 Families have recently heard about who have faced this type of dilemma. This decision is probably one of the most heart-wrenching decisions families have to make. And, despite the portrayal in the mainstream media, it is not just fundamentalist Christians who struggle with this concern.

Joshua's parents' choice to maintain the name they'd given their baby boy at his birth was one they sincerely believed was best for him. Parental responsibility transcends transient cultural standards. Joshua's parents believe that truth is not transient, and no amount of sentiment will change the fact -- the truth -- that the baby born to them was a boy, a boy they named Joshua.

## Painful and Sometimes Deadly Struggles

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report that suicide is the third-leading cause of death among people ages 10 to 24. Only accidents and homicide account for more deaths in that age range. Joshua Alcorn was more than a statistic, but his death added one more to that tragic number. Teenagers experience depression, self-doubt, stress, peer pressure, sexual and gender confusion, and fears of the unknown. With the confusing messages our culture sends via the Internet, television, movies, music, and billboards, life is, not surprisingly, challenging for today's youth. Joshua's struggles with gender identity likely played a part in his suicide. According to [Youth Suicide Prevention Program](#), "More than 50% of Transgender youth will have had at least one suicide attempt by their 20th birthday." That fifty percent rate is five times higher than the national average for high school students.

With all the challenges any teen today faces, those who struggle with gender identity face even more. Transgender children tend to keep their distress and hatred of their born gender private until they reach the teen years. That's a big burden to deal with -- especially when added to all the other pressures teens face. [Madeline Wyndzen](#), a transgender psychology professor, writes, "Fifty percent of transgenders could be struggling with suicide attempts, regret, anger and unhappiness living in a transgender subculture rather than being part of the larger world."

## **Regrets**

Fifty percent (at least) of transgenders are struggling; they are not happy. The calls we get at Help 4 Families bear testament to this sad fact. Let's consider some of those who regret their change. "Joe" called several months after his transition and said, "I thought it [sex reassignment surgery] would fix the way I felt inside, but it didn't." Now Joe can't simply sew the removed body parts back on and return everything to normal. Joe regretted his decisions. Joe is not alone in his surgery regrets, but the mainstream media ignore stories like Joe's -- or Chelsie's.

At age 16, Mathew felt he was old enough to choose transitioning to a girl, Chelsie. But now Chelsie says, "I always longed to be a woman, but no amount of surgery can give me an actual female body, and now I feel like I'm living a lie. I suffered from depression and anxiety as a result of the hormones." Chelsie adds, "I now realize it would be easier to stop fighting the way I look naturally and accept that, physically, I was born a man."

## **Peace at Any Cost, or Truth at Any Price?**

Families are often deeply concerned that if they state their disapproval of their child transitioning to the opposite sex, that child might respond with an act as grim as suicide. The truth, however, is that the earlier the child is treated for gender confusion, the better the chance for a healthy and happy life. But our culture tends to deride parents who seek counseling for their child's inner conflict over gender. Laws are being proposed to outlaw any kind of therapy that does not approve of transgenderism or homosexuality. The rights of parents to raise a child in the way they believe best is being threatened. The Alcorns' situation is a strong case in point.

Family relationships often are destroyed unless the dissenters within the family acquiesce to the confused family member's desires. Truth means that which agrees with reality. But truth is increasingly being surrendered for a false and tenuous peace.

Virtually no one lives in absolute isolation. Each of us enters life as part of a family, and each choice we make affects other family members. Calling himself Becky did not change the fact that he was my father. Instead of labeling people transgender or genderqueer-trans, let's recognize that one who has gender confusion is a hurting person, and their family as well. But we also must acknowledge that truth can be rigid, and sometimes each of us -- male, female, or confused -- must bend to its certitude.