

New NBC film reveals anti-trans legislation harms. What else to watch during Trans Awareness Week

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[Trans people](#) make up a small percentage of the U.S. population. But hundreds of bills around the country are threatening their ability to thrive.

"Dear Noah: Pages from a Family Diary" (premiering Tuesday at the Meet the Press Film Festival at DOC NYC) is an NBC OUT short-form documentary that tells the story of Katie Laird and her 15-year-old transgender son Noah, of Houston, Texas, who choose to leave their native Texas for a safer haven in Denver, Colorado, amid fears of anti-trans legislation's ramifications.

It's one of many films, series and documentaries to explore this [Trans Awareness Week](#) to get better educated about the transgender experience.

"There is a coordinated and intentional disinformation campaign targeting trans people, especially youth, right now," says Alex Schmider, filmmaker and director of transgender representation at GLAAD. "It's critical that people seek out credible resources and experts."

Anti-trans legislation and 'Dear Noah'

For background: [Transgender adults](#) make up less than 2% of the U.S. population; about 5% of young adults identify as [transgender](#) or nonbinary. More than 300 anti-LGBTQ bills have been introduced in 2022, according to [Human Rights Campaign](#).

Texas Gov. Greg Abbott issued an order in February directing the state's child-welfare agency to investigate providers of gender-affirming care for youth. (A district judge has since granted temporary protection from Abbott's order to member families of PFLAG under a lawsuit filed by Lambda Legal and Texas' American Civil Liberties Union.)

What "Dear Noah" depicts isn't some grand political game. It depicts a few months of a family grappling with unimaginable choices *because* of some grand political game politicians are playing.

"We were just living a very, very challenging part of our lives, but had some reassurance in some weird way, that what we were going through wasn't going to be for nothing," Katie Laird says.

And that's what scenes in the film looks like – slices of a simple life amid chaos. Laird dropping Noah at school. Noah taking the dog for a walk with his brother. Noah skateboarding, playing the guitar. But it doesn't sugarcoat the moment either: Laird often cries, we see signs of self-harm on Noah's arms and then, of course, reality sets in they must leave their home.

NBC, too, wanted to capture the moment and had the resources to make it work visually. "The trust in these kinds of stories are paramount, and the trust that Katie had with both the reporters, the producers, that's what really enables us to take a close-up look at this point in time for that family," says Catherine Kim, SVP, global digital news for NBC News and MSNBC. The documentary will later air on NBC News NOW Nov. 18 at 10:30 p.m. ET and will stream on Peacock.

While the family is grateful to be in Denver, "we are heartbroken to be forced from our home," Laird says.

Stories like Noah's captured both the trauma and joy of a life – the latter of which is sorely lacking for transgender people in media representations.

Schmider encourages "the media to expand its focus beyond transition, tragedy, and trauma, and share more modern stories of love, agency, and acceptance."

Laird says that "what is the most remarkable about (the trans community) is not the fact that they're trans. It's the fact that they have pushed through such adversity, they've gone so deep in themselves, and in a lot of cases have been able to come out the other side, and live exceedingly beautiful and hopeful and lovely lives."

Did you see? [As anti-LGBTQ rhetoric grows, voter ID laws create obstacles for thousands of transgender voters](#)

"Let people define who they are, and then just move forward from there," Abbott adds.

For more education, consider these recent fiction and nonfiction suggestions from GLAAD:

TV:

- "9-1-1: Lone Star" (Fox)
- Dead End: Paranormal Park (Netflix)
- First Day (Hulu)
- Good Trouble (Freeform)
- Heartstopper (Netflix)
- Pose (FX)
- Queer as Folk (Peacock)
- Saved By the Bell (Peacock)
- Sense8 (Netflix)
- Sort Of (HBO Max)
- The L Word: Generation Q (Showtime)
- The Umbrella Academy (Netflix)
- Veneno (HBO Max)

Movies/Documentaries:

- Anything's Possible (Amazon Prime Video)
- Wendell & Wild (Netflix)
- Changing the Game (Hulu)
- Disclosure (Netflix)
- Stay on Board: The Leo Baker Story (Netflix)
- Being Thunder (VOD)
- Framing Agnes (coming soon to select theaters)

Important:[Should transgender youths have access to gender-affirming care? Why bans are 'cruel' and 'dangerous'](#)