

Who was Nex? Who is Nex.T?

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It is the start of a new school year. **Nex lived in Oklahoma. They were 16, identified nonbinary, and their pronouns were He/They.**

Who's Nex.t?

The Trevor Project reports that 90% of queer youth have been negatively impacted by our nation's politics.¹ **In Oklahoma, State Senator Tom Woods, when referring to the Queer community, is recorded as saying, I represent a constituency that doesn't want that filth in Oklahoma.**

Who's Nex?

So far, 13 states ban transgender people from using public bathrooms and facilities according to their gender identity.² **In Oklahoma, where Nex lived, there is a 2022 state ban requiring transgender people use the bathroom in schools K-12 that aligns with their sex assigned at birth.**

Who's Nex.t?

23% of LGBTQ+ young people reported that they have been physically threatened or harmed in the past year due to either their sexual orientation or gender identity.¹ ***On February 7 2024 Nex Benedict was involved in a physical altercation in the girls' restroom at the Owasso High School. They didn't want Nex in that bathroom...or their school...or their community***

Who's Nex?

28% of transgender and nonbinary young people reported that they have been physically threatened or harmed in the past year due to their gender identity.³ ***Nex's family reportedly said that bullying started after LGBTQ+ policies began to take effect at the state level.***

Who's Nex.t?

So far, 26 of these United States have banned gender affirming care, including Oklahoma. **They say that the injuries Nex sustained the day before their death - injuries to their head, neck, torso, and limbs by three fellow students - were not lethal**

Who's Nex?

LGBTQ+ young people report lower rates of attempting suicide when they have access to affirming spaces and communities. **Oklahoma State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Ryan Walters following the death of 16 year old Nex Benedict is recorded as saying, "To make sure that all individuals are safe in a school, we want every student to be protected...that means we're not going to lie to students. And we're not going to push a gender ideology."**

Who's Nex.t?

Transgender and nonbinary young people who had access to gender-affirming clothing, gender-neutral bathrooms at school, and had their pronouns respected by the people they lived with had lower rates of attempting suicide compared to those who did not. **Nex was just a kid who grew**

up in a country, a state, a community, a school that made it clear they weren't wanted, nor protected. The coroner's report ruled Nex engaged in self-harm to end their life...the beating the day before, according to the coroner, was not lethal.

Who's Nex.t?

In Delaware, 43% of LGBTQ+ students reported discriminatory policies or practices at their school, 40% of transgender and nonbinary students were prevented from using their name or pronouns, 25% were prevented from using the bathroom that aligned with their gender identity, 47% experienced verbal harassment, and 9% experienced physical assault.⁴ **We shouldn't be asking who's next, but if we don't improve on these statistics by way of sound policies, appropriately trained adults in our schools and communities, offering gender and sexuality alliances to our students, it won't be long until we have an answer the question.**

Who was Nex.t!

References

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