



CEBC Statement Regarding Conversion Therapy

Conversion therapy (also known as reparative therapy or reorientation therapy) is a controversial and harmful therapeutic practice that has been proven to be ineffective. Conversion therapy is based on the assumption that homosexuality is a mental disorder or that the patient should change their homosexual orientation, an understanding of homosexuality that has been **rejected by all the major health and mental health professions**. The American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Counseling Association, the American Psychiatric Association, the American Psychological Association, the National Association of School Psychologists, and the National Association of Social Workers—together representing more than 477,000 health and mental health professionals—have all taken the position that homosexuality is not a mental disorder and, thus, there is no need for a 'cure'.¹ Furthermore, the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP) found no evidence to support the application of any therapeutic intervention operating under the premise that a specific sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or gender expression is pathological (i.e., a disease or abnormal).

Many prominent organizations—such as the AACAP, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the American Medical Association—have **denounced** conversion therapy as harmful (see links to their full statements below). Several states and jurisdictions have **prohibited** the use of conversation therapy.² Conversion therapy has been proven to lack any scientific credibility and, as such, should not be utilized as a behavioral therapeutic intervention with children or adolescents. Furthermore, based on the scientific evidence, the AACAP has asserted that conversion therapies **lack scientific credibility and clinical utility**.

There is also evidence that conversion therapies are harmful. They have led to **maladaptive behaviors** in those receiving them. Individuals who have been exposed to conversion therapy have reported feelings of depression, anxiety, suicide, and other emotionally and physically harmful behaviors. As a result, "conversion therapies" should not be part of any behavioral health treatment of children and adolescents.³

Therefore, based upon the scientific evidence, the California Evidence Based Clearinghouse (CEBC) has taken the position that **conversion therapies are harmful and detrimental and should not be used as a therapeutic practice**.

¹ <http://www.apa.org/pi/lgbt/resources/just-the-facts.pdf>

² <https://www.familyequality.org/resources/conversion-therapy-laws/>

³ https://www.aacap.org/aacap/policy_statements/2018/Conversion_Therapy.aspx

Policy Statements on Conversion Therapy

- American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry: https://www.aacap.org/aacap/policy_statements/2018/Conversion_Therapy.aspx
- American Academy of Pediatrics: <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/92/4/631.full.pdf>
- American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy: https://www.aamft.org/About_AAMFT/Pos_on_couples.aspx
- American Medical Association: <https://policysearch.ama-assn.org/policyfinder/detail/160.991?uri=%2FAMADoc%2FHOD.xml-0-805.xml>
- American Psychiatric Association: <https://www.psychiatry.org/getattachment/3d23f2f4-1497-4537-b4de-fe32fe8761bf/Position-Conversion-Therapy.pdf>
- Just the Facts Coalition (American Academy of Pediatrics, American Association of School Administrators, American Counseling Association, American Federation of Teachers, American Psychological Association, American School Counselor Association, American School Health Association, Interfaith Alliance Foundation, National Association of School Psychologists, National Association of Secondary School Principals, National Association of Social Workers, National Education Association, School Social Work Association of America). (1999). *Just the facts about sexual orientation and youth: A primer for principals, educators, and school personnel.* <http://www.apa.org/pi/lgbt/resources/just-the-facts.pdf>

Resources for Additional Information and Tools

- GLAAD (n.d.). *Conversion therapy.* <https://www.glaad.org/conversiontherapy>
- American Academy of PAs, American Academy of Pediatrics, American Counseling Association, American Federation of Teachers, American Medical Women's Association, American School Counselor Association, Child Welfare League of America, Devereux Advanced Behavioral Health, Mental Health America, National Association of School Nurses, National Association of School Psychologists, National Association of Secondary School Principals, National Education Association, School Social Work Association of America, & Voice for Adoption. (2018). *Declaration on the impropriety and dangers of sexual orientation and gender identity change efforts.* From the Human Rights Campaign's website: https://assets2.hrc.org/files/assets/resources/National_Orgs_Letter_in_Support_of_Legislative_Efforts_to_End_Conversion_Therapy.pdf
- National Center for Lesbian Rights. (n.d.). *Born perfect.* <http://www.nclrights.org/our-work/born-perfect/#q1>
- Southern Poverty Law Center. (n.d.). *Conversion therapy.* <https://www.splcenter.org/issues/lgbt-rights/conversion-therapy>
- The Trevor Project. (2023). *It's still happening: A report on practitioners of so-called Conversion "Therapy" in the U.S.* <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/conversion-therapy-report/>