

FLPTA RESOLUTION

Sexual Orientation Reparative Therapies and Youth

“Conversion Therapy” Ban

Whereas, in 2017, 15.8% of Florida high school students identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or are unsure of their sexual orientation^[1].

Whereas, being lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender is not a disease, disorder, illness, deficiency, or shortcoming.^{[2][3][4]}; and

Whereas, LGBTQ youth who experience family rejection based on their sexual orientation face especially serious health risks, including being more than eight times more likely to report having attempted suicide, more than five times more likely to report high levels of depression, and more than three times more likely to use illegal drugs compared with their peers ^{[5][6][7]} ; and

Whereas, sexual orientation therapies, most commonly known as conversion therapy, can pose critical health risks to lesbian, gay, and bisexual people, provoking mental health conditions that lead to depression and suicide, while having little or no potential for achieving changes in orientation. Rates of attempted suicide by LGBT youth whose parents tried to change their sexual orientation were more than double the rate of LGBT youth who reported no sexual orientation therapy experience ^{[3][5][8][9]} ; and

Whereas, no reputable research has found that sexual orientation therapies, most commonly known as conversion therapy, can be effective and the practices, therein, have been debunked by every mainstream medical and mental health organization, including the American Psychological Association, the American Psychiatric Association, and the American Academy of Pediatrics ^[10]; and

Whereas, 15 states and the District of Columbia recognize sexual orientation change therapies as harmful to youth and passed legislation to ban the practice by licensed clinicians and prohibiting insurance coverage ^{[11][12][13]}; therefore be it

Resolved, that Florida PTA and its constituent associations hold education programs to inform families and youth about the harmful impact of sexual orientation therapies on our LGBTQ youth; and be it further

Resolved, that Florida PTA and its constituent associations provide a list of available resources to assist county councils and local units in planning such programs to address sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.

Resolved, that Florida PTA and its constituent associations advocate for and support legislation and policies that protect our youth from the harmful effects of therapies directed at changing sexual orientation.

Source Data:

[1] https://www.cdc.gov/healthyouth/data/yrbs/2017_tables/introduction.htm#t4_down

[2] https://www.aamft.org/About_AAMFT/Position_On_Couples.aspx?WebsiteKey=8e8c9bd6-0b71-4cd1-a5ab-013b5f855b01

[3] <https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/pediatrics/92/4/631.full.pdf>

[4] <https://www.psychiatry.org/psychiatrists/cultural-competency/treating-diverse-patient-populations/working-with-lgbtq-patients>

[5] <https://www.aamft.org/Documents/Board/j.1752-0606.2008.00065.x.pdf>

[6] https://cchealth.org/topics/lgbtq/pdf/supportive_families.pdf

[7] <https://annals.org/aim/fullarticle/2292051/lesbian-gay-bisexual-transgender-health-disparities-executive-summary-policy-position>

[8] <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyouth/disparities/lgbtprotectivefactors.htm>

[9] <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/24/opinion/gay-conversion-therapy-torture.html>

[10] <https://www.hrc.org/resources/policy-and-position-statements-on-conversion-therapy>

- Links to many policy and position statements of recognized health/medical organizations and associations, including those listed in the clause.

[11]

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._jurisdictions_banning_conversion_therapy

[12] https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201120120SB1172

[13] https://www.njleg.state.nj.us/2012/Bills/PL13/150_.PDF

Rationale

The purpose of this resolution is to save lives of LGBTQ youth who are at greater risk of suicide. Risky behavior and suicide are increasing among all youths. Suicide is now the second leading cause of death among people aged 10 to 24. An LGBTQ youth that is highly rejected by their family is eight times as likely to take their own lives than those from more accepting families.

The practice of sexual orientation conversion therapy is one of the means by which LGBTQ youth experience a high-level of rejection. So-called “conversion therapy,” sometimes known as “reparative therapy,” is a range of dangerous and discredited practices that falsely claim to change a person’s sexual orientation or gender identity or expression. Such practices have been discredited by every mainstream medical and mental health organization for decades. Despite this and due to continuing discrimination and societal bias against LGBTQ people, some practitioners continue to conduct conversion therapy. Studies have shown that conversion therapy can lead these vulnerable LGBTQ minors to depression, anxiety, drug use, homelessness, and suicide.

To protect our LGBTQ youth and their families, the Florida PTA must educate our communities about research-based findings of the harm caused from trying to use therapy to change a child’s sexual orientation, Furthermore, the Florida PTA must advocate for and support legislation and policy that would protect our families from this practice.