

What the Professional Organizations Say About Homosexuality

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In the discussion building over the next few months, it will be important to have the facts out in front of us. In particular, it needs to be understood that there is no scientific debate about whether homosexuality is a choice. The professional mental health and scientific organizations uniformly reject the idea. Many of them make even stronger statements about these issues.

The following is excerpted from ReligiousTolerance.org.

In 1973, the American Psychiatric Association removed homosexuality from its Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Psychiatric Disorders. The American Psychological Association declared that it was not a disorder in 1975.

Recent statements by professional organizations include:

- The **American Psychiatric Association** removed homosexuality from its list of mental illnesses in 1973.
- The **American Law Institute** continually updates its Model Penal Code, which is a group of laws that they suggest be implemented at the state level. They recommend to legislators: "that private sexual behavior between consenting adults should be removed from the list of crimes and thereby legalized."
- The **American Bar Association** in 1974 expressed its approval of the Model Penal Code, including its decriminalization of consensual adult homosexual acts.
- The **World Health Organization** removed homosexuality from its list of mental illnesses in 1981.
- The **American Psychological Association** released a Statement on Homosexuality in 1994-JUL. Their first two paragraphs are:

The research on homosexuality is very clear. Homosexuality is neither mental illness nor moral depravity. It is simply the way a minority of our population expresses human love and sexuality. Study after study documents the mental health of gay men and lesbians. Studies of judgment, stability, reliability, and social and vocational adaptiveness all show that gay men and lesbians function every bit as well as heterosexuals.

Nor is homosexuality a matter of individual choice. Research suggests that the homosexual orientation is in place very early in the life cycle, possibly even before birth. It is found in about ten percent of the population, a figure which is surprisingly constant across cultures, irrespective of the different moral values and standards of a particular culture. Contrary to what some imply, the incidence of homosexuality in a population does not appear to change with new moral codes or social mores. Research findings suggest that efforts to repair homosexuals are nothing more than social prejudice garbed in psychological accouterments.

In 1994-AUGUST, the APA sent a proposal to one of its committees that would declare as unethical:

- **attempts by a psychologist to change a person's sexual orientation through therapy, or**
- **referral of a patient to a therapist or organization who attempts to change people's sexual orientation**

The APA publishes an undated brochure titled [Answers to Your Questions About Sexual Orientation and Homosexuality](#). They state:

- "...many scientists share the view that sexual orientation is shaped for most people at an early age through complex interactions of biological, psychological and social factors."
- "...psychologists do not consider sexual orientation for most people to be a conscious choice that can be voluntarily changed."
- "...homosexuality is not an illness, mental disorder or emotional problem."
- "There is no evidence indicating that homosexuals are more likely than heterosexuals to molest children."

In **1997_AUG-14, the APA published a news release about a recently passed resolution "on so-called reparative therapy."** The resolution "raises ethical concerns about attempts to change sexual orientation, reaffirms psychology's opposition to homophobia and client's rights to unbiased treatment."

- The **American Medical Association** (AMA) released a report in 1994-DEC which calls for "nonjudgmental recognition of sexual orientation by physicians." They suggest that psychotherapy be directed help homosexuals "become comfortable with their sexual orientation."
- The **Academy of Pediatrics and the Council on Child and Adolescent Health** have also stated that homosexuality is not a choice and cannot be changed.
- NARTH, the National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality is a largely conservative Christian organization which promotes reparative therapy for gays and lesbians. Their Statement of Policy and Right to Treatment completely contradict statements by all other professional mental health organizations.
- In 1999, the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Counseling Association, American Association of School Administrators, American Federation of Teachers, American Psychological Association, American School Health Association, Interfaith Alliance Foundation, National Association of School Psychologists, National Association of Social Workers and National Education Association jointly issued a document titled [Just the facts about sexual orientation](#). They:
 - expressed concern about harassment of gay and lesbian youth.
 - condemned reparative therapy as potentially harmful and of little or no effectiveness
 - describe transformational ministries as representing only one part of Christianity—those faith groups which view homosexuality as outside God's will, and incompatible with Christianity. They cite other denominations as supporting equal rights, and protection against discrimination, for gays and lesbians.