



The Kid Experts™

February 8, 2023
Senate Health and Human Services Committee

Dear Chair Wiklund and Committee Members:

On behalf of Children's Minnesota, we are writing to express our support for SF23, prohibiting conversion therapy for children and vulnerable adults.

Children's Minnesota is the state's largest pediatric healthcare system, seeing more than 166,000 kids annually. We see children and teens from all 87 counties and 60 percent of the counties in our surrounding states. We serve a diverse patient population and 46% of our patients are enrolled in Medicaid.

We serve lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, and transgender (LGBTQ) students daily in our Gender Health program, our clinics and our emergency departments. These kids are at higher risk of low self-esteem, bullying, depression, social anxiety, substance abuse, and suicidality.

Based on the recent [2022 Minnesota Student Survey](#) data, reports of serious suicidal thoughts by 11th grade students have increased in the last nine years. The numbers are even more concerning for LGBTQ students. They are about three times more likely as heterosexual students to report seriously considering suicide, and four times as likely to attempt suicide as heterosexual students. Transgender students in the 11th grade report the highest rates of suicide attempts; they are more than four times more likely to attempt suicide than their cisgender 11th grade peers.

The practice of conversion therapy for LGBTQ youth is not effective, evidence-based, or even ethical according to both the [American Psychiatric Association](#), the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) and the [American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry](#). In fact, research shows that these types of interventions result in poorer mental health outcomes and increases in suicide attempts. That is why twenty other states have banned the dangerous and harmful practice.

At Children's Minnesota, our vision is to be every family's essential partner in raising healthier children. As the kid experts in our community, it is our goal to ensure that every child and every teen we take care of is supported, affirmed and valued and respected for who they are. It is our goal to ensure that our kids, especially those who are struggling or vulnerable are provided effective, appropriate and non-judgmental care. We therefore strongly support SF23.

Thank you for your consideration,

Dr. Angela Kade Goepferd
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