

# Conversion Therapy Proposal

Presented to: Bloomington City Council  
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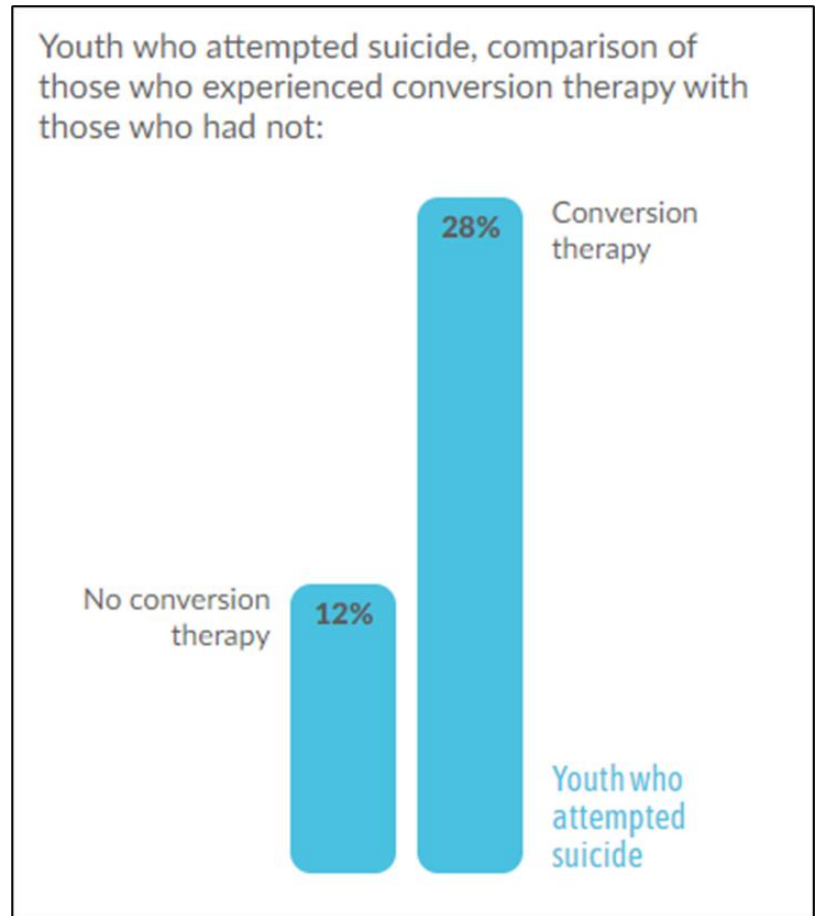
For LGBTQ Youth in Crisis - Trevor Project 24/7 Lifeline: 1-866-488-7386

# What is Conversion Therapy?

- Conversion Therapy is any practice performed with the intent of changing a person's sexual orientation or gender identity.
- This practice is based on the discredited belief that being Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender or other expressions of sexuality and gender (LGBTQIA+) is a mental illness that should be cured.
- The practice is not accredited or supported by any major medical organization.
- Conversion therapy does not work and these practices are dangerous to individuals.

# Harm Caused by Conversion Therapy

- Being subjected to conversion therapy can lead to a significant risk of depression, anxiety, substance abuse, and suicide.
- About 84% of Trevor Project youth respondents expressed a desire to receive mental health counseling – but the quality of care matters!
- Youth who have experienced conversion therapy have increased rates of *attempted suicide*.

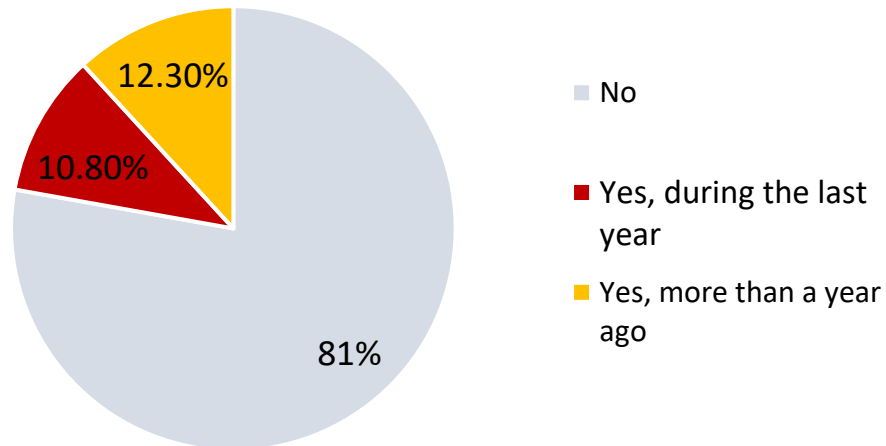


# Minnesota Student Survey Data from 2019

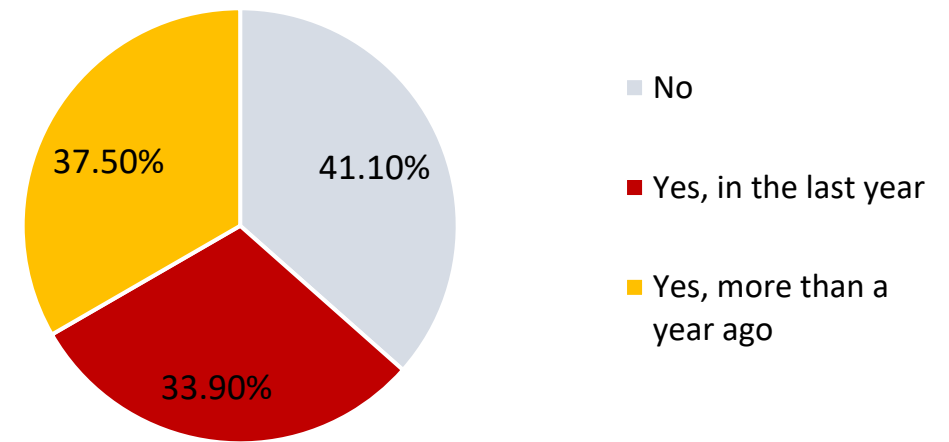
- Mental health responses for students in the Bloomington Public Schools show significant disparities for LGBTQ identified survey respondents compared to Heterosexual identified survey respondents across all grades surveyed.

## Have you ever seriously considered attempting suicide? (Mark all that apply)

2019, Grade 11, Other: Heterosexual



2019, Grade 11, Other:



# Prevalence of Conversion Therapy

- It is estimated that 16,000 LGBTQIA+ youth ages 13-17 are subjected to conversion therapy by licensed practitioners in the remaining 30 states without a ban. This includes Minnesota.
- Survivors of conversion therapy have reported to Outfront MN that at least two locations in Bloomington are currently inflicting this practice on minors.
- The precise number of people who have had conversion therapy inflicted on them is unknown, but we do know that it is occurring and it is causing harm to LGBTQ youth.

# Testimony



# Summary of Professional Opinions

## American Medical Association

“Our AMA...opposes, the use of ‘reparative’ or ‘conversion’ therapy that is based upon the assumption that homosexuality per se is a mental disorder or based upon the a priori assumption that the patient should change his/her homosexual orientation.”

## American Academy of Pediatrics

“Confusion about sexual orientation is not unusual during adolescence. Counseling may be helpful for young people who are uncertain about their sexual orientation or for those who are uncertain about how to express their sexuality...Therapy directed specifically at changing sexual orientation is contraindicated, since it can provoke guilt and anxiety while having little or no potential for achieving changes in orientation.”

## American Psychological Association

“[The APA] advises parents, guardians, young people, and their families to avoid sexual orientation change efforts that portray homosexuality as a mental illness or developmental disorder..”

## American Psychiatric Association

“encourages legislation which would prohibit the practice of “reparative” or conversion therapies that are based on the a priori assumption that diverse sexual orientations and gender identities are mentally ill.”

# United Nations Human Rights Council June-July 2020

- “Practices of “conversion therapy”, based on the incorrect and harmful notion that sexual and gender diversity are disorders to be corrected, are **discriminatory in nature**. Furthermore, actions to subject lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans or gender-diverse persons to practices of “conversion therapy” are by their very nature **degrading, inhuman and cruel**, and **create a significant risk of torture**. States must examine specific cases in the light of the international, regional and local framework on torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment and/or punishment.”

Source: [https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/HRC/44/53](https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/HRC/44/53)

The United Nations Human Rights Council recommends that States ban the practice of “conversion therapy”, and “**take urgent measures to protect children and young people from [these] practices.**”



# Current Conversion Therapy Bans

## In the United States

20 U.S. States, Washington D.C., and Puerto Rico have passed bans on conversion therapy.

## In Minnesota

A bill to ban youth conversion therapy passed the Minnesota House of Representatives in 2019. That section of the bill was struck from the Minnesota Senate by a vote of 34-30.

Passage of a bill during the 2021 legislative session is uncertain, though advocacy organizations have expressed it as a priority.

## Minnesota Cities

### **Municipalities that have banned conversion therapy by ordinance:**

- Minneapolis - November 2019
- Duluth - December 2019
- St. Paul - June 2020
- Red Wing - June 2020
- Winona - August 2020
- West St. Paul - August 2020
- Richfield, Robbinsdale and St. Louis Park are currently looking into implementing bans

### **Other resolutions and proclamations:**

- Rochester - Resolution
- Golden Valley - Proclamation

# Why should we act?

- Banning conversion therapy would help protect LGBTQ youth and their families from harmful, ineffective treatment that leads to increased rates of depression, self-harm and suicide, and other mental and physical health concerns.
- By banning conversion therapy, it would help ensure that unethical providers do not offer these services in Bloomington.
- Help ensure that families and individuals find ethical, culturally competent mental healthcare providers in Bloomington.
- A conversion therapy ban would not apply to religious or individual prayer practices.

# Recommendation:

## Adopt City Ordinance banning Conversion Therapy

- This is the recommendation of the Bloomington Human Rights Commission. Conversion therapy is harmful, it is very likely to be still occurring in Bloomington, and an ordinance banning it would help protect the physical and psychological health of LGBTQ youth.
- This ordinance would be an administrative civil citation and not criminal.

# Request of City Council

- We are seeking approval from City Council to bring forward an Ordinance banning the practice of Conversion Therapy for minors in Bloomington.

# Questions?

# Resources

What is Conversion Therapy - Slide 2:

- <https://www.outfront.org/public-policy#conversion-therapy>
- <https://www.hrc.org/news/flashbackfriday-today-in-1973-the-apa-removed-homosexuality-from-list-of-me>
- <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/world-health-organization-removes-gender-dysphoria-from-list-of-mental-illnesses/>

Harm Caused by Conversion Therapy - Slide 3:

- <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/survey-2020/?section=Conversion-Therapy-Change-Attempts>

Minnesota Student Survey Data from 2019 – Slide 4:

- <https://public.education.mn.gov/MDEAnalytics/DataTopic.jsp?TOPICID=242>

Prevalence of Conversion Therapy - Slide 5:

- <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/conversion-therapy-and-lgbt-youth/>
- <https://www.apa.org/pi/lgbt/resources/just-the-facts>

Testimony - Slide 6:

- <https://www.outfront.org/public-policy#conversion-therapy>

Summary of Professional Opinions - Slide 7:

- <https://www.ama-assn.org/system/files/2019-12/conversion-therapy-issue-brief.pdf>
- <https://www.apa.org/about/policy/sexual-orientation>
- <https://www.psychiatry.org/newsroom/news-releases/apa-reiterates-strong-opposition-to-conversion-therapy>
- <https://www.hrc.org/resources/policy-and-position-statements-on-conversion-therapy>

# Resources

United Nations Human Rights Council June-July 2020 - Slide 8:

- [https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/HRC/44/53](https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/HRC/44/53)

Current Conversion Therapy Bans – Slide 9:

- <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/get-involved/trevor-advocacy/50-bills-50-states/progress-map/>
- <https://mspmag.com/arts-and-culture/the-fight-to-ban-conversion-therapy-in-minnesota/>
- <https://www.minnpost.com/mental-health-addiction/2020/03/citing-harm-to-mental-health-proposed-legislation-aims-to-outlaw-conversion-therapy-in-minnesota/>
- <https://www.mprnews.org/story/2019/11/22/minneapolis-bans-conversion-therapy-for-minors>
- <https://www.duluthnewtribune.com/news/government-and-politics/4825738-Duluth-bans-conversion-therapy-designed-to-change-sexual-orientation-of-minors>
- <https://www.startribune.com/st-paul-city-council-approves-ban-on-conversion-therapy-for-minors/571318882/>
- <https://www.postbulletin.com/news/government-and-politics/6548464-Conversion-therapy-banned-in-Red-Wing>
- <http://www.winonapost.com/Article/ArticleID/69945/Winona-passes-conversion-therapy-ban>
- <https://weststpaulreader.com/2020/08/18/city-council-recap-august-17-2020/>
- <https://www.kaaltv.com/rochester-minnesota-news/rochester-ban-conversion-therapy/5870854/>
- <https://www.goldenvalleymn.gov/newsarchive/index.php/2020/03/05/council-approves-proclamation-opposing-conversion-therapy-in-golden-valley/>

# Additional Resources

Outfront Minnesota:

<https://www.outfront.org/public-policy#conversion-therapy>

Outfront FactSheet

<https://www.outfront.org/sites/default/files/Conversion%20Therapy%20Fact%20Sheet%202019.pdf>

Thank you Outfront Minnesota, and the office of Senator Scott Dibble for their assistance.