



What's with conversion therapy bans?

Conversion therapy bans can be supported if they are well-defined and capture only coercive or dangerous therapeutic practices such as shock therapy.

The problem is that the conversion therapy bans being passed in Canada capture the good with the bad by using this overly broad definition: "a practice, treatment or service designed to change a person's sexual orientation to heterosexual, to change a person's gender identity or gender expression to cisgender or to repress or reduce non-heterosexual attraction or sexual behaviour or non-cisgender gender expression." (Bill C-6, 2021)



Just Imagine:

The day after having a conversation with your teenage daughter about gender and sexuality, you receive a call from her teacher:

- > *Teacher's Objection: "Saying that your child's gender identity can't change is a MYTH. You're not allowed to impose your religious views on your child like that. That's conversion therapy."*
- > *Parental Response: "I thought the politicians said the conversion therapy ban did not restrict parents from having conversations with their children about sexuality?"*
- > *Teacher's Reaction: "That's right... as long as those conversations are 'open-ended and exploratory.' You told your child what you thought her identity is. That's not open-ended. You're imposing your views on her. That's illegal. You must stop or I'll be forced to report you."*

Concerns with Canada's proposed conversion therapy ban:

- > Reduces the availability of psychological help for children, teens, and adults
- > Casts a chill on spiritual counselling, teaching, and mentoring on questions of identity and sexual ethics
- > Censors private conversations of consenting adults
- > Criminalizes any kind of counseling or support for LGBTQ Canadians who are seeking help to reduce non-heterosexual behaviours, like a pornography addiction
- > Forces an "affirmative" model of care for gender dysphoria. This includes fast-track hormonal and surgical procedures that have lifelong, irreversible consequences, particularly for children
- > Prevents girls and women struggling with gender dysphoria from receiving support to address possible contributing factors like sexual abuse, eating disorders, or unwanted sexual attention from men or boys



The faith claims of the proposed ban:

What they say:

- > What I feel inside is what truly matters to who I am
- > The body is a tool for me to use or change as I please
- > If who I feel I am inside and the sex of my body doesn't align, the body must be changed

What we're saying:

- > You and I were made in the image of God – mind, body and soul – as unique and beautiful creations
- > The body and soul are inextricably connected
- > Our bodies are an essential aspect of our identity
- > If who I feel I am inside doesn't align with my body, I should be helped to feel comfortable in the body I have been blessed with

Questions to ask:



- #1 What will you do to ensure that parents can teach their children and provide them guidance and direction regarding sexuality and gender? Especially if that counsel is body-affirming?
- #2 What can we do to protect the rapidly increasing numbers of adolescent girls who are presenting to gender clinics in Canada?
- #3 How will you ensure that LGBTQ Canadians who wish to pursue counselling for unwanted attractions get the help they choose for themselves?

For more information on this issue, check out ARPA Canada's policy report on conversion therapy!



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