



Healthy Teen Network

# Honoring LGBTQ+ People as Equal

## *A Statement of Inclusion*

“There are only two emotions: love and fear. All positive emotions come from love, all negative emotions from fear. From love flows happiness, contentment, peace, and joy. From fear comes anger, hate, anxiety, and guilt... If we're in fear, we are not in a place of love. When we're in a place of love, we cannot be in a place of fear.”

- Elisabeth Kübler-Ross



Fear leads people to be intolerant of those different from us, including differences in our sexual orientations and gender identities. Fear leads people to say hateful things about others so as to safeguard our beliefs, and thus ourselves. Fear leads to judgment. And fear leads to violence.

Fear manifests itself in name-calling, bullying, and physical harm directed toward people who identify as a member of an other than heterosexual sexuality- or gender identity-based culture group (including, lesbian, gay, bisexual, two-spirit, trans, intersex and queer cultures). Fear manifests itself in health and

socioeconomic disparities among the LGBTQ+ population compared to their heterosexual peers, including in substance use, HIV disease, suicide, and homelessness. And fear manifests itself in public policies (approved by fear-motivated policymakers) that discriminate against people who identify as a member of an other-than-heterosexual sexuality- or gender identity-based culture group. This includes laws passed recently in several states in obvious reaction to the ever-broadening acceptance of and civil rights protections for LGBTQ+ people.

Healthy Teen Network envisions a world where all adolescents and young adults lead healthy and fulfilling lives. To reach this vision, all of us must repudiate fear-based responses to human differences. Instead all of us must choose love-based responses that honor our common humanity. For people who are LGBTQ+, such loving action includes insisting on their rights to raise children without judgment, to sexuality education without shame or stigma, to health and social services without bias, to employment without harassment, and to public accommodations (including restrooms of one's choosing) without interference.

Healthy Teen Network declares it way past time to let go of fear of LGBTQ+ people once and for all and let love reign in its stead.