



March 15th, 2017

Allentown City Council
435 Hamilton Street
Allentown, PA 18101

Members of Council:

KidsPeace is a national provider of mental and behavioral health services, primarily to children and adolescents. Our mission is to provide hope, help and healing to children, families and communities. Our history in the Lehigh Valley spans 135 years and our organization is invested in the success of youth in our care. It is with the health of our youth in mind that KidsPeace has chosen to speak out against the utilization of “reparative therapy/sexual orientation conversion therapy”, for reasons detailed below.

“Reparative therapy/sexual orientation conversion therapy” is not an evidence-based practice. In fact, a number of professional medical, health and mental health organizations, among them the American Psychiatric Association, American Psychological Association, American Counseling Association, American School Counselor Association, the National Association of Social Workers and the American Academy of Pediatrics, have issued statements regarding the dangers of “reparative therapy/sexual orientation conversion therapy.” These forms of therapy are based on a viewpoint of sexuality which has been widely rejected by these professions.

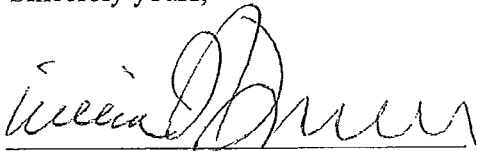
KidsPeace has made a commitment to help people in need overcome challenges and transform their lives by providing emotional and physical healthcare and educational services in an atmosphere of teamwork, compassion and creativity. KidsPeace serves this vision by employing evidence-based practices in the care of all clients. It is also with this vision in mind that KidsPeace created a Standard Operating Protocol for the fair and ethical treatment of gender diverse clients in its Pennsylvania Residential Program and Children’s Hospital. This Standard Operating Protocol has been in place since 2015, and KidsPeace remains committed to be an open and affirming organization and a safe place for members of the LGBTQIA+ community.

For these reasons, KidsPeace refuses to utilize “reparative therapy/sexual orientation conversion therapy” in any of its programs.

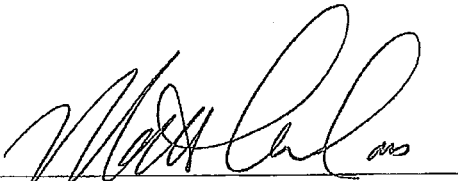
It is our belief that "reparative therapy/sexual orientation conversion therapy" may not necessarily be a common practice in our area. Nevertheless, placing a formal ban on its use by licensed mental health professionals in the treatment of youth in Allentown would be in the best interest of all members of the community.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our views on this issue with you.

Sincerely yours,



William Iseman
President and CEO
KidsPeace



Dr. Matthew Koyal
Executive Vice President and Chief Medical Officer
KidsPeace

