

SOGICE

SEXUAL ORIENTATION & GENDER IDENTITY CHANGE EFFORTS

SURVIVORS

What is the SOGICE Survivor Statement?

SOGICE Survivors are a group of survivors of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Change Efforts, otherwise known as the LGBTQA+ Conversion movement. They are the primary writers of the SOGICE Survivor Statement, a document that calls on Australian Governments to join a growing number of jurisdictions across the world by intervening to stop the LGBTQA+ Conversion movement from harming LGBTQA+ Australians.

SOGICE Survivors represents the combination of lived experience, expertise, research, and perspectives from long-term survivor support. SOGICE Survivors developed the Statement using participatory approaches to policy development and the principle that survivors and survivor experts are best placed to accurately define the movement, conversion practices and conversion ideology.

Who wrote the statement? Who was consulted?

The SOGICE Survivor Statement was written by several survivor self-advocates and allies after consultation with other survivors, including members of Brave Network and participants in private online survivor forums.

After the first draft was written the Statement was sent to numerous faith and LGBTQA+ groups, community leaders, survivors, and survivor groups, including people from diverse cultural backgrounds, for consultation, affirmation and endorsement.

What is LGBTQA+ Conversion?

SOGICE Survivors and Brave Network recommend that conversion practices be defined as:

Any formal or informal practice, activity or treatment (in any setting) that seeks, or is used, to suppress, eliminate or change a person's sexual or romantic orientation, gender identity, or gender expression, where that change is deemed necessary due to the instigator's belief in or adherence to conversion ideology..

Our definition also acknowledges that conversion practices cannot be isolated from conversion ideology (see the SOGICE Survivor Statement for an explanation of LGBTQA+ conversion ideology). Any policy, regulatory, legislative, public health, or survivor support responses that separate the two will not adequately address the conversion movement.

What about religious freedom?

There is a marked difference between conservative religious homo/bi/transphobia and conversion ideology. The first is rooted in religious beliefs about 'sin', a religious doctrine that does not always align with modern secular and ethical values. Conversion ideology, on the other hand, is contemporary pseudoscience grounded in psychoanalytic hypotheses developed in the 19th century then later abandoned by modern psychology in the mid-20th century. Modern concepts of sexual orientation, gender, and even the use of the word 'homosexuality' also did not develop until the late 19th Century.

Conversion ideology is usually present in faith communities that wish to appear warm and welcoming toward LGBTQA+ people, however attach boundaries and caveats to their membership, including the requirement to suppress their identity, remain celibate, or seek healing. It must be noted that this position is not at all a traditional or ancient religious stance – it would be anachronistic to suggest so.

Conversion ideology often attempts to draw a causal link between past experiences, such as trauma and abuse, and LGBTQA+ identity. It makes claims about the function and ethics of LGBTQA+ identity based on subjective ideas drawn from the relatively recent pseudoscience noted above, extending far beyond traditional religious belief. These ideas have now been refuted by modern science and psychology.

What does good legislation look like?

The primary driver of harm is the ideology that underpins conversion practices, and this harm can be prevented by sound state and territory legislation, with supporting strategies, that:

- Strongly affirms that LGBTQA+ people are not 'broken' or 'disordered'
- Bans practices in both formal (medical/psychology/counselling) and informal (including religious) settings, whether paid or unpaid
- Protects adults, children, and people with impaired agency, including prohibition of the removal of children from the jurisdiction for the purpose of conversion practices
- Targets the false, misleading, and pseudoscientific fraudulent claims that drive conversion practices
- Focuses on practitioners' purported purpose to facilitate change or suppression of a person's orientation, gender identity or gender expression on the basis of pseudoscientific claims
- Prohibits advertising and promotion of paid or unpaid conversion practices, including promotion of false and misleading claims designed to generate demand
- Prohibits referrals from practitioners, whether in informal or formal contexts
- Establishes a range of criminal and civil penalties
- Provides counselling and redress for survivors
- Provides investigative powers to a suitably advised body or commission, with scope for investigations to be initiated internally or as a response to complaints by third parties, not just by survivors, using strategies that prevent re-traumatisation

For more information, FAQ's, or to read and affirm the SOGICE Survivor Statement, please visit www.SOGICESurvivors.com.au

If you are a survivor of LGBTQA+ conversion practices or ideology and need support, please contact Brave by visiting www.thebravenetwork.org

[SOGICESurvivors.com.au](http://www.SOGICESurvivors.com.au)

