

# American Academy of Family Physicians Advocates for Children in Adoption Policy

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SAN DIEGO — The American Academy of Family Physicians governing body, the Congress of Delegates, adopted a new policy today that advocates for children. The delegates called for the Academy to “establish policy and be supportive of legislation which promotes a safe and nurturing environment, including psychological and legal security, for all children, including those of adoptive parents, regardless of the parents’ sexual orientation.”

“As family physicians who care for all ages, we believe the health of America’s children is of the utmost importance,” says Warren A. Jones, M.D., president of the AAFP. “Children deserve to be raised and protected in a safe and nurturing environment. This policy advocates for the family in all its complexities and particularly for children.”

By supporting the psychological and legal security of all children, the AAFP’s new adoption policy reaffirms its definition of family, which reads: “The family is a group of individuals with a continuing legal, genetic and/or emotional relationship. Society relies on the family group to provide for the economic and protective needs of individuals, especially the children and the elderly.”

The AAFP Congress of Delegates deliberated the issue and made the announcement at their Annual Scientific Assembly in San Diego. The Academy is a democratic body governed by representatives from each constituent state chapter, the Uniformed Services, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, Guam, District of Columbia and the constituencies of Women Physicians, Minority Physicians, New Physicians, Residents and Students. As such, each member’s voice was heard on this issue and represented by their elected leadership to the Congress of Delegates. The message of the congress is that family physicians support a safe and nurturing environment for children.

## Adoption Policy Q&A

Q. Does the AAFP's new adoption policy support same-sex adoption?

A. The AAFP's new adoption policy calls for a safe and nurturing environment for all children, regardless of the parents' sexual orientation. Children are America's most precious resource. By adopting this policy, the Academy reaffirms its commitment to a safe and nurturing environment for children.

Q. The policy calls for promoting psychological and legal security for all children. Does that mean the AAFP also supports medical and social security benefits for adopted children of same-sex parents?

A. This policy is about the health and well-being of America's children. It's not about the sexual orientation of the parents. Each child deserves a safe and nurturing environment. That's what this policy advocates.

Q. What does the AAFP membership think about this new policy?

A. As you know, the Academy is a democratic body governed by representatives from each constituent state chapter, the Uniformed Services, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, Guam, District of Columbia and the constituencies of Women Physicians, Minority Physicians, New Physicians, Residents and Students. As such, each member's voice was heard on this issue and represented by their elected leadership to the Congress of Delegates. The message of the congress is that family physicians support a safe and nurturing environment for children.

Q. Is the AAFP following the lead of the Pediatric community which recently adopted and new policy in favor of same-sex adoption?

A. No. Our membership has determined that the well-being of a child is the sacred right of that child. We will continue to advocate for a safe, nurturing environment for all children, including those who are brought into a family by adoption.

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*Founded in 1947, the AAFP represents 100,300 physicians and medical students nationwide. It is the only medical society devoted solely to primary care.*

*Approximately one in four of all office visits are made to family physicians. That is 228 million office visits each year — nearly 84 million more than the next largest medical specialty. Today, family physicians provide more care for America's underserved and rural populations than any other medical specialty. Family medicine's cornerstone is an ongoing, personal patient-physician relationship focused on integrated care.*

*To learn more about the specialty of family medicine, the AAFP's positions on issues and clinical care, and for downloadable multi-media highlighting family medicine, visit [www.aafp.org/media](http://www.aafp.org/media). For information about health care, health conditions and wellness, please visit the AAFP's award-winning consumer Web site, [www.FamilyDoctor.org](http://www.FamilyDoctor.org).*