

Statement on Dr. Kenneth Zucker and Gender Identity Disorder (5/23/2008)

Kenneth J. Zucker, Ph.D., C.Psych., the Chair of the DSM-V Sexual and Gender Identity Disorders work group, is a widely respected and pre-eminent scholar in the world of academic sexology research. As Chair of the work group for Sexual and Gender Identity Disorders, Dr. Zucker's role is to coordinate and facilitate the work of the three sub-work groups addressing Sexual Dysfunctions, Paraphilias, and Gender Identity Disorders. Further information on the DSM-V development process can be found at:

<http://www.psych.org/MainMenu/Research/DSMIV/DSMV/APAStatements/APAStatementonGIDandTheDSMV.aspx>

Dr. Zucker has published 97 peer-reviewed journal articles, 48 book chapters, and a landmark textbook. His published work addresses psychosexual differentiation and its disorders, based on a wide range of empirical research studies on children and adolescents with gender identity disorder, with a focus on diagnosis and assessment, and their associated behavioral and psychological distress. As the current Editor of *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, the premier human sexuality research journal, he also has a wide familiarity with the disparate areas of sexual dysfunctions and paraphilias. Since 2001, he has been the Psychologist-in-Chief at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH), is a Professor in the Departments of Psychiatry and Psychology at the University of Toronto, and is on the Scientific Staff (Division of Child Psychiatry) at the Hospital for Sick Children. He was the President of the International Academy of Sex Research in 2005-2006.

Dr. Zucker and his service team at CAMH in Toronto have the longest standing research-clinical service for children and youth with gender identity problems in North America. Since the mid-1970s, Dr. Zucker and his team have evaluated over 900 children and youth with gender identity issues. Dr. Zucker is one of the few researchers who is doing long-term follow-up of the patients he has treated.

The philosophy of Dr. Zucker's team is to provide client-centered care that maximizes benefit and minimizes harm to each child or youth. The goal of treatment is a well-adjusted youth, regardless of ultimate gender identity or sexual orientation, who feels she or he has been genuinely helped by her or his healthcare providers. Dr. Zucker has offered a variety of treatment options, understanding that options may vary greatly with the age of the client. For younger clients, therapy options include helping the child to overcome discomfort with his or her body, i.e., helping clients learn to live comfortably in their natal sex. Diagnosis and treatment of other problems that may be present, such as anxiety, depression, or substance abuse are also available, as are services for family members.

For adolescent patients (including those who first came to the clinic as young children), Dr. Zucker follows the Standards of Care Guidelines of the World Professional Association for Transgender Health. The treatment options include helping patients make a satisfactory transition to the opposite sex, including the institution of hormonal treatment to facilitate transition. In some cases, treatment may include helping an interested adolescent obtain sex-reassignment surgery.

For all patients, regardless of age, the focus of therapy is the patient's gender identity, not the patient's sexual orientation. Dr. Zucker's therapeutic approach has no relationship to so-called reparative or sexual conversion therapies that attempt to change homosexual orientations to heterosexual ones. The goal of his therapy is the opposite of conversion therapy in that he considers well-adjusted transsexual, gay, lesbian or bisexual youth to be therapy successes, not failures.