

APA Official Actions

Position Statement on Abortion

Approved by the Board of Trustees, July 2018

Approved by the Assembly, May 2018

“Policy documents are approved by the APA Assembly and Board of Trustees. . . . These are . . . position statements that define APA official policy on specific subjects. . .” – *APA Operations Manual*

Issue:

Historically, there was concern that abortion may be associated with negative adverse mental health outcomes for women. This has been refuted by a growing body of research carefully conducted with appropriate comparison groups. Currently, available evidence does not support that having an abortion is associated with an increase in depressive, anxiety, or post-traumatic stress symptoms.

APA Position:

- 1) Abortion is a medical procedure, and a decision about an abortion should be between a woman and her physician.**
- 2) Providers should consider consulting a psychiatrist when treating a pregnant woman with current mental health symptoms**
- 3) The APA opposes governmental restrictions on family planning and abortion services.**

Authors:

Council on Minority Mental Health and Health Disparities

The original statement was approved by the Assembly of District Branches at its October 15, 1978 meeting and by the Board of Trustees at its December 10, 1977 meeting. That draft was drawn up by a subcommittee appointed by the Reference Committee to collate an Area I Action Paper and information provided by the Committee on Women, the Council on National Affairs, the Council on Children, Adolescents, and Their Families, and the American Academy of Child Psychiatry. In November 2017, the Council on Minority Mental Health and Health Disparities edited the position statement to include cultural perspectives and updated available evidence.