



MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

3 June 2008

Rights of children of same-sex parents

The NSW Council of Churches views with grave concern the introduction of any legislation by the NSW Parliament that undermines the traditional Christian understanding of marriage and family, or attempts to equate same-sex relationships and same-sex parenting with their heterosexual counterparts.

1. Marriage

The NSW Council of Churches affirms the definition of marriage in the Marriage Act 1961 (as amended 2004). Further, the Council believes that marriage is a covenant relationship ordained by God between two people of the opposite sex, and that sexual activity outside of a marriage relationship between a man and a woman is immoral and counter to God's intention for humankind.

2. Same-sex parenting

The ideal environment in which to raise children, affirmed by the Bible, is a family with one father and one mother who are married to each other. Therefore it is not desirable for children to be raised by same-sex parents. Where a same-sex parenting arrangement cannot be avoided it is appropriate for the state to extend relevant children's rights to the children of same-sex parents, but this must be regarded as an exception to the norm rather than as a precedent allowing further erosion of community standards.

3. Birth certificates

The NSW Council of Churches opposes the proposal to record on a child's birth certificate the name of a lesbian partner of a child's mother which wrongly indicates that the partner is a parent of the child. Where possible, birth certificates should record the name of the biological mother and biological father of the child. In the opinion of the NSW Council of Churches, the state should not legitimize or encourage a means of producing children that intentionally denies the right of a child to know his or her father (in accordance with practices relating to child adoption).

4. Homosexual persons

The NSW Council of Churches encourages a policy of welcoming lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons but does not affirm any form of sexual intercourse outside of a marriage of one man and one woman. Similarly, the NSW Council of Churches does not affirm "alternative" patterns of parenting such as parenting by same-sex couples. The biblical imperative of love and compassion for all people does not extend to celebrating or condoning patterns of behaviour consistently prohibited by the Bible.

We encourage all ministers and church members to affirm the Bible as the supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct. With respect to sexuality, the Bible teaches that monogamous heterosexual marriage is the only appropriate context for sexual intercourse.

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