

Nondiscrimination in the Care of Pediatric Patients

Committee on Practice and Ambulatory Medicine

The mission statement of the American Academy of Pediatrics declares that the Academy is committed to the attainment of optimal physical, mental, and social health for all infants, children, adolescents, and young adults. This mission is to be accomplished through the following: (1) advocacy for children and youth, (2) advocacy for pediatricians, (3) professional and public education, and (4) membership service and research. These activities are provided without prejudice for the benefit of all children.

The Academy's 1984 joint policy statement, Principles of Treatment of Disabled Infants, stated: "Discrimination of any type against any individual with a disability/disabilities, regardless of the nature or severity of the disability, is morally and legally indefensible."¹ This policy has been updated in the current policy, Pediatric Services for Infants and Children With Special Health Care Needs.²

Because the Academy supports diversity and equal opportunity and encourages the teaching of acceptance of diversity to children, it is opposed to discrimination in the care of any patient based on the race, ancestry, national origin, religion, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, age, or disability of either the patient or the patient's parents or guardians. The Academy encourages its members to follow

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this guideline consistently in the management of all patients.

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REFERENCES

1. American Academy of Pediatrics, Joint Policy Statement. Principles of treatment of disabled infants. *Pediatrics*. 1984;73:559-560
2. American Academy of Pediatrics, Committee on Children With Disabilities. Pediatric services for infants and children with special health care needs. *Pediatrics*. 1993;92:163-165

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