

The following statement on non-therapeutic circumcision of boys was agreed upon by the presidents of the six national member organizations of the Nordic Association for Clinical Sexology (NACS) in connection with its annual meeting in Aalborg, Denmark, on October 3-6, 2013:

Nordic Association of Clinical Sexology:

STATEMENT ON NON-THERAPEUTIC CIRCUMCISION OF BOYS

The penile foreskin is a natural and integral part of the normal male genitalia. The foreskin has a number of important protective and sexual functions. It protects the penile glans against trauma and contributes to the natural functioning of the penis during sexual activity. Ancient historic accounts and recent scientific evidence leave little doubt that during sexual activity the foreskin is a functional and highly sensitive, erogenous structure, capable of providing pleasure to its owner and his potential partners.

As clinical sexologists, we are concerned about the human rights aspects associated with the practice of non-therapeutic circumcision of young boys. To cut off the penile foreskin in a boy with normal, healthy genitalia deprives him of his right to grow up and make his own informed decision. Unless there are compelling medical reasons to operate before a boy reaches an age and a level of maturity at which he is capable of providing informed consent, the decision to alter the appearance, sensitivity and functionality of the penis should be left to its owner, thus upholding his fundamental rights to protection and bodily integrity.

Every person's right to bodily integrity goes hand in hand with his or her sexual autonomy. By signing this statement we support the resolution of September 30, 2013, issued by the Nordic ombudsmen for children, and the resolution of October 1, 2013, issued by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, in which governments are urged to take the necessary measures to protect children's bodily integrity with regard to non-therapeutic genital surgery.

Helsinki, October 10th, 2013

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On behalf of all six member organizations:

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