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SB172 Support Statement

Thursday, 9 March 2023

Presented by Leann McAllister, Executive Director

Everyone – including teenagers -- deserves the right to confidential medical care that best supports their own needs and is informed by their physician's expertise.

The American Academy of Pediatrics favors laws and policies that enable pediatricians to provide adolescents with unbiased counseling and best medical practices. Pediatric health clinicians should encourage adolescents to engage their parents/caregivers or a trusted adult in their medical decision-making; however, if adolescents choose not to do so, their decision should be respected.

[Confidentiality protections are critical in the provision of comprehensive primary care of adolescent patients.](#)

Take, for example, HIV. An estimated 21% of all new HIV infections in the United States occur in teens and young adults. Yet most sexually active youth often don't realize that they're at risk for HIV or they fear a parent discovering their choice to be sexually active, so they don't get tested. In fact, this age group is more likely than any other to have undiagnosed HIV. Increased confidentiality protections will empower more teens to seek care.

The Nevada Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics currently has 266 members, most of whom are board-certified pediatricians, both primary and specialty care; members also include pediatric nurse practitioners, physician assistants, pediatric residents, and medical students, all of whom live and work in Nevada and have dedicated their professional lives to the health of all children.