



USA

A Gay American Teen's 'Blog' Reveals the Hell Some Can be Put Through by Parents and Others

A Commentary (we wish we didn't have to write)

(Originally published 14 June at 17:00 - updated 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19 June)



IMPORTANT NOTE: Love In Action or Love In Action International mentioned on this page is nothing to do with the Love in Action charitable work for the needy by Billy Graham

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In the past day, we have received three emails suggesting we look at the weblo (blog) of someone who signs himself as "Zach".

So we looked. And the first reaction?

Wow.

Then came the question about just how civilised are certain section of America society? Alas, not very, is the answer.

Here, we have a "diary" of a teen – Zack is a 16 year-old from Tennessee – wh didn't want to live the lie any more, so he told his parents he was gay.

[Below are excerpts from Zach's blogs. Follow the link for the complete blog]

"Well today [[May 29](#)], my mother, father, and I had a very long "talk" in m room where they let me know I am to apply for a fundamentalist Christia program for gays," writes in his 'blog' on that fateful day.

"They tell me that there is something psychologically wrong with me, and the "raised me wrong." I'm a big screw up to them, who isn't on the path God want me to be on. So I'm sitting here in tears, joining the rest of those kids wh complain about their parents on blogs – and I can't help it.

England and Wales
will be removed.
Also, offensive
posts will be
removed.

“I wish I had never told them. If I could take it all back, I would ... It's better than them crying and depressed cause they will have no grandchildren from me. It's better than them telling me that there's something wrong with me. It's better than them explaining to me that they “raised me wrong.”.”

The following day's post [[May 30](#)] ... “After The World Stopped, It Gave Me A Lot Of Rules. Current mood: worried” ... Zach publishes the rules and regulations of this fundamentalist “refuge program”.

And perhaps describing his current mood as “worried” is a bit of an understatement. “My parents lied to me. ...[they said] that they didn't know what the rules were exactly. ... I see now why they “didn't know what the rule were”. It's horrible.. they' posted below.. and I [am] so worried. It's like boot camp, but worse. I obviously was not supposed to see this, seeing the bottom say “Parental Rules (not to be given to client)”,” he writes.

The next posting is [June 3](#): “It's been a week of torture – anger, and crying Current mood: worried”. Zach explains that his cell phone and PC have been taken away by his parents.

“Hi. I'm not sure if I'm even supposed to be on. I ran away for a short while. came back and they took everything from me, they don't want me to have outside influences. I don't know how long I'm going to be on, because if the wake up, I'm screwed. The program starts June 6.”

The latest entry is for [June 4](#) – 10 days ago. “Thanks, by the way. Current mood: numb”. He writes: “I agree, if you're thinking that these posts might be dramatized, but the proof of the program's ideas are sitting in the rules. I pray this blows over. I can't take this ... no one can ... not really, this kind of thing tears you apart emotionally. To introduce THIS subject ... I'm not a suicidal person ... really I'm not ... I think it's stupid – really...”

Two days later, Zach was due to start the fundamentalist “refuge program” When he wrote his last entry, he knew that he had 232 messages of support posted on his blog. His last entry has drawn 509 responses – and we couldn't find one that was not supportive of Zack.



■ Demonstrators outside the fundamentalist Christian "Love in Action" Refuge on Monday.
(photo courtesy [Queer Action Coalition](#))

Yes, the blog does not make pleasant reading. But then Zack is putting down his thoughts at the time – his thoughts on the emotional torture he is being subjected to.

How any loving parent could put a son or daughter through this sort of thinking is totally beyond us.

It is fair to assume that this sort of thing is not just confined to America. There are “fundamentalists” in every religion in every country.

Do we really live in a civilized society? And if you don't know the answer, as Zack.

■ You can express your thoughts on this horrendous human rights matter in Bush's America or messages of support for Zach on our ["Forum"](#) (registration is NOT required), or you can [email](#)

LINKS

[Gay Reparative Therapy: Statements From Today's 'Love In Action' Press Conference](#) - Thursday June 16 in Memphis

[Zach's Story: Other American Gay Kids' Pleas For Help](#) - UK Gay News, June 17

[Gay Teen Has Further 6 Weeks in LIA Reparative Therapy](#). The gay teen in Tennessee who "came out" to his parents last month and was promptly sent to "Love In Action International Inc." refuge for reparative treatment has to stay at the fundamentalist Christian institution for a further six weeks, DetourMemphis is reporting. - June 19

BaptistWatch website: [An article by Robert Truluck about the fallacy of therapy to "cure" gays.](#)

BaptistWatch website: [Scripture Is Not the Ally Christian Homophobes Think It Is](#), by Bishop John Shelby Spong

Social Work Today - USA: [Reparative Therapy — What's Broken?](#) By Kate Jackson (from May/June 2005 issue). While science suggests that nothing is broken, this therapy seeks to "repair" homosexuals.

Memphis Flyer - USA: [Yellow is Blue and Pink's a Sin at the Love in Action Camp](#), by Chris Davis. How does God make a gay man straight? In 1997, John Smid, the ex-gay director of Love in Action, a homosexual conversion center located in Memphis, tried to explain this mystery to a *Memphis Flyer* reporter ... (June 17 issue)

Resources

[ChildhelpUSA® Tennessee](#) website. Define the forms of abuse including: Emotional Abuse - Any attitude or behavior which interferes with a child's mental health or social development. This includes yelling, screaming, name-calling, shaming, negative comparisons to others, telling a child they are "bad," "no good," "worthless," "a mistake," etc.

There are many websites/blogs covering Zach. Here are a few links:

[DetourMemphis](#)

[Queer Action Coalition](#) - A group of concerned Memphians who have come together to work towards educating society about the existence of "ex-gay" ministries.

[Pulpfaction](#) blog (Love In Action or Child Abuse)

[An online petition](#) in support of relieving Zach of his unnecessary treatment.

Eyewitness News, Memphis (ABC). [Turning Gay Teens Straight](#). Video report [here](#)

Eyewitness News, Memphis (ABC). [Gay to Straight Controversy](#) - Video from Thursday's Love In Action press conference (June 17)

WMCTV Channel 5: [Inside Love In Action](#) - a video report on Love In Action programme.

Social Work Today - USA: [Reparative Therapy — What's Broken?](#) By Kate Jackson (from May/June 2005 issue). While science suggests that nothing is broken, this therapy seeks to "repair" homosexuals

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