

Taking a Public Stance

Psychology's Role

Changes and tragedies continue to bring social justice issues and politics to the forefront of conversation.

As a psychologist, what do you do when you feel distressed with current events? How can you make a difference?

There is a growing trend to demand public position statements and act on social and political issues. These are frequently reviewed by your PAA Board of Directors for careful consideration. Your elected strategic leaders engage in robust and ongoing reviews of corporate social responsibility – for long term impact and benefit.

Organizations can feel empowered when they rush to make a statement. That may help us all to *feel* as though we have done something tangible, but have we? And what issues have we neglected whilst addressing others?

Good governance has a responsibility to go beyond making an appearance by rushing to take a side on a public social or political issue. When issues matter in relation to psychology, PAA IS involved in a myriad of ways that matter.

What is far more important is when members are actively involved.

We (all members) are the PAA, and we can work together for a psychologically healthier future for our province and those we serve.

Grassroots advocacy is effective and impactful when done well.

As psychologists we cannot make personal public statements outside of our professional context – we have a responsibility to consider that we are perceived as professionals in all contexts. And we have clear [ethical standards](#) that guide how we engage our responsibility to society:

- Development of knowledge
- Beneficial activities
- Respect for society
- Development of society
- Extended responsibility

How YOU can be Involved

Never assume that silence is a statement.

- We are scientist practitioners. Being informed, reflecting, and careful planning of engagement is at the heart of our profession.
- Actions speak loudly, demands are more easily forgotten

Explore resources for those you serve

- Share these resources openly – public education matters
- Build your resource library from [PAA](#), [CPA](#), [APA](#), and other key resources

Become educated on the matter.

- Dive in psychological research and best practices as they relate to the issue
- Engage in critical thinking in relation to social media review

If you are making a statement do so in a way that is:

- Grounded in psychological science and best practices
- Is non-incendiary and mean to propose solutions and actionable recommendations

Plan to optimize your impact

- Learn about [effective advocacy](#)
- [Engage](#) in a way that best suits you and the issue at hand

Help us increase our impact

- When PAA hosts a townhall on issues, attend and share your voice
- When you have critically examined beneficial resources, post those in our Communities of Practice or share those for consideration on our website

Resource Examples

Human Rights

[Human rights \(apa.org\)](#)

[International Humanitarian Crisis – Psychologists’ Association of Alberta](#)

[\(psychologistsassociation.ab.ca\)](#)

[2023-PAA-International-Humanitarian-Crisis.pdf \(psychologistsassociation.ab.ca\)](#)

Anti-Trans Legislation

[Gender Diversity Report EN 2023 Final.pdf \(cpa.ca\)](#)

[‘The young people feel it in their bones’: A look at the mental health impact of antitrans legislation \(apa.org\)](#)

[Sexual orientation and gender diversity \(apa.org\)](#)

Coping with Emergencies, Disasters, and Violent Events

[Trauma \(apa.org\)](#)

[2022-PTSD-and-Trauma.pdf \(psychologistsassociation.ab.ca\)](#)

[Psychology Works Fact Sheet – SubjectName \(cpa.ca\)](#)