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Dear Friend of Exodus:

If you are like me, you are greatly concerned about what our youth are being taught these days about homosexuality. Through programs like "It's Elementary," children as young as five years old are being taught that homosexuality is inborn, natural—and cannot be changed. This message is being reinforced year after year as students progress through elementary school, middle school and on into their high school and college years.

Yes, it's true that some young people are struggling with same-sex attractions. But this issue of gay youth is often mentioned in the same breath as intolerance. In other words, if Christians would be more open-minded and loving, our young people could accept their same-sex orientation. But I believe the problems are far bigger than intolerance...

Today, single-parent families represent nearly 30 percent of our nation's population (1). Divorce, separation, abuse, and rejection have become "normal" for many children. Since most single-parent families are female-headed, they struggle economically. Nearly 90 percent of welfare recipients are in single-parent households (2). But this only explains the economic factor. What about the emotional issues kids in these families face?

An absentee father is an enormously negative factor in a child's life—boy or girl. Children experience shock, confusion, guilt, depression, anger, irrational fear and grief when divorce occurs. Maybe you have been there yourself or know someone who has.

The bottom line is this: The immense escalation of single-parent families makes children more vulnerable to sexual identity issues. Here's why...

Fathers play a fundamental role in the masculine identity of their male children. Likewise, a father's love, nurture and overall acceptance helps in the development of a girl's feminine identity and acceptance.

There may be a drive to fulfill a void left by an absentee father in some male youth, according to Jason Thompson at The Portland Fellowship. And hurting children with a non-aggressive temperament are undoubtedly more susceptible to outside persuasion. This can have an immense influence in how they come to view their own sexual orientation.

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