

**GENERAL CONVENTION OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH 2009
ARCHIVES' RESEARCH REPORT**

RESOLUTION NO.: 2009-D062
TITLE: Implementation of Sexual Abuse Misconduct Prevention Training
PROPOSER: Mrs. Barbara T. Ross
COMMITTEE: Education

Directly Related: (attached)

2006-A086 Create and Disseminate Training Materials to Recognize and Respond to Abuse
2003-B008 Protect Children and Youth from Abuse
2000-A098 Authorize Continuation of the Committee on Sexual Exploitation
2000-D045 Affirm and Urge Consideration of the Centrality of Children to the Ministry of the Church
1997-B005 Adopt Statement "A Children's Charter for the Church"
1991-A125 Renew Commitment and Ministry to Children
1991-B052 Establish a Committee on Sexual Exploitation
1991-D105 Educate Children for Protection Against Sexual Abuse
1988-D163 Request Resources and Advocacy on Behalf of Children
1985-B014 Direct Bishops to Establish Workshops for Clergy on Child Abuse

Indirectly Related:

2006-B018 Endorse the NCC Policy on the Rights of Children
2003-D015 Make Sexual Exploitation Materials Available on the Web
1994-B022 Commend Use of Educational Materials by the Sexual Exploitation Committee

In preparing this report, the Archives researched the resolutions of General Convention for the period 1976 through 2006, selecting "direct" resolutions that have a substantive bearing on the proposed legislation. Committee members who are interested in obtaining copies of "indirectly related" resolutions, legislative history before 1976, or who require other research assistance should contact the Archives at 800-525-9329 before Convention or at Convention in the General Convention Secretariat.



Resolution Number: 2006-A086
Title: Create and Disseminate Training Materials to Recognize and Respond to Abuse
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 75th General Convention instruct the Standing Commission on Ministry Development to create and disseminate training materials to assist leaders in ministry to recognize and respond to evidence of abuse; and be it further

Resolved, That the Standing Commission on Ministry Development report on this initiative to the 76th General Convention.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Columbus, 2006* (New York: General Convention, 2007), p. 511.



Resolution Number: 2003-B008
Title: Protect Children and Youth from Abuse
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred
Final Text:

*Resolved, That the 74th General Convention of The Episcopal Church recommit itself to the vision of the role of children in the church as articulated in *A Children's Charter for the Church* as adopted by the 72nd General Convention in 1997. The *Charter*, among other things, calls the church to:*

- **Receive, nurture, and treasure each child as a gift from God;**
- **Love, shelter, protect, and defend children within its own community and in the world, especially those who are abused, neglected, or in danger; and**
- **Advocate for the integrity of childhood and the dignity of all children at every level of our religious, civic, and political structures; and be it further**

Resolved, That this Church acknowledge that the times and circumstances demand that the church articulate a clear and firm commitment to the safety of all, especially children; that we support this commitment with clear and firm policies and procedures for the well-being of all; and that we commit this Church to being and becoming a place where children and youth are safe, especially from abuse and neglect; and be it further

Resolved, That each diocese develop and adopt policies for the protection of children and youth from abuse that address the following:

1. **A screening and selection process for all clergy, lay employees, and volunteers who regularly work with children or youth. Dioceses are encouraged to consider:**
 - a. **A written application**
 - b. **A public records check**
 - c. **An interview**
 - d. **Reference checks**
 - e. **A general provision that volunteers not work with children or youth until they have been known to the clergy or congregation for at least six months**
2. **The articulation of behavioral standards for clergy, lay employees, and volunteers working with children or youth. Dioceses are encouraged to consider:**
 - a. **Respect for the privacy and dignity of children and youth by not putting them in inappropriate unmonitored one-to-one situations**
 - b. **Age-appropriate arrangements for sleeping, bathing, dressing, or showering**

- c. The prohibition of dating, romantic involvements, or sexual contact with a child or youth
 - d. The prohibition of any sexually oriented materials (magazines, cards, videos, films, clothing, etc.) in the presence of children and youth except as expressly permitted as part of a pre-authorized educational program
 - e. Guidelines for physical contact and expressions of affection that define appropriate and inappropriate behaviors
 - f. The prohibition of discussing their own sexual activities and fantasies with children or youth
 - g. The prohibition of the non-sacramental use, possession, distribution or being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or the misuse of legal drugs
3. **The monitoring of programs and interaction with children and youth. Dioceses are encouraged to consider:**
- a. The prohibition of the development or initiation of new activities for children or youth without prior approval from the appropriate decision-maker(s)
 - b. The recognition that the ordinary standard is the presence of two unrelated adults for any activities involving children or youth
4. **Education and training. Dioceses are encouraged to consider:**
- a. Child abuse prevention for clergy, lay employees, and volunteers who regularly work with children or youth
 - b. Specialized training for those who recruit, screen, or select persons to work with children or youth
5. **Guidelines for responding to concerns. Dioceses are encouraged to consider:**
- a. Inappropriate behavior with children or youth
 - b. Violation of policies for the protection of children or youth
 - c. Suspected abuse of children or youth;and be it further

***Resolved,* That each diocese shall report to the House of Bishops Committee on Pastoral Development prior to the Spring 2006 meeting of the House of Bishops with a copy of its adopted and implemented policy and an evaluation of the history of its use. A summary report shall be made to the House of Bishops Spring 2006 meeting and a full report made to the 75th General Convention.**

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Minneapolis, 2003* (New York: General Convention, 2004), pp. 255-257.



Resolution Number: 2000-A098
Title: Authorize Continuation of the Committee on Sexual Exploitation
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Submitted
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 73rd General Convention of the Episcopal Church acknowledge and applaud the conscientious efforts on the part of the Committee on Sexual Exploitation to establish a close working association and collaboration with both the Office of Pastoral Development and the Standing Commission on Constitution and Canons; and be it further

Resolved, That the 73rd General Convention authorize the continuation of the Committee on Sexual Exploitation for the purpose of completing the tasks as outlined in its report with special attention to the development of an ongoing network of leadership at both the diocesan and provincial levels that will continue and strengthen the institutional, preventative, and remedial measures which are so critical to a healthy, holy, and witnessing church.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Denver, 2000* (New York: General Convention, 2001), p. 453.



Resolution Number: 2000-D045
Title: Affirm and Urge Consideration of the Centrality of Children to the Ministry of the Church
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 73rd General Convention affirm that children are central to the mission of the Episcopal Church and ask each committee, commission, and program of the Episcopal Church, as it plans for the future, to consider how its ministry will positively impact the lives of children in the church and in the world, how it will be impacted by children, and how it will encourage children's full participation in the worship and mission of the church; and be it further

Resolved, That the 73rd General Convention affirm and lift up "A Children's Charter for the Church" as a continuing vision of The Episcopal Church's ministry in nurturing children, ministering to and advocating on behalf of children, and supporting children in their ministries, remembering that "it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs" (Mark 10:14 NRSV); and be it further

Resolved, That the 73rd General Convention ask each diocese to continue to build awareness and increase implementation of "A Children's Charter for the Church," and live out its vision locally.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Denver, 2000* (New York: General Convention, 2001), p. 297.



Resolution Number: 1997-B005
Title: Adopt Statement "A Children's Charter for the Church"
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Submitted
Final Text:

*Resolved, That the 72nd General Convention of The Episcopal Church adopt "A Children's Charter for the Church" as a vision of children's ministries; and be it further
Resolved, That the 72nd General Convention request that each diocese study "A Children's Charter for the Church," and live out its vision locally.*

A CHILDREN'S CHARTER FOR THE CHURCH

Nurture of the child

Children are a heritage from the LORD, and the fruit of the womb is a gift. Psalm 127:4

The church is called to

- receive, nurture and treasure each child as a gift from God;
- proclaim the Gospel to children, in ways that empower them to receive and respond to God's love;
- give high priority to the quality of planning for children and the preparation and support of those who minister with them;
- include children, in fulfillment of the Baptismal Covenant, as members and full participants in the Eucharistic community and in the church's common life of prayer, witness and service.

Ministry to the child

Then Jesus took the children in his arms, placed his hands on each of them and blessed them. Mark 10:16

The church is called to

- love, shelter, protect and defend children within its own community and in the world, especially those who are abused, neglected or in danger;
- nurture and support families in caring for their children, acting in their children's best interest, and recognizing and fostering their children's spirituality and unique gifts;
- embrace children who seek Christian nurture independently of their parents' participation in the Church;
- advocate for the integrity of childhood and the dignity of all children at every level of our religious, civic and political structures.

Ministry of the child

A little child shall lead them. Isaiah 11:6

The church is called to

- **receive children's special gifts as signs of the Reign of God;**
- **foster community beyond the family unit, in which children, youth and adults know each other by name, minister to each other, and are partners together in serving Christ in the world;**
- **appreciate children's abilities and readiness to represent Christ and his Church, to bear witness to him wherever they may be, and according to gifts given them, to carry on Christ's work of reconciliation in the world, and to take their place in the life, worship, and governance of the Church. (Ministry of the Laity BCP p.855)**

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Philadelphia, 1997* (New York: General Convention, 1998), p. 744.



Resolution Number: 1991-A125
Title: Renew Commitment and Ministry to Children
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, the House of Bishops concurring, **That the Church be called upon to renew this Church's commitment to God's gift of children;** and be it further

Resolved, **That a high priority be given to ministry with and on behalf of children and youth, particularly those at risk;** and be it further

Resolved, **That each congregation provide an environment in which children and young people, regardless of social or economic status, may be encouraged and enabled to grow to the fullness of their potential.**

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Phoenix, 1991* (New York: General Convention, 1992), p. 252.



Resolution Number: 1991-B052
Title: Establish a Committee on Sexual Exploitation
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, the House of Deputies concurring, **That the 70th General Convention of the Episcopal Church declares that sexual abuse, exploitation, coercion, and harassment of adults and minors by clergy and church employees are abuses of trust, a violation of the Baptismal Covenant, contrary to Christian Character, and are therefore wrong;** and be it further

Resolved, **That the 70th General Convention of the Episcopal Church establish a Committee on Sexual Exploitation to be appointed by the Presiding Bishop and the President of the House of Deputies to work with the Office of Pastoral Development. It shall be the duty of the Committee on Sexual Exploitation to study, educate, develop curriculum, and propose policy and standards of conduct on sexual abuse, exploitation, coercion, and harassment, and to advise the Office of Pastoral Development as resource persons. The membership of the committee is to be representative as to sex, race and ethnic diversity. The Committee will report to the 71st General Convention.**

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Phoenix, 1991* (New York: General Convention, 1992), p. 783.



Resolution Number: 1991-D105
Title: Educate Children for Protection Against Sexual Abuse
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, the House of Deputies concurring, **That the 70th General Convention of the Episcopal Church recommend that all dioceses, congregations, and church schools provide age-appropriate educational programs for children and youth for protection against sexual abuse;** and be it further
Resolved, **That the Executive Council be charged with identifying existing resources, informing dioceses of these resources and reporting back to the 71st General Convention on the progress and participation in this program.**

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Phoenix, 1991* (New York: General Convention, 1992), p. 842.



Resolution Number: 1988-D163
Title: Request Resources and Advocacy on Behalf of Children
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Submitted
Final Text:

Resolved, the House of Deputies concurring, **That the Children's Advocacy Committee provide appropriate resources for the Church to be responsive to the needs, issues, stresses and decisions relating to children;** and be it further

Resolved, **That the Children's Advocacy Committee develop ways for the Church to act as an advocate (including legislative advocacy) on behalf of children.**

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Detroit, 1988* (New York: General Convention, 1989), p. 693.



Resolution Number: 1985-B014
Title: Direct Bishops to Establish Workshops for Clergy on Child Abuse
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, the House of Deputies concurring, **That where legally and pastorally appropriate, each Bishop be requested to direct an appropriate body within his diocese to establish and conduct training workshops for clergy to enable better recognition of the indications of child abuse and child sexual abuse, and for the purpose of orienting the clergy to their own community's resources for dealing with this sensitive issue; and be it further**

Resolved, **That said workshops be repeated periodically in each diocese in order that new clergy be included.**

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Anaheim, 1985* (New York: General Convention, 1986), p. 594.

TOPIC/TITLE: Sexual Misconduct: Implementation of Sexual Abuse Misconduct Prevention Training

PROPOSER: Mrs. Barbara T. Ross

C&C PAGE:

BB PAGE:

1 Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, That the 76th General Convention direct the
2 Center for Evangelism and Congregational Life to continue the work of the directives of
3 the 74th General Convention to, "commit to develop clear and firm policies and
4 procedures for the well-being of all; and to commit this Church to being and becoming a
5 place where children and youth are safe, especially from abuse and neglect" particularly
6 in dioceses that have been unable to implement this call; and be it further

7
8 Resolved, That the 76th General Convention request the Joint Standing Committee on
9 Program, Budget and Finance consider a budget allocation of \$20,000 for the
10 implementation of the Resolution during the 2010-2012 triennium; and be it further

11
12 Resolved, That the 76th General Convention request the Center for Evangelism and
13 Congregational Life report to the Standing Commission on Lifelong Christian Formation
14 and Education before the 77th General Convention on the status of diocesan training and
15 implementation.

EXPLANATION:

The request to the 74th General Convention was well received and has been implemented in a great number of dioceses, however there are still a number of dioceses which because of financial, resource and geographic issues have been unable to fully comply with the call to protect the least among us from abuse. The Center for Evangelism and Congregational Life is uniquely qualified to assist with the implementation of the call from the 74th General Convention. Although the 74th GC passed the resolution there is still a significant lag in implementation in some dioceses, not because of a lack of desire to implement but a lack of ability to bring together the necessary resources. This resolution provides funding to send trainers to dioceses that are unable to fund their own training programs. Safeguarding God's Children has become a standard program for child abuse prevention in The Episcopal Church but a number of dioceses in the Church lack the financial means to implement the program. With these funds the Center for Evangelism and Congregational Life can assist dioceses in developing and adopting policies for the protection of children and youth from abuse that address the following: 1. A screening and selection process for all

Endorser(s): Rev. J. Philip Purser, The Rev. Kathy M. Lutes

Review Status: Not Yet Reviewed by PB&F

clergy, lay employees, and volunteers who regularly work with children or youth 2. The articulation of behavioral standards for clergy, lay employees, and volunteers working with children or youth3. The monitoring of programs and interaction with children and youth 4. Education and training5. Guidelines for responding to concerns General Convention, Journal of the General Convention of The Episcopal Church, Minneapolis, MN 2003 (New York: General Convention, 2004), pp. 255-257.

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