

RESOLUTION – CHILD AND YOUTH ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY HOLSTON CONFERENCE

Adopted: June 16, 2004

Whereas Jesus' call to all who believe stated in part that "whoever welcomes (a) child ... welcomes me" (Matthew 18:6) thus acknowledging the importance of children and youth in God's Kingdom; and

Whereas the physical and emotional safety, as well as the spiritual growth of all God's children and youth, is a priority of the Holston Annual Conference; and

Whereas the Holston Annual Conference is committed to the holistic well being of each child, youth, and adult entrusted to said conference through its organization and individual congregations; and

Whereas these congregations, districts, and agencies in ministry are often entrusted with children and youth by their families; and

Whereas the resolution *Reducing the Risk of Child Sexual Abuse in the Church* was adopted in 1996 and reaffirmed in 2000 by the General Conference of The United Methodist Church, thus becoming the impetus for all Annual Conferences and congregations to implement child and youth abuse prevention policies; and

Whereas the General Board of Discipleship has identified *Safe Sanctuaries*, for both children and youth, as an official resource of The United Methodist Church equipping churches to develop a child and youth abuse prevention policy;

Therefore be it resolved: that the Holston Annual Conference adopt the following as its Child and Youth Abuse Prevention Policy.

Every pastoral charge, each district, and any agency of the Holston Annual Conference that relates to children and youth in its programming or oversight shall create a Child Abuse Prevention Policy with accompanying implementation procedures by Charge Conference 2005. Toward that end, conference-wide and district training sessions will be offered by the Office of Connectional Ministries between June 2004 and Charge Conferences in 2005. A copy of the policy shall be on file in the charge's District Office. Administrative bodies of the local charges shall be responsible for implementing, monitoring, and reviewing the policy and accompanying procedures.

In conclusion, in all of our ministries with children and youth, this Conference is committed to demonstrating the love of Jesus Christ so that each child will be "...surrounded by steadfast love, ...established in the faith, and confirmed and strengthened in the way that leads to life eternal" (*Baptismal Covenant II, United Methodist Hymnal*, p. 44). This Child and Youth Abuse Prevention Policy demonstrates our commitment to the physical safety and spiritual growth of all of our children and youth.

~ DAN GRAY, *Conference Youth Coordinator*
~ ANITA HENDERLIGHT, *Conference Children's Coordinator*
~ ANNE TRAVIS, *Director of Connectional Ministries*