

The 31st General Synod of the United Church of Christ adopted this resolution with 91% in favor in 2017

ON CORPORAL PUNISHMENT OF CHILDREN IN HOMES AND INSTITUTIONS
A Resolution of Witness

Text of the Motion:

Whereas Jesus called for society to honor children for “of such is the kingdom of God,”
Luke 18:16

Whereas Jesus said that harming “the least of these my brethren” was an offense against
Him, Matthew 25:40

Whereas the United Church of Christ has approved the National Council of Churches’
Social Creed for the 21st Century, which states that “we honor the dignity of every person” as
created in the divine image and therefore “commit ourselves to a culture of peace and
freedom that embraces nonviolence” and “nurtures character,”

Whereas the United Church of Christ is committed to working for a world safe for children
and free from violence, 95-GS-56 Resolution of Witness

Whereas corporal punishment models aggressive behavior as a solution to conflict and sends
a message that hitting smaller and weaker people is acceptable,

Whereas corporal punishment is degrading and traumatizing to children and often leads to
physical injury,

Whereas corporal punishment may produce short-term compliance but is subsequently less
effective, leading frustrated caretakers to inflict more severe forms of punishment,

Whereas some research has associated corporal punishment with chronic depression and
increased crime, violence, substance abuse, anxiety and aggression in children and adults,

Whereas children must eventually develop their own conscience and self-discipline which
are fostered by home environment of respect, trust, love and self-control,

Whereas schools and child-care centers should inspire children to enjoy learning and feel
safe and affirmed,

Whereas corporal punishment in schools is disproportionately used on poor children,
minorities, children with disabilities, and boys,

Whereas 19 states, including Indiana and Kentucky, allow corporal punishment in schools
and childcare facilities,

Whereas in the 2013 2014 school year Indiana had 239 cases of corporal punishment and Kentucky had 823,

Whereas the Churches' Network for Non-violence, Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children, United Methodist Church, and Presbyterian Church USA oppose corporal punishment,

Therefore, be it resolved that the Thirty-first General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls for state and local governments to prohibit corporal punishment in schools, juvenile detention centers, group homes, mental health institutions and child-caring facilities;

Be it further resolved that the Thirty-first General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls upon member churches to make resources available on Christian parenting that include alternatives to corporal punishment.