

The 31<sup>st</sup> 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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.