

RESOLUTION #3: Safe Haven Guidelines for Children, Youth and Adults Within Each Congregation in the Rocky Mountain Synod

Adopted at Rocky Mountain Synod Assembly May 27-29, 2010

WHEREAS, in Baptism the congregation promises to support and pray for the baptized in a new life in Christ:
and

WHEREAS, through Baptism we are entrusted with the great responsibility to live together as God's faithful people; and

WHEREAS, Jesus said, "Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God . . ." (Mark 19:14, Luke 18:16); and

WHEREAS, God calls us to be a cross-generational community of faith and because young people are the most important gifts God entrusts to us, therefore it is vital to our ministry with families, outreach to our neighbors and our testimony to the wider church and world that the church takes seriously its responsibility to protect its children and the adults who care for them so all may flourish physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually;
and

WHEREAS, congregations are influential institutions in our communities, therefore every congregation needs guidelines in place to protect their children, youth, the vulnerable and adults from abuse of any kind; and

WHEREAS, creating a Safe Haven is a lifelong process of learning, caring and keeping our promises, therefore we desire our families, our immediate community, the wider church and the world to know we establish places where children are safe and we create ministry where children can flourish and adults are caring and trusted;
and

WHEREAS, each congregation lives out its faith in a unique context and a unique community, therefore each congregation is encouraged to follow basic, general guidelines established by the synod, but each congregation's policy will be their own and like no other;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that each congregation will be encouraged to create a Safe Haven Team and to establish basic Safe Haven guidelines, unique to each congregation's context and ministry, by the date of the 2012 Rocky Mountain Synod assembly; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Rocky Mountain Synod will create a basic, but comprehensive, Safe Haven checklist; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that each congregation's Safe Haven team will use the Safe Haven guidelines, or checklist, established by the synod as a guide; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that each congregation will train the adults who work with children and the vulnerable in one's midst, to practice these Safe Haven guidelines regularly; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that each congregation will hold youth, young adults and adults accountable to the Safe Haven guidelines created by that congregation and unique to that congregation's context and ministry;
and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that each congregation will seek out ways to support families and educate new members related to the Safe Haven guidelines established by that congregation; and