

AID TO VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND THEIR FAMILIES

Amended Resolution Adopted by Convention Delegates April 2023

Adopted by Convention Delegates October 13, 1977

Reviewed and deemed relevant November 2017

- WHEREAS, Sexual violence is a crime against children as well as adults, with long-lasting effects on the victims and survivors and their families; and
- WHEREAS, Black, Indigenous and People of Color as well as members of the LGBTQIA+ community are disproportionately represented in sexual violence data; and,
- WHEREAS, The social stigma associated with the crime of sexual violence creates needless guilt and suffering for victims and survivors and their families; and
- WHEREAS, Resources have been developed to provide assistance to the victims and survivors of sexual violence and their families; and
- WHEREAS, PTA units, councils, and districts can assist by informing their communities of locally provided services; and
- WHEREAS, National PTA addresses the subject of sexual violence in a resolution titled **Response to Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence Affecting Students**, adopted by the 2014 board of directors that focuses on schools providing services for victims and survivors and presenting awareness and prevention programs; now therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** That PTA urge its units, councils and districts to educate parents regarding sexual violence in its many forms and that it happens in every community affecting people of all genders and ages with disproportionate representation by Black, Indigenous and People of Color as well as members of the LGBTQIA+ community; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That PTA units or councils and/or districts work to assure that adequate and appropriate services for victims and survivors of sexual violence and their families are available in the community; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That PTA promote the awareness of community services available to victims and survivors of sexual violence and their families; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That PTA units, councils, and districts collaborate with school administrations, institutions of higher learning, and community partners to ensure that every school provides support services for victims and survivors of sexual violence and presents age-appropriate awareness and prevention programs that address sexual violence affecting students; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That the California State PTA advocate for legislation that will provide for appropriate services to victims and survivors of sexual violence and their families.

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BACKGROUND SUMMARY

Sexual violence is a broad term that describes behaviors and actions that are sexual in nature and are unwanted, coerced, and committed without consent. It may also be known as sexual assault, rape, sexual abuse, exploitation, incest, date rape, and human trafficking. Sexual violence also includes sexual harassment, indecent exposure, forced sexual acts between children, stalking, showing or distributing sexual images without consent, and other forms of online violence or misogyny. Research has demonstrated that sexual violence is widespread and has traumatic and long-lasting effects, not only on the victims, but also on their families. Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, as well as members of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersexual, Asexual/Aromantic/Agender (LGBTQIA+) community, are disproportionately represented in the data.

Sexual violence is preventable through the collaboration of community members at multiple levels of society—in our homes, neighborhoods, schools, faith settings, workplaces, and elsewhere. We all play a role in preventing sexual violence and establishing norms of respect, safety, equality, and service to others. Based on data regarding the impact of sexual violence on victims and their families, our support and advocacy are essential. Currently, there are many groups that provide immediate services to victims of sexual violence and their families, but unless these groups are in every community, well known and called upon, needless emotional suffering will continue.

The California State PTA, with its mission to positively impact the lives of all children and families, is in a unique position to be of assistance as it has the ability to:

- Work to educate people about the importance of understanding what sexual violence is, that it affects children as well as adults, how our culture enables it, and the impact it can have on a victim/survivor and those around them.
- Work with school districts to help create and maintain safe learning environments for all of our children and youth.
- Advocate for comprehensive local, state, and national legislation that protects all victims of sexual violence and their families.
- Seek out available community organizations and facilities and make their purpose and functions known to all families in the community. Where no facility exists, the PTA can be instrumental in working with outside organizations, such as the county department of health, to ensure the availability of such services.