

Representative Andrew Stoddard proposes the following substitute bill:

**JOINT RESOLUTION ENCOURAGING DISCUSSION ON
THE EFFECTS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE**

2021 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Andrew Stoddard

Senate Sponsor: Todd D. Weiler

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This joint resolution encourages discussion about the effects and prevention of child sexual abuse.

Highlighted Provisions:

This resolution:

- ▶ acknowledges the widespread nature of child sexual abuse in Utah;
- ▶ explains the impact of child sexual abuse on victims and communities;
- ▶ encourages discussion about the effects and prevalence of child sexual abuse; and
- ▶ encourages discussion about ways in which the government, communities, and

citizens of Utah can prevent child sexual abuse and support those affected.

Special Clauses:

None

Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah:

WHEREAS, in Utah, it is estimated that one in 10 children will be sexually abused before they turn 18 years old;

WHEREAS, a report on rape in Utah published in 2007 by the Utah Commission on



26 Criminal and Juvenile Justice found that almost 80% of females who had been sexually
27 assaulted reported that their first sexual assault occurred before their 18th birthday;

28 WHEREAS, victims of child sexual abuse are about four times more likely to develop
29 symptoms of drug abuse and experience Post Traumatic Stress Disorder as adults;

30 WHEREAS, victims of child sexual abuse are about three times more likely to
31 experience a major depressive episode as adults;

32 WHEREAS, victims of child sexual abuse are at a higher risk of experiencing
33 behavioral health problems, including eating disorders, learning difficulties, fearfulness, social
34 withdrawal, anxiety, and suicidal thoughts;

35 WHEREAS, victims of child sexual abuse are at a higher risk of experiencing poor
36 physical health outcomes across the lifespan, including asthma, cancer, obesity, and heart
37 disease;

38 WHEREAS, advocacy organizations such as Prevent Child Abuse Utah have indicated
39 that raising awareness of and preventing child sexual abuse is critical for promoting safe and
40 healthy children and families across Utah;

41 WHEREAS, experts have also urged that stopping child sexual abuse is each adult's
42 responsibility and requires the public to be properly educated on the true nature of abuse; and

43 WHEREAS, Utah statute requires an individual who has reason to believe a child has
44 been subjected to abuse or neglect, or observes a child being subjected to conditions or
45 circumstances that would reasonably result in abuse or neglect, to report the alleged abuse or
46 neglect to the certain authorities:

47 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah
48 encourages open and frank discussion about the effects and prevalence of child sexual abuse
49 and supports evidence-based solutions to prevent and reduce the harmful impacts of child
50 sexual abuse.

51 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the ways in which the government, communities,
52 and citizens of Utah can prevent child sexual abuse and best support those affected should be
53 further discussed and addressed to ensure that children in Utah are healthy and safe, regardless
54 of race, ethnicity, religion, sex, gender identity, or socioeconomic status.