



## SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

### Position Statement Adopted: 10/29/02

All human beings are created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:26-27) and thus are created with an inherent dignity. Sexual exploitation is destructive of human dignity and God's good gift of sexuality.

Sexual exploitation is destructive of human relationships. It separates sex from mutual relationships of love. It objectifies the individual person, undermining the inherent dignity of all human beings. Oftentimes, it reduces sexuality to a marketable commodity.

Sexual exploitation has a commercial side which includes: prostitution (buying or selling sex on streets, brothels, massage parlors, saunas, bars, and escort services), pornography (buying or selling demeaning sexual images in movies, videos, magazines, internet, cable, and phone sex), and stripping (buying or selling live sexual performances in strip clubs, adult theaters, bars, peep shows, and private parties). The driving force of sexual exploitation is the exchange of sexual activity for money. Sex is the commodity; money is the motivation. Customers are simply a means to a profit. They, too, are being exploited. All the participants are exploited: the <sup>3</sup>users<sup>2</sup> and the <sup>3</sup>used.<sup>2</sup>

### *Citizen Action*

Sexual exploitation is pervasive, even in mainstream media--television, advertisements, radio, magazines, and pop music. Much of this is an inevitable outcome of a free and open society and is not subject to regulation or censorship. Communities of faith and others, however, are well within their rights to organize and challenge sexual exploitation in the media or in the neighborhood by citizen action.

Moreover, families, faith communities, and other institutions/agencies whose express mission includes the nurture and development of children and youth are encouraged to take

**Montana Association of Churches**

American Baptist Churches of the Northwest \* Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ) in Montana  
Episcopal Church Diocese of Montana \* Evangelical Lutheran Church in America-Montana Synod  
Presbyterian Church (USA)-Glacier Presbytery \* Presbyterian Church (USA)-Yellowstone Presbytery  
Roman Catholic Diocese of Great Falls-Billings \* Roman Catholic Diocese of Helena  
United Church of Christ of Montana-Northern Wyoming Conference \* United Methodist Church Yellowstone Conference