



## HOW TO USE RESOURCES

Everywhere you look statistics are in our world. One out of four children do this or, 75 percent of children do that. How do we look at these numbers and issues and make sense of them? How do we approach legislators and make an impact with good information? Should you pass on bad information, it will be a long time before you get called upon again or trusted by that legislator. So what is good and bad information?

### **Bad Information**

- ▶ based on anecdotes or guesses
- ▶ based on faulty statistics
- ▶ unclear and/ or sensationalized
- ▶ outdated information
- ▶ statistics without a source reference
- ▶ make comparisons (apples to oranges)

### **Good Information**

- ▶ states solid facts
- ▶ annotated statistics that can be understood
- ▶ up to date information (for most issues this is within a year)
- ▶ cites stories as personal and has solid grounding to develop a position
- ▶ states clearly who is responsible for information
- ▶ uses few acronyms (whenever used, the whole name can easily be found in the beginning)
- ▶ states specifically and clearly what you want the legislator to do or what position you are taking
- ▶ uses statistics which correlate to each other (apples to apples)



## **Social Statements of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

Social statements are major documents, adopted by the ELCA Churchwide Assembly, addressing significant social issues. Since 1991 the ELCA has adopted seven social statements. You can read and download these social statements by clicking on the links. For more information on what social statements are and how they are developed, go to “[Addressing Social Issues.](#)” Need to download and print a statement? Use the “Print-Friendly” versions.

**Abortion** (Print-Friendly Version)

Adopted in 1991 at the second biennial Churchwide Assembly

**Caring for Creation** (Print-Friendly Version)

Adopted in 1993 at the third biennial Churchwide Assembly

**The Church in Society** (Print-Friendly Version)

Adopted in 1991 at the second biennial Churchwide Assembly

**The Death Penalty** (Print-Friendly Version)

Adopted in 1991 at the second biennial Churchwide Assembly

**For Peace in God’s World** (Print-Friendly Version)

Adopted in 1995 at the fourth biennial Churchwide Assembly

**Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity and Culture** (Print-Friendly Version)

Adopted in 1993 at the third biennial Churchwide Assembly

**Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All** (Print-Friendly Version)

Adopted in 1999 at the sixth biennial Churchwide Assembly

To find these please go to - <http://www.elca.org/dcs/socialstatements.html>

## ABOUT WEB PAGES

More and more of us are using the Internet as a primary source of information and statistics around a variety of issues. Where do we start and how do we get the needed information, especially when it comes to understanding ELCA policies.

The first place to go is to the ELCA Web site [www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org) and LOGA Web site [www.loga.org](http://www.loga.org). You will find this a source of information about issues, links to resources both within ELCA and within like minded organizations. The division which houses advocacy work is the Division for Church in Society – [www.elca.org/dcs.html](http://www.elca.org/dcs.html).

Once you have checked out these ELCA sites, visit the other parts of the advocacy department:

DCS Advocacy Page	<a href="http://www.elca.org/dcs/advocacy.html">www.elca.org/dcs/advocacy.html</a>
DCS Advocacy Plan	<a href="http://www.loga.org/advocacyplan/AdvocacyIndex.html">www.loga.org/advocacyplan/AdvocacyIndex.html</a>
Corporate Social Responsibility	<a href="http://www.elca.org/dcs/corp.html">www.elca.org/dcs/corp.html</a>
Lutheran Office for World Community	<a href="http://www.elca.org/dcs/lowc.html">www.elca.org/dcs/lowc.html</a>

### State Public Policy Offices

California	<a href="http://www.lutheranpublicpolicyca.org">www.lutheranpublicpolicyca.org</a>
Colorado	<a href="http://www.logmco.org">www.logmco.org</a>
Michigan	<a href="http://www.lssm.org">www.lssm.org</a>
Minnesota	<a href="http://www.lcppm.org">www.lcppm.org</a>
Nevada	<a href="http://www.lamn.org">www.lamn.org</a>
New Jersey	<a href="http://www.concentric.net/~logmnj/">www.concentric.net/~logmnj/</a>
New Mexico	<a href="http://www.logmnm.org">www.logmnm.org</a>
New York	<a href="http://www.lsa-ny.org">www.lsa-ny.org</a>
Pennsylvania	<a href="http://www.lamp.org">www.lamp.org</a>
Washington	<a href="http://www.loppw.org">www.loppw.org</a>

Look toward our partners in advocacy:

Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service	<a href="http://www.lirs.org">www.lirs.org</a>
Lutheran World Relief	<a href="http://www.lwr.org">www.lwr.org</a>
Lutheran Services in America	<a href="http://www.lutheranservices.org">www.lutheranservices.org</a>
Women of the ELCA	<a href="http://www.elca.org/wo">www.elca.org/wo</a>

Visit other ELCA divisions by going to the main ELCA site at [www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org) and look through the selected topics.

One area to move to would be our full communion partner churches. You can visit their Web sites:

The Episcopal Church	<i>www.ecusa.anglican.org</i>
Moravian Church	<i>www.moravian.org</i>
Presbyterian Church (USA)	<i>www.pcusa.org</i>
Reformed Church in America	<i>www.rca.org</i>
United Church of Christ	<i>www.ucc.org</i>

Next you can move on to government web sites and then onto non-profit organizations which may have similar positions to the ELCA.

Now you are ready to further explore the web. Expanding your search yet knowing how this fits with ELCA thought can get complicated. Using a search engine (such as yahoo, alta vista, or goggle) can bring lots of information. It may or may not answer your question and it may actually present opposing viewpoints to ELCA positions.

How do you evaluate if the Web site is in keeping with an ELCA position? Remember that statistics can be used in various ways to support differing positions.

When you go to a web site:

1. Determine why the site was developed. What is the motivation behind placing this information on the Web? Do we have an ELCA Social Statement that supports this position?
2. If you don't know or can't determine a position, do a search to see what others say about the group. Look at the labels others attach to their work or position. Remember to check the LOGA Web site to see if they are a link in the issue section.
3. Look at the language used. For example, is it gun control or anti-gun campaigns, tax relief or tax cuts? Some of the language should give you a hint as to the position.
4. If you are still confused, phone or write LOGA or your state public policy office.

## WEB SITE RESOURCES

Our lives have changed with the World Wide Web at our fingertips. The amount of information available is staggering. With so much out there it is often hard to know what sites to trust.

*Research can always begin at:*

- ▶ Evangelical Lutheran Church in America: [www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org)
- ▶ Division for Church in Society, ELCA: [www.elca.org/dcs](http://www.elca.org/dcs)
- ▶ Advocacy Department of the Division for Church in Society, ELCA: [www.elca.org/dcs/advocacy.html](http://www.elca.org/dcs/advocacy.html)
- ▶ Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs, ELCA: [www.loga.org](http://www.loga.org)

*In addition you may want to search the following sites.*

Administrative - government information: [www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov)

Alliance for Children and Families: [www.alliance1.org](http://www.alliance1.org)

Bread for the World: [www.bread.org](http://www.bread.org)

Census Bureau - Poverty: [www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty.html](http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty.html)

Center for Community Change to the Welfare Group: [www.communitychange.org](http://www.communitychange.org)

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities - Click Federal Welfare on side panel: [www.cbpp.org](http://www.cbpp.org)

Center on Law and Social Policy: [www.clasp.org](http://www.clasp.org) Review their monthly publication

Child Trends (Studies Children, Youth and Families): [www.childtrends.org](http://www.childtrends.org)

Children's Defense Fund - Click on fair start: [www.childrensdefense.org](http://www.childrensdefense.org)

Coalition on Human Needs: [www.chn.org](http://www.chn.org)

Disarmament and peace voting records: [www.clw.org](http://www.clw.org)

Economic Policy Institute: [www.epinet.org](http://www.epinet.org)

Environment: [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov)

Environmental legislation - how members voted: [www.lcv.org](http://www.lcv.org)

Families USA (Health Care): [www.familiesusa.org](http://www.familiesusa.org)

Federal Statistics: [www.fedstats.gov](http://www.fedstats.gov)

Food Research and Action Center (Hunger Policy): [www.frac.org](http://www.frac.org)

House contact and legislative information: [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov)

Institute for Research on Poverty - University of Wisconsin, Madison: [www.ssc.wisc.edu/irp](http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/irp)

Joint Center for Poverty Research - Chicago and Northwestern Universities: [www.jcpr.org](http://www.jcpr.org)

Library of Congress legislative information - <http://thomas.loc.gov>

National Association of Child Advocates: [www.childadvocacy.org](http://www.childadvocacy.org)

National Center for Children in Poverty - Columbia University:  
<http://cpmcnet.columbia.edu/dept/nccp/>

National Governor's Association - Click Welfare Reform: [www.nga.org](http://www.nga.org)

National Low Income Housing Coalition: [www.nlihc.org](http://www.nlihc.org)

New York Times service which connects you with the site to write your member:  
<http://congress.nw.dc.us/nyt>

Senate contact and legislative information: [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov)

State Policy Documentation Project: a joint project of the Center for Law and Social Policy and the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities regarding welfare reform: [www.spdp.org](http://www.spdp.org)

Third Annual Report to Congress, Department of Health and Human Services:  
[www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/opre/annual3.doc](http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/opre/annual3.doc)

Urban Institute - Click welfare reform - also on logo, Assessing the New Federalism:  
[www.urban.org](http://www.urban.org) and [www.federalism.urban.org](http://www.federalism.urban.org)

U.S. Congressional Budget Office: [www.cbo.gov](http://www.cbo.gov)

Welfare Information Network: [www.welfareinfo.org](http://www.welfareinfo.org)