



Honor Thy Children

Archdiocese of Louisville continuing education for the awareness and prevention of child abuse

WHAT EXACTLY IS CHILD ABUSE?

Prevention starts with understanding

People who sexually abuse children are likely to be people we know, and could even be people we care about. It would be easy to figure out who sexually abuses children if they were like the ones we see on TV—those strangers hanging around the edges of playgrounds, or the “monsters,” who kidnap and kill children. But truthfully, they’re hardly ever like that.

Most often people who sexually abuse children—both those who’ve been reported and those who haven’t—are fathers, mothers, step-parents, grandparents, and other family members (uncles, aunts, cousins). Or they’re neighbors, babysitters, clergy, teachers, coaches, or anyone else who has close contact with our children.

We can’t tell who they are by the way they look. What they have in common is that they think about sexual interactions with children and then they act on those thoughts by sexually abusing a child. We know that

child sexual abuse happens every day across the country, with little regard for social classes, racial or ethnic groups, religious affiliations, or sexual orientation. That means that adults and youth who have sexually abused a child live in the same neighborhoods, shop in the same stores, and use the same parks that we do. We may know them personally as part of our family or extended family, or in our circle of friends and neighbors. But we may not know about their sexual interests in kids.

It’s hard to face the fact that someone we know and like might sexually abuse children. But because it’s true, we all need to know what to look for and how to make sure that everyone we know lives up to an expectation of safety in our homes and communities. Child abuse includes touching and non touching behaviors. Touching behaviors include touching a child’s genitals (penis, testicles, vulva, breasts, or anus) for sexual pleasure or other

unnecessary purpose. Making a child touch someone else’s genitals, or playing sexual (“pants-down”) games. Putting objects or body parts (like fingers, tongue or a penis) inside the vulva or vagina, in the mouth, or in the anus of a child for sexual pleasure or other unnecessary purpose. Non touching behaviors Exposing a person’s genitals to a child. Asking children to interact sexually with one another. Online enticement of a child for sexual purposes. Photographing a child in sexual purposes. Exposing a child to adult sexual activity in person or through the use of technology. Watching a child undress or use the bathroom, often without the child’s knowledge (known as voyeurism or being a “Peeping Tom”).

If you see or suspect anything, report it immediately. If you have any questions or concerns you can always contact Ms. Martine Siegel at 502.636.1044

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If you need support or someone to talk to:

- ☺ Prevent Child Abuse Kentucky or Indiana: 800.CHILDREN/800.422.4453 www.pcaky.org www.pcaain.org
- ☺ Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline 800.4.A.CHILD 800.422.4453 www.childhelp.org

Signs of Possible Sexual Abuse

- Unexplained pain, itching, redness or bleeding in the genital area
- Increased nightmares or bedwetting
- Withdrawn behavior
- Angry outbursts/mood swings
- Loss of appetite or difficulty swallowing
- Sudden/unexplained avoidance of certain people or places
- Sexual knowledge, language or behavior that is unusual for the child’s age.

HONOR THY CHILDREN TRAINING

Those employed or volunteering with youth must undergo a background check every 5 years as well as attend the "Honor Thy Children Training" that addresses child abuse, how to recognize it and how to report it. See your parish/school Safe Environment Coordinator if you have not sat-

isfied either of these requirements. The "Honor Thy Children" training is a one time requirement and is normally completed within 30 days of beginning service. Each training session lasts 2 hours. The background check MUST be completed BEFORE any service/employment begins.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT COORDINATORS

Some friendly reminders for Safe Environment Coordinators.

Before submitting a background check, be sure to ask the member if they've already had a

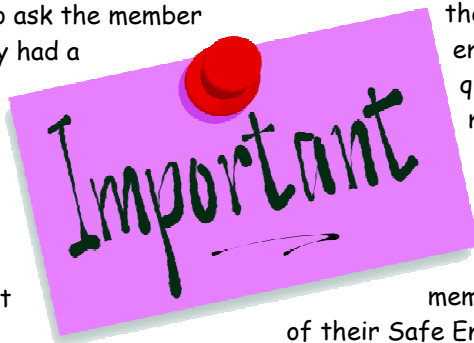
background check submitted via selection.com (this would be August 2014 and later).

If unsure contact Scott Fitzgerald

(fitzgerald@archlou.org) or

502.471.2132 to check the status.

We also no longer accept outside Safe Environment Trainings. Reason being is we have a Code of Conduct specific to the Archdiocese of Louisville that is reviewed in the training and the member ultimately signs off that they understand.



As always if you are filling out the background check form in it's entirety for a member (as opposed to

them doing it via an email link) you are required to have the member sign a release form and you need to maintain this form on file.

Also remind your members to return a copy of their Safe Environment Completion Certificate to you after they complete the Safe Environment training. Should you have any questions or concerns don't hesitate to contact Scott Fitzgerald Coordinator of Safe Environment Services via email (fitzgerald@archlou.org) or by phone 50.471.2132.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Because there's an element of emotional abuse in all other types of child abuse and neglect, it can be difficult to spot the signs and to separate what's emotional abuse from other types of abuse. Emotional abuse includes:

- humiliating or constantly criticizing a child
- threatening, shouting at a child or calling them names
- making the child the subject of

- jokes, or using sarcasm to hurt a child
- blaming, scapegoating
- making a child perform degrading acts
- not recognizing a child's own individuality, trying to control their lives
- pushing a child too hard or not recognizing their limitations
- exposing a child to distressing events or interactions such as domestic abuse or drug taking

UPCOMING TRAININGS

A current list of trainings is always available at www.archlou.org/safe
All trainings are at 6:30p unless otherwise indicated.

1.25.16

St. Joseph (Bardstown)

1.30.16 (8:30 am)

*Male High School
(small gymnasium)*

2.1.16

St. Margaret Mary

2.15.16

St. Nicholas Academy

2.25.16

St. Agnes

3.15.16

Holy Trinity-Louisville

More trainings are being scheduled for both February and March and will be posted once confirmed.

Be sure to check archlou.org/safe for a complete list. Dates are subject to change and of course weather delays also effect training dates

- failing to promote a child's social development
 - not allowing them to have friends
 - persistently ignoring them
 - being absent
 - manipulating a child
 - never saying anything kind, expressing positive feelings or congratulating a child on successes
 - never showing any emotions in interactions with a child, also known as emotional neglect.
- Emotional abuse is the 2nd most common reason for children needing protection from abuse.

RISK FACTORS

While child abuse and neglect occurs in all types of families—even in those that look happy from the outside—children are at a much greater risk in certain situations.

Domestic violence. Witnessing domestic violence is terrifying to children and emotionally abusive. Even if the mother does her best to protect her children and keeps them from being physically abused, the situation is still extremely damaging. If you or a loved one is in an abusive relationship, getting out is the best thing for protecting the children.

Alcohol and drug abuse. Living with an alcoholic or addict is very difficult for children and can easily lead to abuse and neglect. Parents who are drunk or high are unable to care for their children, make good parenting decisions, and control often-dangerous impulses. Substance abuse also commonly leads to physical abuse.

Untreated mental illness. Parents who suffering from depression, an anxiety disorder, bipolar disorder, or another mental illness have trouble taking care of themselves, much less their children. A mentally ill or trau-



matized parent may be distant and withdrawn from his or her children, or quick to anger without understanding why. Treatment for the caregiver means better care for the children.

Lack of parenting skills. Some caregivers never learned the skills necessary for good parenting. Teen parents, for example, might have unreal-

istic expectations about how much care babies and small children need. Or parents who were themselves victims of child abuse may only know how to raise their children the way they were raised. In such cases, parenting classes, therapy, and caregiver support groups are great resources for learning better parenting skills.

Stress and lack of support. Parenting can be a very time-intensive, difficult job, especially if you're raising children without support from family, friends, or the community or you're dealing with relationship problems or financial difficulties. Caring for a child with a disability, special needs, or difficult behaviors is also a challenge. It's important to get the support you need, so you are emotionally and physically able to support your child.

ANGER MANAGEMENT

Anger is a normal, healthy emotion, but when chronic, explosive anger spirals out of control, it can have serious consequences for relationships, health, and a leading cause of abuse. With insight about the real reasons for anger and these anger management tools, we can learn to keep tempers in check and help prevent abuse.. The emotion of anger is neither good nor bad. It's perfectly healthy and normal to feel angry when you've been mistreated or wronged. The feeling isn't the problem—it's what you do with it that makes a difference. Anger becomes a problem when it harms you or others.

If you have a hot temper, you may feel like it's out of your hands and there's little you can do to tame the beast. But you have more control over

your anger than you think. You *can* learn to express your emotions without hurting others—and when you do, you'll not only feel better, you'll also be more likely to get your needs met. Mastering the art of anger management takes work, but the more you practice, the easier it will get. And the payoff can be huge. Learning to control your anger and express it appropriately can help you build better relationships, achieve your goals, and lead a healthier, more satisfying life. When you start getting upset about something, take a moment to think about the situation. Ask yourself:

- How important is it in the grand scheme of things?
- Is it really worth getting angry about it?

- Is it worth ruining the rest of my day?
 - Is my response appropriate to the situation?
 - Is there anything I can do about it?
 - Is taking action worth my time?
- Therapy can also be a great way to explore the reasons behind your anger. If you don't know why you are getting angry, it's very hard to control. Therapy provides a safe environment to learn more about your reasons and identify triggers for your anger. It's also a safe place to practice new skills in expressing your anger.
- If you'd like to speak to someone feel free to contact Martine Siegel at 502.636.1044 for a referral.

Archdiocese of Louisville Office of Safe Environment

Martine Bacci Siegel, MSN, RN, CNS
Maloney Center
1200 South Shelby Street
Louisville, KY 40220

Phone: 502.636.1044

Fax: 502.634.3381

E-mail: msiegel@archlou.org

No child or adult should ever experience abuse by anyone, especially a church minister. We all have the right to be treated with dignity and to expect our church to reflect the goodness of God in all of its dealings.

We hope that this information is helpful to all in our communities who are working to prevent and respond to childhood sexual abuse. Please let us know if you need further assistance or information by calling or emailing our victim assistance coordinator, Ms. Martine Siegel, at 502/636-1044; victimassistance@archlou.org or the Chancery at 502/585-3291.

We must heed God's call to care for the most vulnerable among us and to continue our efforts toward wholeness and health in dealing with sexual abuse.

OFTEN OVERLOOKED CAREGIVER ABUSE

We hear a lot about child abuse, but our code of conduct requires background checks on those who work with "vulnerable persons" as well. As per our code of conduct "An adult 18 years or older is considered vulnerable when, because of impairment of mental functions, that person is unable or unlikely to report abuse or neglect without assistance".

Many vulnerable persons are abused in their own homes, in relatives' homes, and even in facilities responsible for their care. If you suspect that an someone is at risk from a neglectful or overwhelmed caregiver, or being preyed upon financially, it's important to speak up. Learn about the warning signs of abuse, what the risk

factors are, and how you can prevent and report the problem. Abuse comes in many forms. Those include emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect or abandonment by caregivers, financial exploitation, and health care fraud and abuse.

At first, you might not recognize or take seriously signs of abuse. In elderly persons they may appear to be symptoms of dementia or signs of frailty—or caregivers may explain them to you that way. In fact, many of the signs and symptoms of elder abuse do overlap with symptoms of mental deterioration, but that doesn't mean you should dismiss them on the caregiver's say-so.

The following are warning signs of

some kind of abuse:

- Frequent arguments or tension between the caregiver and the person.
- Changes in personality or behavior in the person.

If you suspect abuse, but aren't sure, look for some physical and behavioral signs such as unexplained signs of injury, such as bruises, welts, or scars, especially if they appear symmetrically on two side of the body or the caregivers refusal to allow you to see them alone.

If you're feeling overwhelmed with caring for someone seek help through family or friends, even local agencies if only for just a couple of hours.