



# HONOR THY CHILDREN

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

## SUPREME COURT RULES ON CHILD ABUSE REPORTING

*Prevention starts with understanding*

Last month the Supreme Court ruled that teachers' reports of child abuse based on conversations with students can be admitted in court as testimony, despite a defendant's constitutional right to confront his accuser.

The unanimous judgment came in the case of a 3 1/2 year old boy whose wounds became visible to his day care workers. When the mother was questioned, she said her boy-

friend (Darius Clark) was to blame. When asked, the child said "Dee" did it ("Dee" being Darius). At Clark's trial for felonious assault, child endangerment and domestic violence, the child was deemed incompetent to testify. Instead, the day care worker testified to the child's identification of Clark as the perpetrator of his injuries.

Clark argued that the use of hearsay violated his 6th

Amendment right to confront the witnesses against him. The argument also went on to say the statement was testimonial because the day care worker was a mandated reporter and gathering evidence for



the state. While this was rejected at trial, it was adopted on appeal by both the court of appeals and the state supreme court. The Supreme Court reversed those rulings saying the teachers' primary purpose in asking about the abuse was not to help the prosecution, so allowing the testimony did not violate Clark's constitutional rights.

When police take children's statements out of court

and present it at trial, it can violate the confrontation clause but in this case Justice Samuel Alito said the child spoke to teachers immediately after his wounds were discovered, in an emergency setting on

school grounds, not in preparing courtroom testimony. Lily Eskelsen Garcia, president of the National Education Association applauds the decision. "This case could have had a chilling effect on teacher-student

interactions." Lily goes on to say "Teachers aren't cops. To confuse those two roles could have hampered educators' ability to help their students.

Should you ever have any questions or concerns regarding child abuse don't hesitate to call Archdiocese of Louisville Victim Assistance Coordinator Martine Siegel at 502.636.1044 or via email (msiegel@archlou.org).

## Archdiocese of Louisville

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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](http://www.pcaky.org) [www.pcaain.org](http://www.pcaain.org)
- ☺ Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline 800.4.A.CHILD 800.422.4453 [www.childhelp.org](http://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.

## EDUCATING CHILDREN ABOUT CHILD ABUSE

Parents, teachers and other caring adults often teach children guidelines for bike, water and street safety. Children do not become fearful of bicycles, swimming pools and crosswalks as a result of this instruction. Teaching children about sexual abuse is the best way to help keep them safe. Teach them:

- The real names for their body parts, including their private parts, so they can talk about things that happen to their bodies in a way others will understand.
- Not to keep secrets. Tell your children to let you know if a child or adult plays secret games or tells them something bad will happen if they don't keep the secret.
- That adults are not always right. Tell your children to come and talk to you if they don't feel right about something a grown up says or does.
- To tell if something happens. Let your children know that if they say someone has touched them, you will believe them and not be mad at them. Tell them that you love them and will help keep them safe.
- Touching safety can be approached in the same straightforward, matter-of-fact way.

### Repeat simple safety guidelines often.

"If you are touched by a person in a way that you don't feel right about, tell me about it. I will believe you and help you."

"Grownups don't need to touch children in private areas unless it's for health or hygiene reasons."

"Never go away or get into a car with a grownup you don't know, no matter what they tell you."

"Trust your inner voice (instincts, judgments) if it's telling you something doesn't seem right."

Establish your own set of family rules.

"Do not let others know if you are home alone."

"Your opinion is important when we try a new babysitter or have a problem with a babysitter."

"You can say 'no' to anyone who wants you to break one of the family rules. I will back you up."

"You can ride in a car with \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_, but not with anyone else without asking first." manner.

### Play "what ifs" to practice decision making.

"What if you were playing (someplace you aren't supposed to play) and a man or woman tried to make you get into their car?"

"What if you and I got separated at the shopping mall?"

"What if someone we know really well touched you in a confusing way and asked you to keep it a secret?"

"What if an older person offered you money (or something you really wanted) if you would break our family rules?"

### Help children develop assertiveness

### UPCOMING TRAININGS

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

7.20.15

*St. Bernadette*

8.5.15

*Holy Trinity (Louisville) (5p)*

8.10.15

*St. Gregory (Cox's Creek)*

8.11.15

*Assumption High School (1p)*

8.17.15

*Holy Spirit (Louisville)*

8.24.15

*St. Albert the Great*

8.31.15

*St. Dominic (Springfield)*

9.10.15

*St. Augustine (Lebanon)*

9.14.15

*St. Mary School*

*There are additional trainings scheduled. Be sure to check [archlou.org/safe](http://archlou.org/safe) for a complete list. Dates are subject to change and of course weather delays also effect training dates*

### skills. Teach them to respond verbally.

"I don't tell people that."

"I don't want to be tickled. Could we take a walk instead?"

"Leave me alone. I'll tell."

"I'm not allowed to do that."

"No."

# DEALING WITH INTRAFAMILIAL SEX ABUSE

What is Intrafamilial Sexual Abuse? Intrafamilial sexual abuse means sexual abuse that occurs within the family. In this form of abuse, a family member involves a child in (or exposes a child to) sexual behaviors or activities. Dealing with these reactions—and helping your child recover from the abuse—requires time, strength, and support from your extended family, your community, and from professionals in law enforcement, child protection, and mental health services. If you are a parent whose child has been abused by a spouse or boyfriend/girlfriend, it can take a great deal of courage to stand up for your child. Some of the challenges you may face include:

- Dealing with family members who don't believe the abuse occurred or who continue to maintain their relationship with the abuser
- The possibility of economic hardship if you are financially dependent on the abuser
- Possible loss of friends and acquaintances when they learn your partner is a child abuser
- Making sense of conflicting advice from friends, family, or religious lead-

ers—who may think you should forgive the perpetrator—and child protection and legal authorities who expect you to end your involvement with the perpetrator



It is important to remember that power takes many forms, and that your adolescent may have felt coerced in ways that were not directly physical. For example, if your partner is in a position of power and has control over financial resources, over disciplining the adolescent, and over your attitude and reactions to your child, your child may have been afraid that rejecting sexual advances or fighting back would only cause more problems in the family. In fact, many perpetrators "buy" their victims' silence through veiled or overt threats of all the bad things that could happen if their victims disclose the abuse.

Don't let your natural and understandable feelings of confusion and doubt override the fact that the perpetrator is always at fault. If, in the heat of your own pain and distress, you accuse your adolescent of betrayal instead of acknowledging that your child was the victim, he or she may begin to experience dangerous—and potentially damaging—self-doubt. This can be particularly devastating if he or she experienced normal sexual arousal during the abuse, even though it was unwanted and forced. This is not unusual and should not be taken as evidence that the adolescent "wanted" or was seeking out the abuse. Non-offending parents are the single most important resource that children have after they have experienced intrafamilial abuse. As hard as it may be to report sexual abuse that has been perpetrated by a family member, this is the best thing you can do to help your entire family heal, including the person who perpetrated the abuse. If you are not sure who to contact, call the ChildHelp National Child Abuse Hotline at 1.800.4.A.CHILD.

## PARISH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION SAFETY PROGRAMS

While the Speak Up/Be Safe Program offers children in our schools education about sexual abuse, we also offer curriculums to our parish religious education programs. These programs cover basic safe environment information and are complimented by the faith-based content presented in parish catechetical programs. Parish catechetical leaders are asked to introduce new age-appropriate videos to further enhance what is already in place.

The following curriculums are available on a limited basis through the

Family Ministries Office or you may order a copy for yourself.

**SAFE SHEEP IN OUR FLOCK (Grades 1-4):** SAFE SHEEP is a Catholic faith based "safe touch" and general safety program for primary grades. **SAFE SHEEP** is a "safe touch" and general safety program for primary grades. **SAFE SHEEP** delivers the sensitive subjects of "safe touch" with age-appropriate candor presented through engaging animation, ventriloquism, and humor. **(\$100.00 each) ORDER FROM:**

<http://safesheep.org>

**VIOLENCE PREVENTION: Abuse: If It Happens To You (Grades 5-8):**

This program is designed to help young teens understand that abuse, of all types, is more common than they think and if it happens to them, they need to tell a trusted adult. It examines the different types of abuse that can occur: physical, emotional, and sexual, and helps young teens understand that the victim is never at fault and did not cause or deserve the abuse. One of the biggest reasons

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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](mailto: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.

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## PARISH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION SAFETY PROGRAMS (Cont.)

victims don't speak out is because they think no one will believe them. This program assures young people that while this can happen in some cases, the victim must continue to speak out until someone listens and takes what they say seriously. Use this program to educate your students and help them come forward if they have been abused. **(\$129.95)**

**ORDER FROM:** <http://www.sdteach.com/abuse-if-it-happens-you-dvd.html>

**WHAT TADOO (Grades 1-2):** With the help of two puppet frogs, What and Tadoo, Thaddeus learns how to protect himself from strangers with four basic rules: Say No, Get Away, Tell Someone, and if needed, Yell.

Highly recommended by prevention professionals, this program looks at the lures strangers use to entice children, and the "uh-oh feeling" they experience with certain touches.

**(\$95) ORDER FROM:** <http://empowerkids.com/html/order.htm>

**WHAT TADOO WITH SECRETS (Grades 3-4):** Seven year-old Juliette learns that secrets can be good or bad, and that telling bad secrets to a caring adult is the right thing to do. Professor Sir Hillary Von Carp and his wise frog friends, What and Tadoo, team up again to teach important lessons in making choices, distinguishing "good" secrets from "bad", and following basic rules for getting help or helping oneself. **(\$95) ORDER**

**FROM:** <http://empowerkids.com/html/order.htm>

Should you have any questions or to reserve a copy of these curriculums don't hesitate to contact Scott Fitzgerald, Coordinator of Safe Environment Services via email ([fitzgerald@archlou.org](mailto:fitzgerald@archlou.org)) or phone (502.471.2132).

Thank you for your leadership in making our parishes safe for our children.

