



# Honor Thy Children

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

## SUMMERTIME MEANS A BREAK FOR THE KIDS, BUT NOT EFFORTS TO PROTECT THEM

As summertime approaches and life starts to regain a bit of normalcy now may be the time to check in with your kids and discuss body safety. According to the Kentucky based Face It movement, discussing body safety and safe body boundaries with your school aged children is important as kids are

more likely to be in organized sports that require physical exams, visiting friends' houses for sleepovers, all while their body is beginning to change. Empowering them to know what to expect along the way will help keep them safe and in control. As we've learned during

the pandemic, cyber awareness is also paramount when it comes to protecting our children. Below are some helpful hints from Face It that can assist in having those conversations. For more information feel free to visit [www.faceitabuse.org](http://www.faceitabuse.org)

### Archdiocese of Louisville

May 2021

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

### Are You Safe Environment Compliant?

Are you working regularly with children?

If so you must have attended an Archdiocese of Louisville Safe Environment Training.

You must also have a satisfactory background check not older than 5 years.

See your Safe Environment Coordinator today to verify your compliance!

- Use the correct names for body parts, including their genitals.
- Make sure your child knows the difference between "okay" and "not okay" touches.
- Teach children that now that they can bathe and use the restroom on their own, they should not accept such help from adults and older children.
- Teach children that it's okay for them to say "no" if they don't want to hug or kiss someone, including family, and always respect their decision.
- Teach your child about the "bathing suit" rule: No one can touch the private parts of their body under their bathing suit, no one can ask for them to touch their private parts, and no one should show them pictures of anyone's private parts.
- Educate children about the difference between surprises and secrets. A surprise party is a good, and everyone is happy. A secret that they are told to keep forever is not okay and could hurt people.

- Balance screen time with offline time to encourage unplugged playtime and physical activity
- Only allow use of screens in common rooms of the house and set "device-free" times
- Know all of the apps and the functions available on each device, including YouTube, Roblox, TikTok, Snapchat, HIP, Whisper and ask.fm
- Remind your children to never use their real name in any chat rooms and that once you put anything out there, you can't take it back
- Discuss how to be a good "digital citizen" and encourage your child to tell you if anyone is mean or inappropriate to them while online

# THE LASTING EFFECTS OF ABUSE

**Golfer Madelene Sagstrom has been on the LPGA Tour since 2017. She won the 2020 Gainbridge LPGA and represented Europe on the 2017 Solheim Cup team. She recently shared her story of abuse and it's lasting effects at LPGA.com**

I'm sitting in a hotel room in Greenwood, South Carolina. And I can't stop crying. It's March 2016 and I'm here to prepare for a Symetra Tour event later in the season.

I want to give myself the best chance to succeed. But I can't keep this inside of me anymore. I need to tell someone about the secret that I've kept bottled up inside of me for 16 years. Growing up in Sweden, I was so naïve. I thought I could trust everybody. I thought everybody was supposed to be my friend. I hung around a lot with my brother when we were kids and many of our close friends were older people who lived near us in the countryside about an hour from Stockholm.

One day, I was by myself going over to see my friend, a man I was really close to but who was not a relative. I went inside. We hung out. And he sexually abused me. I was 7 years old. Afterward, I went home. And for 16 years, I acted like nothing ever happened.

For years, I immersed myself in golf. Golf became my savior; I could lose myself in the game. And when I played well, I was okay. That became a pattern. If I could just play a little better, I thought I'd be happier. Then I carried it a step further. If I could just be a little skinnier, a little nicer, a little more likable.

What I didn't realize is that I simply did not like who I was. I felt insecure - never thinking that I was worthy enough or good enough. I didn't like who I saw in the mirror. I couldn't even put body lotion on my legs because of how much I hated my body, hated myself, all because of what someone else did to me.

I never wanted to acknowledge the assault, to myself or anyone else.

Even after I became an adult and could understand that what happened to me was not my fault - that the feelings I had about myself were rooted in the trauma from long ago - it didn't help. Somehow, I thought I'd be okay not talking about it. But I was wrong.

I had a big awakening in 2016 when I joined the Symetra Tour. Robert Karlsson, a Ryder Cup player who I met through the Swedish National team was my mentor back then. At the time, I was struggling with my emotions on the course. He really pushed me to dig deeper and understand the reasons why I reacted the way I did. I had this thing come up in my mind. At first I didn't think it was important. But it kept coming back again and again. I thought, 'Maybe there is something there. Maybe I should tell Robert.'



One day, in that hotel room in Greenwood, South Carolina, I told him that I had been sexually abused as a child. As he looked at me, with a mixture of shock and empathy on his face, my entire world broke down. I wept uncontrollably. Sixteen years of secrets poured out with each tear and every heaving gasp. I had no idea how being sexually abused by a man I trusted affected me. All those years, I blamed myself. I hated myself. I despised my body and hurt myself both mentally and physically. That day haunted me. I had nightmares about it and did everything I could to escape.

Telling Robert was the biggest release I've ever had. It made me feel free. It's a big reason why I won three times in 2016 and earned my LPGA Tour card. I

*See "effects" page 3*

## UPCOMING TRAININGS

In accordance with local, state and federal guidance amid the Covid-19 outbreak, all Safe Environment Trainings continued to be limited to **50** people. If this changes we will get word out to all parish/school Safe Environment Coordinators as well as post to [www.archlou.org/safe](http://www.archlou.org/safe)

Attendance is on a first come/ first served basis.

*No one under 16 will be admitted to the training. This includes infants.*

Masks are required and must be worn properly (over the nose and mouth) during the duration of the training

*(We do have some extras, but participants are encouraged to bring their own)*

6.1.21  
St. Gabriel

6.14.21  
St. Albert

6.15.21  
St. Joseph (Bardstown)

7.12.21  
St. Gabriel

7.26.21  
Incarnation

Fall trainings will start in earnest in August and are being scheduled now as are trainings into September. Once confirmed all will be posted to the website.

Capacity could be increased once local authorities say it is safe to do so.

Keep checking  
[www.archlou.org/safe](http://www.archlou.org/safe) for updates



## EFFECTS (cont.)

didn't feel like I was hiding anymore. I felt like I could do whatever I wanted. I felt like I would be okay.

Robert understood the pain that I'd been carrying for so many years. On the golf course, we experienced so many of the same thoughts. He knew where I was coming from as a player, so I felt really free to speak to him. He was my ally. He was someone I could trust 100% and provide the counsel and support I needed. Together, we decided that I needed to tell my parents. That was one of the worst days of my life.

I knew telling them would be overwhelming and emotional so I wrote a script and made a voice recording. I sat in my apartment, with Robert on FaceTime and my parents on Skype. They were like, 'Why is Robert here?' And I was like, 'You'll figure it out.' Then I played the recording for them. As I listened, I realized that this is the worst thing that parents can ever hear from their child. I can't do anything worse to them. They took it really hard. I mean, how do you ever take that news? But telling them brought us closer. I feel much more open with them,

and much more comfortable telling them how I feel. I think they appreciate that openness and see a different side of me, too.

When I was 7 years old, something horrible happened to me. It was an event that scared me and shaped my self-esteem for far too long.

The best decision I ever made was to share my secret with my mentor and friend, Robert Karlsson, in that hotel room. And then to keep telling the people around me.

It was the start of a new chapter in my life, of me feeling okay just being me. The day I shared my secret, all my walls broke down. Everything I had built up for so many years fell to the ground. For so long, I never thought I'd tell anyone. It was going to be my secret forever. I'm so happy it's not.

Finding my voice and courage to share my experience has taken time. Survivorship is a continuous process. As a professional athlete, I have the visibility to make a difference and connect with others who may have experienced sexual abuse. If I touch one life by telling my story, it will all be worth it.

### SAFE ENVIRONMENT EDUCATION CONTINUES SAFELY AMID A PANDEMIC



As the fiscal year draws to a close over 800 people participated in socially distanced Safe Environment Trainings since July of last year. Trainings were held in strict compliance with local health and safety guidelines at Incarnation, St. Gabriel and St. Albert. As local authorities will allow, trainings may be expanded this fall to accommodate the expected rise in demand. If you are working regularly with children you are required to attend a Safe Environment Training.

[www.archlou.org/safe](http://www.archlou.org/safe)

### MONTHLY SAFE ENVIRONMENT TIP

Sometimes it's the littlest things that can make all the difference.

Like checking your Safe Environment Compliance

It takes just a few minutes to email (or call) your parish/school Safe Environment Coordinator to make sure they have a copy of your Safe Environment training certificate or verification of your training on file.

Anyone working regularly with children must have completed the Archdiocese of Louisville's Safe Environment Training course.

*(we do not accept another diocese's training as we cover our Archdiocese of Louisville specific code of conduct in our training)*

Members must also have a satisfactory background check not older than five years on file.

While background checks have a good turn around time and trainings tend to increase in the fall, you don't want to miss out on a chance to start coaching that team or taking that field trip because you're not Safe Environment compliant.

If you have questions regarding your compliance, please reach out to your parish/school Safe Environment Coordinator.

If you don't know who that is or have questions on compliance or safe environment in general feel free to contact:

**Scott Fitzgerald**  
Archdiocese of Louisville  
Coordinator of  
Safe Environment Services



**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](mailto: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](mailto:victimassistance@archlou.org) or the Pastoral Center 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.

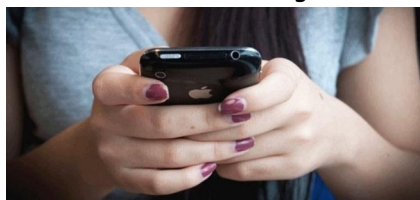
---

## **ABUSE REPORTING TEXTS AND CALLS INCREASE DURING EARLY MONTHS OF PANDEMIC**

A study published in the journal JAMA Pediatrics this month show child abuse calls increased in the early months of the pandemic. Calls to the national child abuse hotline increased nearly 15% from March to May last year over the same time the previous year.

Study author Dr. Robin Ortiz, national clinician scholar at the University of Pennsylvania says "We hypothesize that there was an increase in calls and texts to the hotline overall due to an increase in child and caregiver distress and potential child maltreatment amid the stressors of the pandemic." The research team also noted there were 300 texts from March to May

2019 with that number growing to 1,263 text for the same time period in 2020. That's a 321% increase leading the team



to believe text-based reporting tools continue to be an effective in reporting abuse. Dr. Suzanne Haney, chair of the American Academy Pediatrics Council on Child Abuse and Neglect tells CNN "I believe that it will take us many years to sort out the true effects of the pandemic on our children and this study is one step in that process." Part of the reason for this is data from 2020 has been difficult process.

According to CNN, early in the pandemic child abuse hotlines in Connecticut, California, Michigan, Kentucky, New Hampshire and Louisiana reported double-digit declines in calls about abuse.

Child abuse escalates when families are overwhelmed, experts say. The pandemic's perfect storm of school closures, social isolation, separation from loved ones, interrupted income, and job loss has worried child abuse experts, who fear a hidden epidemic of abuse that has mostly gone undetected. Remember Kentucky is a mandatory reporting state if you suspect abuse you must report it by calling (877) KYSAFE1 or you can report online <https://prd.webapps.chfs.ky.gov/reportabuse/home.aspx>



**No one behavioral change by itself indicates a child is being sexually abused, however you should always trust your gut when reporting abuse.**

**Should you have any questions about abuse and/or reporting, Martine Siegel, Archdiocese of Louisville Victim Assistance Coordinator is available to answer any questions at 502.636.1044 or via email ([msiegel@archlou.org](mailto:msiegel@archlou.org))**