



Honor Thy Children

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

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

What would you do if a young person approached you and disclosed they were being abused? It's not something we typically think about until it happens to us. This and other topics are covered in length at the Archdiocese of Louisville's Honor Thy Children Safe Environment required of anyone who is working with children. Below are some examples

of how children disclose and how you should respond. Remember if you are ever approached by a child, Kentucky is a Mandatory Reporting State and you are required by law to report ANY suspected abuse to 1.877.KYSAFE1. Should you have any questions about reporting abuse or situations that concern you Martine Siegel, Archdiocese of



Louisville Victim Assistance Coordinator is always available at 502.636.1044 or via email (msiegel@archlou.org)

Children tend to disclose either purposefully by deliberately telling someone or accidentally by giving out clues or signs. More often, children disclose accidentally by attempting to signal adult caregivers that they are in pain

Immediate disclosure refers to a telling that occurs while the abuse is occurring. Know that there are times when abusers will stop offending a particular child because of the anticipated consequence to the abuser. Faced with being accused or "found out," abusers may change their behavior to protect themselves.

Long-term disclosure refers to a telling that happens once the abusive interaction has ended. This includes situations in which an older adolescent or adult discloses that he or she was abused as a child. Although the individual may be out of harm's way, he or she will likely feel some emotional vulnerability that needs attention. Working to create an age-appropriate safety plan to deal with flashbacks, feelings of suicide, and self-imposed guilt/shame is critical with this disclosure. Whichever way children or adults disclose, it is important to acknowledge the courage that it took for them to disclose and attend to their safety. In many cases when a long-term disclosure has been made, the individual continues to experience the fear imposed by the threats they experienced as children.

Be open and invite the child's disclosure through active listening. This is made difficult by the atrocity of what the child is claiming. Know that children who have been sexually abused often assume that they will be blamed for the abuse. Children who have been abused are skilled at watching others in assessing danger. This ability to "read" others protects them amidst the dynamics of abuse. These skills are readily employed in threatening situations where the child may be vulnerable. Consequently, a child who has been abused may be hesitant to tell you what has occurred. If you respond with horror or anger to what is being said, you are unwittingly causing the child to feel ashamed and fearful. Children respond to this type of reaction by self-censoring. Therefore, do all that you can to maintain your poise as the child tells you what happened.

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 www.pcaain.org
- ☺ Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline 800.4.A.CHILD 800.422.4453 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!

KENTUCKY LEGISLATURE WANTS TO INTRODUCE CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE TRAINING IN SCHOOLS

Kentucky Senator Ray S. Jones II from Pikeville has re-filed Senate Bill 250 that would allow all schools in the state to educate children on sexual abuse. This bill, to be called "Erin's Law" would allow the Kentucky Department of Education to develop a program on detecting child physical, sexual and emotional abuse as well as neglect and how to report it.

The bill's namesake Erin Merryn is a child sexual abuse survivor who was raped by an adult at just 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ years old and again later by an older male cousin. The bill would allow schools to have age-appropriate education programs about recognizing and preventing abuse. Senator Jones reiterates the bill's goal. "One in three girls and one in six

boys will be sexually abused before their 18th birthday," Jones said. "Ninety percent of the time, the child knows the abuser. This often keeps the child from turning to the parent. They are alone in trying to determine



between a good touch and a bad touch or in dealing with their fear of repercussion for reaching out for help."

Schools within the Archdiocese have long been teaching age-appropriate sexual abuse prevention via ChildHelp's "Speak Up/Be Safe" program made possible through a generous grant

from Kosair Charities and the Face It Movement. Childhelp's Speak Up Be Safe program is the only evidence-based comprehensive child abuse prevention education curriculum that covers various types of abuse, with age-appropriate lessons for pre-kindergarten through 12th grade. It is used with confidence by schools, districts, advocacy centers, faith-based organizations, and other groups throughout the United States and over a dozen other nations. Below is a description of individual curriculums being taught in Archdiocese of Louisville Schools.

Grades Pre-K - 2

A primary focus for the earliest age groups is emphasizing that adults are responsible to keep children safe. Students learn basic concepts of personal safety and how to identify safe adults in their lives.

Grades 3 - 5

Lessons emphasize that adults are responsible for child safety and that, by learning and using a few key safety rules, children can help those adults keep them safe. Students learn how to recognize potentially unsafe situations. They identify their safe adults and practice using the safety rules.

Grades 6 - 8

While adults continue to be responsible for child safety, lessons acknowledge the growing responsibilities and privileges of students in this age group that can present opportunities for potentially unsafe situations. Students learn to recognize possible risks and practice resistance strategies they can use until they can talk to a safe adult.

Grades 9 - 12

Lessons address the increasing independence of adolescents, with emphasis on the importance of recognizing unhealthy relationships and unsafe situations and knowing ways to prevent abuse and get help. Students develop a broader understanding of abusive behavior and preventive approaches while continuing to identify the safe adults and peers that can form a robust safety network.

UPCOMING TRAININGS

There are plenty of training opportunities coming up please see below.

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

If you think you will be working regularly with children please make plans to attend a training at your earliest opportunity.

You don't want to miss out on an opportunity to serve because you haven't completed the Safe Environment Training Course.

3.7.22
Incarnation

3.14.22
St. Albert the Great

4.19.22
St. Gabriel

4.25.22
Incarnation

5.2.22
St. Albert the Great

A complete list of trainings can always be found at

www.archlou.org/safe

Be sure to bookmark this site for updates and/or cancellations as we enter inclement weather season and the website is the primary avenue for communicating changes to the training schedule.

MORE TRAININGS WILL BE SCHEDULED DURING THE SUMMER MONTHS.

Once those are finalized they will be published to the website and communicated to each parish/school Safe Environment Coordinator

CHILD ABUSE AWARENESS MONTH NEARS

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month. Now is an excellent time to familiarize yourself with the signs of child sexual abuse and what you need to know should you have to report child sexual abuse. Below are both the behavioral signs and the physical signs of abuse to look out for. All of these are covered in detail at anyone of the in-person "Honor Thy Children" Safe Environment Trainings with trainers on hand afterwards to address any one on one concerns you may have.

BEHAVIORAL CHANGES: When children are experiencing stressors such as divorce or death of a loved one, expect a change in their behavior. Children exhibit similar behavioral changes when they are being sexually abused. No one behavioral change by itself indicates a child is being sexually abused, however, a combination of these symptoms should alert adults to the possibility of sexual abuse:

- Nightmares, trouble sleeping, fear of the dark, or other sleeping problems.
- Extreme fear of "monsters."
- "Spacing out" at odd times.
- Loss of appetite, or trouble eating or swallowing.
- Sudden mood swings: rage, fear, anger, or withdrawal.
- Fear of certain people or places (e.g., a child may not want to be left alone with a babysitter, a friend, a relative, or some other child or adult).
- Stomach illness with no identifiable reason.
- An older child behaving like a younger child, such as bed-wetting or thumb sucking.
- Sexual activities with toys or other children, such as simulating sex with dolls or asking other children/siblings to behave sexually.
- New words for private body parts.
- Refusing to talk about a "secret" he/she has with an adult or older child.
- Talking about a new older friend.
- Suddenly having money.
- As an adolescent, cutting or burning herself or himself.

PHYSICAL SIGNS: Additionally, there are obvious physical symptoms that are clear signs of sexual abuse. Adults should take appropriate and immediate action if they detect any of the following physical warning signs:

- Unexplained bruises, redness, or bleeding of the child's genitals, anus, or mouth.
- Pain at the genitals, anus, or mouth.
- Genital sores or milky fluids in the genital area.

All adults who have any reason to suspect child abuse are legally required to contact Child Protective Services (CPS) and make a report. This is a mandatory reporting law that obligates all adults to make a report within 24 hours of learning about possible abuse by contacting the statewide hotline at

1-877-KYSAFE1 (1-877-597-2331)



MONTHLY SAFE ENVIRONMENT TIP

As the school year rounds the corner and heads for home, we typically transition to a two a month Safe Environment Training Program as attendance isn't as strong this time of year as the fall.

If you think you may be in need of a training now or over the summer in any parish/school sponsored activity, now is the time to attend anyone of the scheduled trainings.



Maybe you're going to be a new coach/room parent in the fall, now is a good time to attend a training to avoid the typical "fall rush"

Remember anyone working with children must initially attend an "in person" Safe Environment Training and have an Archdiocese of Louisville run satisfactory background check not older than five years.

A "refresher training" for those who have ALREADY attended an in person training is required every five years. See your school/parish Safe Environment Coordinator for details. If you're unsure of who this is feel free to contact

Scott Fitzgerald
Archdiocese of Louisville
Coordinator of Safe
Environment Services

sfitzgerald@archlou.org
or
502.471.2132

**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 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.

**SEEKING ADDITIONAL HELP?
THERE ARE PLENTY OF COMMUNITY RESOURCES AVAILABLE**

Center for Women and Families (844) 237-2331 Toll Free Crisis Line/(502) 581-7200 Business Line
Provides services to victims of sexual abuse and violence in the Kentucky counties of Bullitt, Henry, Jefferson, Oldham, Shelby, Spencer, and Trimble. www.TheCenterOnline.org

The Caring Place (270) 692-9300

Center for abused women and children. Serving Marion, Nelson, Taylor, and Washington Counties.

Family & Children's Place (502) 893-3900

Broad-based family counseling program serving child and adult victims of violence and families in which a child has been sexually abused by an adult family member or adolescent. www.FamilyAndChildrensPlace.org

NAMI - The National Alliance on Mental Illness (502) 588-2008

Offers support to individuals suffering with mental illness and their families. This may include abuse, PTSD, anxiety and depression. Services include support groups for the community as well as education. www.namilouisville.org

Silverleaf Sexual Trauma Recovery Services (270) 234-9236

Provides services to victims of sexual abuse and rape, as well as to non-offending caregivers and families. Serving Breckinridge, Grayson, Hardin, Larue, Marion, Meade, Nelson, and Washington counties. www.sliverleafky.org

The Couch Immediate Health Center (502) 414-4557

Complete mental health services by walk in our appointment offering counseling and/or medication when appropriate. www.thecouchimmediatementalhealthcare.com

Treatment and Counseling for Victims

UofL Peace Hospital (502) 451-3330

The Brook Hospitals (502) 426-6380- KMI/ (502) 896-0495-Dupont

Norton Children's Hospital (Ackerly Unit) (502) 629-8000

**FOR HELP ON WITH ADDITIONAL RESOURCES, PLEASE FEEL FREE TO REACH OUT TO ARCH-
DIOCESE OF LOUISVILLE VICTIM ASSISTANCE COORDINATOR MARTINE SIEGEL
502.636.1044 (msiegel@archlou.org)**