



Honor Thy Children

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

RECOGNIZING CHILD ABUSE COULD YOU?

Archdiocese of
Louisville

February
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When children are experiencing stressors such as divorce or the 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 below listed symptoms should alert adults to the possibility of sexual abuse.

Could you identify abuse and would you know what do if you became aware? See below and ask yourself, what would you do?

If you need support or someone to talk to:

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

Behavioral Changes

- 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

- 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.

Are You Safe Environment Compliant?

Are you working regularly with children?

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

Has it been 5 years since your initial in person training? You must complete your 5 year refresher training

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

See your Safe Environment Coordinator today to verify your compliance!

**TO REPORT ABUSE IN THE STATE OF KENTUCKY CALL 1-877-KYSAFE1
IF YOU SUSPECT ABUSE, YOU ARE LEGALLY OBLIGATED TO REPORT,
IT'S THE LAW**

UNDERSTANDING CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE & GROOMING

Child sexual abuse is the misuse of power through sexual means. Child sexual abuse generally involves a trusted adult (neighbors, parents, stepparents, aunts, uncles, teachers, priests, deacons, and coaches) who is in a relationship of power to the child and uses that position to manipulate children to satisfy the adult's own sexual needs.

Abusers manipulate situations to create an atmosphere where sexualized contact can occur, such as opportunities to be alone with the child. They then work to gradually reduce the child's inhibitions to sexualized touch, while simultaneously working to strengthen the child's trust. As the sexualized interaction between the adult and child becomes increasingly normalized, the abuser pushes for more and more sexually gratifying interaction. The child is confused about the sexual violations because the adult abuser is in a position of trust, and others tend to hold him or her in high regard. Furthermore, children are often told not to disobey or disrespect adults, especially those in care positions.

The evolving sexually abusive relationship is

maintained due to the power that the adult has in the relationship with the child. That power is utilized in making threats that ensure the child's secrecy. Secrecy, then, is the key to keeping sexual abuse private. The child is afraid to talk about what is going on to others, in part for fear that the



threats will be carried out. What is grooming? Adults who sexually abuse children seek out vulnerable children - children who are easier to manipulate relative to other children. This means targeting children to whom they have ready access, as well as those who are left alone by adult caregivers and/or possess low self-esteem.

Abusers gain a child's cooperation through manipulation, threats, and bribery. The initial stages of abuse involve subtle, seemingly innocent actions that prey upon a child's

lack of knowledge and maturity to violate normal boundaries. This process of manipulating children to become increasingly comfortable with the violations of their boundaries is termed "grooming." Grooming begins with indirect violations that are difficult to identify as preludes to sexual abuse. Such things as tickling a child, hugging a child, or patting the child's backside may not be abusive but could serve as the beginning of the grooming process. For adult abusers, these interactions are sexually charged. Children, having no experience with the notion of "sexually charged" experiences, are unable to put words to what is happening. They only know that something is a "little weird." This awkward experience is called an "uh-oh" feeling and is often described in safe-touch programs for children. The "uh-oh" feeling is confusing, because of the trust that the child feels for the adult. Children also tend to discount their own "uh-oh" feelings because the abuser uses minimization to justify his or her violations. As the grooming process evolves, sexually violating behaviors become seemingly normal so that each progressive, intrusive step is experienced as only a slight violation of the previously established boundary.

UPCOMING TRAININGS

3.18.24

St. Margaret Mary

3.19.24

St. Albert

4.8.24

Flaget Center

4.9.24

St. Agnes

Additionally trainings are being finalized for May, June and July and will be published at www.archlou.org/safe once confirmed

It is strongly advised that you not wait to attend a scheduled in person training if required to do so as trainings are subject to cancellation or postponement due to inclement weather.

Be sure to bookmark www.archlou.org/safe for the latest status or changes in any training

Should any training be postponed or cancelled at the last minute, notice will be sent to the parish/school Safe Environment Coordinator and posted on the website

TAKE NOTE...

Each school/parish has a designated Safe Environment Coordinator that can verify your compliance. Do you know who that is?

If not reach out to Scott Fitzgerald sfitzgerald@archlou.org to find out who it is.

SHOULD YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS REGARDING GROOMING OR ABUSE, MARTINE SIEGEL, THE ARCHDIOCESE OF LOUISVILLE VICTIM ASSISTANCE COORDINATOR IS AVAILABLE AT 502.636.1044 OR VIA EMAIL (MSIEGEL@ARCHLOU.ORG)

SAFE ENVIRONMENT TRAINING - WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

The Archdiocese of Louisville is committed to ensuring that children and youth who worship, study, or participate in church-sponsored activities can do so in the safest and most

secure setting possible. To fulfill this commitment, all employees or volunteers who have contact with children or youth (18 and under) for ANY length of time are required to

participate in one of the 2-hour Safe Environment Training Workshops. The Safe Environment Program will cover the following topics:

- Identifying signs of child sexual abuse
- Understanding the dynamics of child sexual abuse, including how children are groomed and how they may attempt to reveal their experience.
- How to act in response to child sexual abuse, including the obligation to report and care for the abused child.
- Becoming familiar with new archdiocesan policies and Code of Conduct regarding work with children

Participants will receive a copy of the new Sexual Abuse Policies and a resource manual. No registration is necessary. Sign-in sheets will be available at the workshops.

Children under the age of 16 should never attend the Safe Environment Training Program. (nor should anyone under the age of 18 be considered an adult or placed in unsupervised environments requiring the adult supervision of minors). Any person 18 or older who is in a supervisory role with children **MUST** have a criminal background check.

Due to the subject matter, **NO minors will be allowed into the training.** Please arrange for child care prior to the day of the training.

It is advisable to arrive at least 15 minutes before the workshop start time listed for all locations to complete the paperwork.

Attendees must remain present for the entire workshop. Leaving early will result in having to attend the Safe Environment workshop again, in full.

All registrants must attend, stay for the ENTIRE 2-hour presentation, and complete completion paperwork. Failure to do so will result in having to re-complete the course correctly.



IMPORTANT

Always check www.archlou.org/safe the day of and prior to heading out for a training.

All trainings are subject to cancellation and rescheduling due to inclement weather, etc.

In the event a training is cancelled, notice will be sent to parish/school Safe Environment coordinators and posted to at www.archlou.org/safe

It is highly recommended you check the website prior to leaving for a training. This is the only way we can communicate and changes to the training schedule

**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

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.

TRUST YOUR GUT

Have you ever seen an adult interacting with a child in such a way that made you feel uncomfortable with what you observed? It is human nature to minimize or doubt these suspicious feelings and opt to believe that you are overreacting. These are "uh-oh" feelings and they should not be ignored. The checklist below offers warning signs that encourage further inquiry when you witness an adult who:



- Refuses to let a child set any of his or her own limits.
- Insists on hugging, touching, kissing, tickling, wrestling with, or holding a child even when the child does not want this affection.
- Is overly interested in the sexuality of a particular child or teen (e.g., talks repeatedly about the child's developing body or interferes with normal teen dating).
- Manages to get time alone or insists on time alone with a child with no interruptions.
- Spends most of his/her spare time with children and has little interest in spending time with someone his or her age.
- Regularly offers to babysit many different children for free or takes children on overnight outings alone.
- Buys a child an expensive gift or gives money for no apparent reason.
- Frequently walks in on children/teens in the bathroom.
- Allows children or teens to consistently get away with inappropriate behaviors.