



Honor Thy Children

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

WELCOME BACK!



Despite frigid temperatures and an unfortunate round of inclement weather postponements, employees and volunteers within the Archdiocese turned out at St. Agnes this month for their required initial in-person Safe Environment training.

Again, if you are working with children, to be Safe Environment compliant within the Archdiocese of Louisville, you must have the following:

- Attendance at an (in-person) Archdiocese of Louisville Safe Environment Training
- A satisfactory Archdiocese of Louisville issued background check, not older than five years
- Mandatory five-year refresher training that can be completed on-line or in-person.

Remember, the on-line version is only available as a "refresher". Those working with children, must attend an initial in-person training.

How is your compliance? Reach out to your school/parish Safe Environment Coordinator today to ensure you won't be caught off guard when asked to serve.

A list of scheduled trainings can be found on page 2 of this newsletter

Archdiocese of
Louisville

January
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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.

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!

WHAT IS CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE?

Child abuse, including child sexual abuse, has occurred throughout our society for many years. Child abuse appears to be on the rise again and child sexual abuse is a significant aspect of this increase. Child abuse is widespread. It cuts across all cultures, religions, and socioeconomic groups. It is estimated that approximately one in four girls and one in six boys are sexually abused by the time they are 18 years of age. Many people are well into adulthood before something triggers in them a need to reveal childhood sexual abuse. Because childhood sexual abuse is traumatic, many will suppress these memories out of pain and survival, only to recall later what happened. This is a common scenario in post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Many, out of shame, will unfortunately never report the abuse. It is estimated that only 10% of victims report their abuse, which is a fraction of the sexual abuse that occurs. Simply stated, child sexual abuse is defined as any adult interaction with a child to meet the sexual needs of an adult. Sexual abuse can be physical, verbal, auditory, or visual and therefore, does not necessarily require physical contact between the abuser and the child. For example, watching a child undress, take a shower, or go to the bathroom for the purpose of creating sexual arousal would be child sexual abuse. Other non-physical behaviors include an adult exposure to his or her sexual organs to a child and speaking to a child about things of a sexual nature that are inappropriate for the child's age. Viewing, possessing, or distributing child pornography is criminal and is a form of sexual abuse that is becoming an increasing problem in our society.

MYTH V. FACT

Myth: Strangers are responsible for most child abuse.

Fact: Most child abuse, including sexual abuse, is perpetrated by someone known to the child.

Myth: Most sexual abusers are homosexuals.

Fact: Most sexual abusers are male, and the vast majority are heterosexual.

Myth: Children usually lie about sexual abuse.

Fact: The rate of false reporting, or lying, about sexual abuse is the same as the incidence of false reporting of any other type of crime.

Myth: Child sexual abuse is more widespread among Catholic clergy than other professions or religious communities.

Fact: There is no evidence that child sexual abuse is more or less common in any particular denomination or religion. All evidence suggests that the occurrence of sexual abuse remains the same across religious affiliations, socioeconomic status, or cultural groups.



KRS 620.030 states: Any person who knows or has reasonable cause to believe that a child is dependent, neglected or abused shall immediately cause an oral or written report.

UPCOMING SAFE ENVIRONMENT TRAININGS

The initial round of spring Safe Environment Training sessions are set. These important training sessions are designed to promote a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for all—this training, along with an Archdiocese of Louisville-issued background check, is mandatory for anyone working with children. Even if you think you will be working with children in the future, but are unsure, you're strongly encouraged to take advantage of these upcoming sessions.

All trainings begin promptly at 6:30p and **children under 16 will not be admitted given the content discussion.**

2.4.25
St. Gabriel

2.10.25
St. Patrick

2.24.25
St. Athanasius

3.4.25
St. Bernard

3.18.25
St. James
(Elizabethtown)

Trainings are subject to postponement due to weather, etc. It's best not to wait if you think you will be serving in your parish or school.

Complete updates can always be found at www.archlou.org/safe

Martine Siegel is the Archdiocese of Louisville Victim Assistance Coordinator. Feel free to contact her anytime (502.636.1044) or (msiegel@archlou.org) with any questions you may have

WHY SAFE ENVIRONMENT?

In 2011, the John Jay College of Criminal Justice of the City University of New York released a landmark study on *The Causes and Context of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Catholic Priests in the United States, 1950-2010*. In this report, the researchers supported the emphasis of the Church, since the passage of the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, on zero tolerance of sexual abuse among priests and Church personnel, reporting sexual abuse to the authorities, transparency, promoting

safe environments, and strengthening formation in seminaries.

Though recognizing the progress that has been made, researchers also emphasized that these efforts must remain essential best practices and become routine responses. Organizational systemic change takes decades, and we cannot afford to become complacent about the need to improve. 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 its dealings.

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. 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.

Yes & No

Below are a few examples of what is acceptable behavior and what is not as per the Archdiocese of Louisville Code of Conduct

Never take an overnight trip alone with a minor.

Avoid driving alone in a vehicle with a young person.

Refrain from giving inappropriate or expensive gifts to young people.

Ensure that all activities (extracurricular, catechetical, youth ministry, scouting, athletics, etc.) have been approved in advance by the appropriate administrator.

Exercise caution in communicating with young people through e-mail, through social media, or the Internet. Only share work/ministry-related e-mail addresses with minors.

Ensure that all social media utilized in ministry with minors be approved and monitored by the appropriate administrator (pastor, principal, director). Ensure that parents are informed about all social media communication utilized by the group/ministry in question.

Release young people only to parents or guardians, unless the parent or guardian has provided permission allowing release to another adult.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT TRAINING

Upon completion of the training members will...

- Be able to identify signs of child sexual abuse
- Understand the dynamics of child sexual abuse, including how children are groomed and how they may attempt to reveal their experience
- Know how to take action in response to child sexual abuse, including the obligation to report and care for the abused child
- Become familiar with new archdiocesan policies and Code of Conduct regarding work with children
- Receive a copy of the new Sexual Abuse Policies and a resource manual.

IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER

- **No registration is necessary.** Sign-in sheets will be available at the workshops.
- Children under the age of 16 will not be admitted to the training.
- No one under the age of 18 is to be considered an adult or placed in unsupervised environments requiring the adult supervision of minors. Eighteen year olds still in high school are to be considered minors until graduation. They may not be alone with children, nor placed in a supervisory role. Any activities for children require two Safe Environment compliant adults.
- **All registrants must attend, stay for the ENTIRE 2-hour presentation, and complete the required paperwork.** Failure to do so will result in having to complete the course correctly.

**Archdiocese of Louisville
Office of Safe Environment**

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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

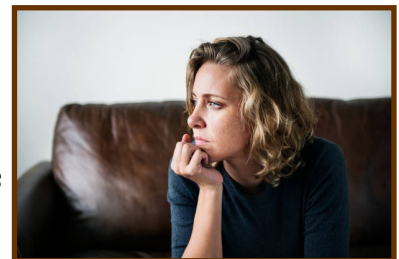
We must heed God's call to care for the most vulnerable among us and to continue our efforts toward wholeness and health in dealing with sexual abuse.

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

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 symptoms should alert adults to the possibility of sexual abuse. Never discredit your gut instinct. You are not paranoid. Your body can

pick up on a bad vibration. If something deep inside of you says something is not right about a person or situation, trust it. Below are some examples of behaviors to be on the look-out for.



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.

PHYSICAL CHANGES

- 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.

Should you have any questions about behaviors you think are questionable, please reach out Archdiocese of Louisville Victim Assistance Coordinator

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