



# Honor Thy Children

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

## TEEN DATING VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

*Prevention starts with understanding*

February has been designated Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month. Young people, 12 to 19 years old, experience the highest rates of rape and sexual assault youth while 18 to 19 year olds experience the highest rates of stalking, and 15.5 million U.S. children live in families in which intimate partner violence occurred at least once in the past year. Every day teens and tweens deal with issues that members of older generations never contemplated - How do I get help if my boyfriend/girlfriend is pressuring me to send a sexy text? Should I break up with my boyfriend/girlfriend on Facebook? What do I do if someone is spreading online rumors about me? The pervasiveness of technology has created an environment unlike any other that has become a platform for teens to navigate their sexuality and first sexual experiences. Emerging issues like sexting, sexual coercion and bullying create serious

challenges for millions of youth. In a study conducted by the Associated Press (AP) and MTV with an online panel of young persons (14-24 years old) that is representative of the U.S. population, 41% of respondents who were in a relationship had experienced some form of digital abuse and nearly one quarter (24%) said they



always or sometimes felt that their partner was constantly pressuring them to check -in by e-mail, phone calls and texts. Even more sobering, one study found Among 7 to 12 graders, 16.8% of girls and 9.45% of boys reported unwanted sexual experiences that were perpetrated by a peer. Being able to tell the difference between healthy, unhealthy and abusive relationships is key. Although

there are many signs to pay attention to in a relationship, look for these common warning signs of dating abuse:

- Checking cell phones, emails or social networks without permission
  - Extreme jealousy or insecurity
  - Constant belittling or put-downs
  - Explosive temper
  - Isolation from family and friends
  - Making false accusations
  - Erratic mood swings
  - Physically inflicting pain or hurt in any way
  - Possessiveness
  - Telling someone what to do
  - Repeatedly pressuring someone to have sex
- For more information on teen dating and what you can do should you detect someone is a victim you can contact the National Domestic Abuse Violence Hotline at Call 1-866-331-9474, chat at [loveisrespect.org](https://loveisrespect.org) or text "loveis" to 22522, any time, 24/7/365

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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.

## RECOGNIZING IS PREVENTION

**STORY CREDIT: CAILEY RIZZO  
TRAVEL & LEISURE MAGAZINE**

It is commonly reported that human trafficking increases around high-profile events, especially the Super Bowl. Although some have refuted this claim based on a lack of statistics, visibility around human trafficking skyrockets around the football game every year.

Last week, hundreds of flight attendants gathered in Houston for a seminar on how to spot signs of human trafficking. It's an annual event that has been given increased importance—in 2016, reports of human trafficking in the United States increased by 35 percent.

The organizers of the event, Airline Ambassadors International (AAI), aim to help "orphans and vulnerable children worldwide by leveraging connections with the airline industry towards humanitarian service."

Congress passed a rule last year that requires flight attendants to receive human trafficking training, but AAI wants to go further.

At the event, attendants were taught to look for a disheveled appearance, a passenger who insists on speaking for

their companion, or signs that a victim was drugged. Attendees at the event learned from experienced flight attendants who have dealt with human trafficking, like Sheila Frederick.

Frederick, a flight attendant for Alaska Airlines, had a dramatic experience when she stopped a flight trafficking incident on a flight from Seattle to San Francisco in 2011.

While assisting two passengers, an older man and a young girl, Frederick noticed a few suspicious things. First,



there was a drastic age difference between the two—and the girl had a dirty appearance while the man was well-dressed. He also insisted on speaking for her and became defensive when Frederick tried to communicate with her directly.

Frederick recognized the signs of human trafficking and left a note for the girl in the bathroom. When the girl indicated that she needed help,

### 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.

2.20.17

*St. Albert the Great*

2.28.17

*St. Agnes*

3.6.17

*Holy Family*

3.13.17

*St. Mary Academy*

*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*

Frederick had the pilot warn police on the ground, who were waiting in the terminal when the plane landed. The trafficker was arrested and the girl (with whom Frederick still has contact) has moved on to a normal life. She is currently attending college.

"I've been a flight attendant for 10 years and it's like I am going all the way back to when I was in training, and I was like, I could have seen these young girls and young boys and didn't even know," Frederick told local Florida news station WTSP.

It's estimated that more than 50,000 women and girls are trafficked into the United States every year. Last year, over 7,500 cases of human trafficking were reported across the country, according to the National Human Trafficking Hotline.

If you suspect human trafficking, call the National Human Trafficking Hotline (1.888.3737.888)

# GAMING AND CHILD ABUSE

**STORY CREDIT:** *teensafe.com*

Last year a UK based Community Policing Team in the United Kingdom reported that an adult made an attempt to "groom" a boy while they both played Minecraft, a game where users build constructions out of blocks in a three-dimensional world. This case is just one of many that shows the dangers that face children in the gaming world.

What is "grooming"? Grooming is the process by which a child predator gains the trust of a victim by building a relationship with the child and then breaking down his or her defenses. After the predator has built a foundation of trust with the child, he begins to make some sort of sexual contact with the child, whether it is sending explicit messages and photos or attempting to meet in person to commit sexual abuse or rape.

Unfortunately, predators have discovered that gaming is an ideal way for predators to connect with children over a shared interest and build a relationship by being on the same team or fighting the same mission. In fact, in 2012, Microsoft, Sony, Disney, and Electronic Arts shut down the accounts of over 3,500 registered sex offenders in a mission called "Operation Game Over."

The truth is, predators are still using gaming as a way to gain access to children on a daily basis. Predators will most likely start off a conversation with an innocent question about the child's name or age, and then move into more inappropriate questions as the relationship grows. After contact has been initiated, the predator may try to convince the child to take the conversation over to another app such as WhatsApp, Skype or Snapchat. Predators have become so skilled at grooming children through gaming,

that they even know how to sense when a child is being supervised. If the child stops responding or begins to respond in an unusual way, predators typically sign off to avoid getting caught.

Even if parents do everything that they're supposed to do by only allowing their children to play age-appropriate games, children can still become victims of grooming.

## ***What are the signs of grooming?***

Children are vulnerable and, unfortunately, predators are well aware of it. Child predators begin to build trust with the child by preying on his or her vulnerabilities. If the predator senses that the child feels alone or left out, the predator will make him or her feel special with excessive attention or by offering a shoulder to cry on. In some cases, the groomer isolates the child from friends and family by making him or her believe that he is the only one in the world who understands the emotions that the victim feels. The groomer will most likely manipulate the child into keeping the relationship a secret so that parents or caretakers do not discover the inappropriate bond. Be on the lookout for these signs that your child might be a victim of grooming through gaming:

- Your child wants to spend more time online or playing games through a console but won't tell you why.
- Your child does not want to discuss what he or she does online or what websites he or she visits.
- You notice that your child is using inappropriate language that he or she would not have heard within your home or at school.
- When you walk in a room, your child quickly changes the computer screen, mutes the volume on his or her gaming console, or turns it off altogether.

## MONTHLY SAFE ENVIRONMENT TIP

*Spring sports season is near. Are you 100% sure who your coaches are? Do they have a current background check and have they attended the required Safe Environment Training? Should you have any questions or need additional guidance please contact Scott Fitzgerald, Coordinator of Safe Environment Services 502.471.2132*

## ***How can you protect your child?***

It's important to know the signs of grooming, but even more important to take the necessary steps to prevent your child from becoming a victim.

- Check the parental controls on the game console and restrict strangers from gaining access to your child's profile.
- From time to time, parents should play the game, too. Get a feel for the other people who your child interacts with, the language that they use, and whether or not your child is at risk of being groomed.
- Talk openly to your children about privacy and why some information should never be shared with people that you don't know.
- Explain to children that even if they frequently talk to someone through a game, this person is still a stranger and should not be trusted with personal information.

If you believe that your child is being groomed online, talk to him or her openly, but firmly. Be sure to contact your local police department immediately if you find evidence that a predator has attempted to groom your child through online gaming or any other channel.



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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.

## DID YOU KNOW

Did you know? Ten startling facts about violence in the home.

1. 5 million children witness domestic violence each year in the US
2. 40 million adult Americans grew up living with domestic violence
3. Children from homes with violence are much more likely to experience significant psychological problems short- and long-term
4. Children who've experienced domestic violence often meet the diagnostic criteria for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder(PTSD) and the effects on their brain are similarly to those experienced by combat veterans
5. Domestic violence in childhood is directly correlated with difficulties learning, lower IQ

scores, deficiencies in visual-motor skills and problems with attention and memory.

6. Living with domestic violence significantly alters a child's DNA, aging them prematurely 7-10 years
7. Children in homes with violence are physically abused or seriously neglected at a rate 1500% higher than the national average
8. Those who grow up with domestic violence are 6 times more likely to commit suicide and 50% more likely to abuse drugs and alcohol
9. If you grow up with domestic violence, you're 74% more likely to commit a violent crime against someone else
10. Children of domestic violence are 3 times more likely to repeat the cy-

cle in adulthood, as growing up with domestic violence is the most significant predictor of whether or not someone will be engaged in domestic violence later in life.

