



Honor Thy Children

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

CHILD ABUSE: 6 QUESTIONS (AND ANSWERS)

Prevention starts with understanding

Understanding child sexual abuse can be a sometimes uncomfortable and complicated subject. Here are some commonly asked questions and answers

Q. How is it possible for an abuser to convince my child to participate?

A. Abusers create a detailed plan to manipulate the child and/or the child's family. By doing so, the abuser gains trust of the child and family. After forming this relationship, the abuser is able to take advantage of the time spent alone with the child. Once groomed, the child finds it difficult to escape the abuse or feel comfortable telling anyone about the abuse. Grooming creates a sense of loyalty between the abuser and the child. In nearly 93% of child abuse cases, the child knows and trusts the abuser.

Q. What does it mean when a perpetrator "grooms" a child or family?

A. Grooming is the building of a trusting relationship

by a perpetrator to a child. Grooming makes it difficult for a child to escape the abuse and keeps a child from telling because the child has come to know, trust, and like the abuser. This creates a sense of guilt in the child, believing the abuse is their own fault.

Q. What is involved regarding sexual abuse between an abuser and a child?

A. Perpetrators break down the defenses of children by explaining that what is happening is ok, and they can be trusted. Abuse begins with frequent touch (hugging, massage, tickling) and moves to more inappropriate activities.

Q. Wouldn't my child tell me if he/she was being abused?

A. Abusers manipulate children into keeping the abuse a secret. Children feel helpless to tell anyone about the abuse because the abuser has given the child reasons why they shouldn't tell.

A recent study showed that

74% of the time abuse was disclosed it was an accidental disclosure meaning a third party had observed the abuse or symptoms, not the child (him/herself) disclosing. It is important to remember that children may not show any symptoms of being abused. Because of this, it is important to do whatever you can to prevent and educate your children about sexual abuse. Teach them about inappropriate touch, empower them to say "no", and how to get away from uncomfortable situations. Remind them they should always tell you or a trusted adult if anything uncomfortable happens to them. By educating them and creating conversation, you can make a difference in preventing abuse.

Q. My child has been sexually abused. How will it affect their mental health?

A. Many victims report that the emotional damage done by the abuse is more harm-

See Q&A (page 3)

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

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.

CHILD ABUSE BY THE NUMBERS

In 2015, an estimated 1,670 children died from abuse and neglect in the United States. In 2015, Children's Advocacy Centers around the country served more than 311,000 child victims of abuse, providing victim advocacy and support to these children and their families.

Nearly 700,000 children are abused in the U.S annually. An estimated 683,000 children (unique incidents) were

victims of abuse and neglect in 2015, the most recent year for which there is national data.

CPS protects more than 3 million children. Approximately 3.4 million children received an investigation or alternative response from child protective services agencies. 2.3 million children received prevention services.



The youngest children were most vulnerable to maltreatment. Children in the first year of their life had the highest rate of victimization of 24.2 per 1,000 children in the national population of the same age.

Neglect is the most common form of maltreatment. Of the children who experienced maltreatment or abuse, three-quarters suffered neglect; 17.2% suffered physical abuse; and 8.4% suffered sexual abuse. (Some children are polyvictimized—they have suffered more than one form of maltreatment.)

About four out of five abusers are the victims' parents. A parent of the child victim was the perpetrator in 78.1% of substantiated cases of child maltreatment.

UPCOMING TRAININGS

A current list of trainings is always available at www.archlou.org/safe
All trainings are at 6:30p unless otherwise indicated.

11.9.17

St. Agnes

11.13.17

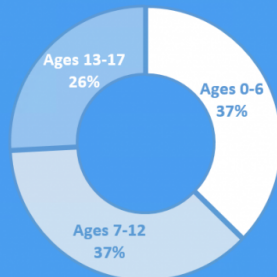
St. Joseph (Bardstown)

There will be one more training scheduled in December (location is being determined) but trainings are scaled back in November and December due to holiday schedules.

The frequency of trainings will pick up again in January, February and March. Keep checking www.archlou.org/safe for updates.

Children's Advocacy Centers served more than 311,000 children around the country in 2015

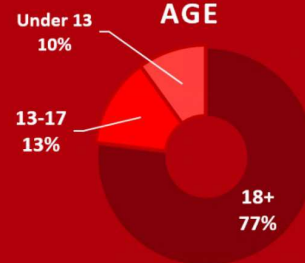
CHILD VICTIMS SERVED BY CACS BY AGE, 2015



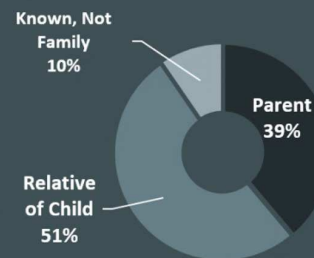
Two-thirds of children served disclosed **sexual abuse** (205,438)
Nearly 20% of children served disclosed **physical abuse** (60,897)
211,831 children received on-site forensic interviewing at a Children's Advocacy Center

People Investigated for Abuse

PEOPLE INVESTIGATED BY AGE



RELATIONSHIP TO VICTIM



Q&A (CONT.)

ful than the actual abuse it-
self. Mental health issues your child
may experience include:

- Depression
- Damaged goods syndrome—"no one wants me"
- Distorted body image which can lead to overeating or lack of eating.
- Low self-esteem and poor social skills
- Poor development and immaturity
- Anger and hostility/inability to trust.

Q. As parents, should we be concerned about the validity of our child's allegations of abuse?

A. Children rarely lie about abuse. You should always believe your child and again, Kentucky is a mandatory reporting state. All claims of abuse

MUST be reported to the Child Protection Hot Line: **1-877-KYSAFE1** or **1-877-597-2331 (Toll Free)**



Should you have any questions at anytime about abuse you can always contact:

MARTINE SIEGEL
Archdiocese of Louisville
Victim Assistance Coordinator
502.636.1044
msiegel@archlou.org

MONTHLY SAFE ENVIRONMENT TIP

Yes, the calendar says fall and by now your winter sports coaches/volunteers should be identified or close to being identified.

A best practice is to reach out to your athletic director and review a list of winter sports teams and their coaches.

Are they Safe Environment compliant?

Also, field trip season will be here soon. Now is the time to remind those who think they might be going on a trip to ensure they are compliant with a Safe Environment Training and a current background check.

THE ONE SIGN AN ADULT WAS ABUSED

When on the look-out for signs of child abuse, it's common to look at the individuals when they are, well, children. But what about looking for signs of past abuse in adults? It isn't unheard of for abuse to go unrecorded, only for symptoms and behaviors to manifest in adulthood. There is one sign, however, that should set off an alarm that someone may have been a victim of child abuse.

But first, what constitutes abuse? Child abuse takes on many forms, according to the American Society for the Positive Care of Children. There is obvious physical or sexual abuse, and also neglect. The ASPCC categorizes these different kinds of abuse and neglect as "physical abuse, emotional maltreatment, neglect, sexual abuse and witnessing family violence."

The stats surrounding abuse are staggering, and upsetting. According to the National Children's Alliance, there were an estimated 683,000 instances

of childhood mistreatment and neglect in the U.S. in 2015 alone. It is also reported that "neglect" is the most common form of abuse. According to the same pool of data, a parent is the abuser in four out of five instances.

Child abuse can bring about a form of PTSD — and the signs of it can manifest in the victim's adulthood. Many factors play into adults developing PTSD following childhood abuse. Behaviors that may suggest PTSD include aggressive behavior, night terrors, and loss of interest in everyday activities, just to name a few.

One giveaway is that a victim might get into abusive relationships as an adult, and be more likely to engage in toxic relationships that reflect their abusive childhood.

The National Association of Adult Survivors of Child Abuse explains that many victims disassociate to cope with abuse at a young age.

Therefore, many of the PTSD symptoms associated with child abuse might not manifest until the victim is older.

Help is certainly available for adult survivors. Unfortunately, it can be difficult to pinpoint an instance of PTSD that is related to childhood mistreatment. The PTSD symptoms, NAASCA explains, mimic symptoms of other chronic conditions. Depression, anxiety, and substance abuse can have the same general symptoms. Should you have any questions or concerns or think you might want to talk to someone feel free to reach out to Martine Siegel, Archdiocese of Louisville Victim Assistance Coordinator at 502.636.1044 or via email (msiegel@archlou.org)

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 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.

SPORTS AND SEXUAL ABUSE

Research shows that sexual abuse can happen in all sports and at all levels. From beginning youth sports programs, across school, community and university settings, even to Olympic elite athletes.

Sexual abuse can be a physical act or a psychological experience. As a physical act, sexual abuse involves touching and non-touching behaviors. This can be done in coercive or seductive ways. As a psychological experience, the abuse of power and authority by the predator renders the young athlete powerless. First, a cycle of dependency is created between the predator and the child, involving special attention and friendship. Predators look to build a bond of loyalty, and then move to isolate and control

the athlete. This specialness descends into sexual attention, where intimidation, guilt, secrecy and further dependency are manipulated. Sometimes the abuse occurs with threats and violence. Sometimes with deception or even with misdirected love. By the time the child wants to - or wishes - to disclose the nature of the sexual trauma, a sense of helplessness and hopelessness secures their silence.

Members of an athlete's sports community in positions of power and authority have at times been identified as sexual abuse predators. This includes coaches, trainers, athletic directors, physical therapists, bus drivers, chaperones, etc. Here are things to keep in mind:

- The risk of sexual abuse is greater when there are loose guidelines, unstructured and unsupervised practice times and high athlete vulnerability, especially in relation to age and maturation.
- Passive attitudes, non-intervention, denial, and/or silence by people in positions of power in sports culture increases the psychological harm of sexual abuse for the athlete.
- Lack of bystander action also creates the impression for victims that sexual abuse is legal and socially acceptable - and that those involved in the sporting world will be powerless to speak out against it.