



# Honor Thy Children

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

## NEW YEAR, NEW COMMITMENT TO CHILD ABUSE AWARENESS

Just 2 years ago over 22,000 Kentucky children were victims of child abuse. That translates to 22.2 victims per 1,000 children, double the national average. Coming in second was Indiana with 18.6 victims per 1,000 children. How much lower could that number be if more adults were not only educated on the warning signs of abuse, but knew how and where to turn when reporting suspected abuse. Remember, Kentucky is a MANDIOTRY reporting state. That means you can be held accountable if you know about suspected abuse and don't report it. In accordance with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Charter for the protection of Children and Young People, 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. In an effort to fulfill this commitment, ALL employees or volunteers who have contact with children or youth (17 and under) for ANY length of time are required to participate in one of the 2-hour Safe Environment Training Workshops and have a current background check not older than 5 years. When it comes to protecting children, how committed are you? How committed is your parish? If a child came to you and indicated in one way or another they were being abused would you know what to do? If they had questions about abuse how would you answer? Where would you turn if you couldn't answer? Is your child's coach or youth group advisor Safe

Environment compliant? Do they have a current background check? If you have difficulty answering just one of these questions consider attending one of the scheduled "Honor Thy Children" trainings. Abuse is many times discovered by a teacher, coach or another parent who senses something just isn't right. Safe parishes/schools start with it's people working together. Should you suspect any abuse you are bound by law to report it. This can be done by calling 1-877-KY-SAFE-1. If you have any questions or just want to talk to someone about abuse, please reach out to Martine Siegel, Archdiocese of Louisville Victim Assistance Coordinator at 502.636.1044 or via email (msiegel@archlou.org)

**"As a parent, I am the best protector of my children. Why do I have to attend safe environment training sessions?"**

*Sexual abuse happens in all segments of society, and 80% of all abused children were abused by parents or other family members*

*This training also helps adults who may not have experienced abuse in their own lives recognize the signs of abuse in children they may encounter, whether that abuse happens in the context of the Church, a sports program, or a neighborhood. Many adults are not fully aware of their responsibility to report. In this training, they learn of the mandated reporting laws for all adults in Kentucky to report child abuse, and they learn how to do it.*

## 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](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)

### 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!

# RESET: WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE

To renew our commitment to child abuse, we have to understand what it is. This is the very foundation each "Honor Thy Child Training" is built on.

Child abuse, including child sexual abuse, has occurred throughout our society for many years. After several years of decline, 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 actually happened. This is a common scenario in post traumatic stress disorders (PTSD). Many, out of shame, will unfortunately never report the abuse. It is esti-



mated that only 10% of victims report their abuse, which is a fraction of the sexual abuse that actually occurs.

Simply stated, child sexual abuse is defined as any adult interaction with a child for the purpose of meeting 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 ex-

ample, 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 exposing 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 VS. FACTS

**MYTH** Strangers are responsible for most child

**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.

*For more important facts and information make plans today to attend an upcoming "Honor thy Children" training*

## 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.

2.17.20  
Immaculate Conception  
LaGrange

2.19.20  
Holy Spirit

2.21.20  
St. Peter the Apostle  
**(SPANISH SPEAKING ONLY)**  
**(7:00 p.m. start)**

2.24.20  
St. Paul School

3.3.20  
St. Athanasius

3.16.20  
St. Michael

4.14.20  
St. Martha

4.23.20  
St. Martha

5.4.20  
St. Gabriel

*More trainings will be scheduled for May, June & July and posted at [www.archlou.org/safe](http://www.archlou.org/safe) as they are confirmed.*

*Keep checking this webpage for updates as trainings cancelled due to inclement weather will be posted here*

*Please note that due to the nature of material discussed at these trainings, children under 16 will not be allowed into the trainings and child care is not provided.*



# IDENTIFYING CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

When it comes to child abuse, do you know what to look for? There are two types of signs, physical and emotional.

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. Remember you are mandated by Kentucky Law to report ANY suspected abuse. As a reminder you can do this by calling 1-877-KYSAFE1

## EMOTIONAL SIGNS OF 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 OF ABUSE

- ◆ 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.

**"If someone would have talked in school about safe touch and unsafe touch, I believe I would have spoken up as a child and not been victimized over and over again for years, but that day never came, which is why my mission now is to protect children from the childhood I could not be protected from."**

**- Erin Merryn, Author of *An Unimaginable Act: Overcoming and Preventing Child Abuse Through Erin's Law***

## MONTHLY SAFE ENVIRONMENT TIP

It's hard to believe, but soon the current school year will be coming to a close and before it does there will be numerous events in both parishes and schools that will need volunteers for activities that involve working with children.

You don't have to wait until you're asked to ensure you're Safe Environment compliant. Make plans now to visit your parish/school Safe Environment Coordinator to see if you are up to date and compliant

Each year parents or grandparents are unable to chaperone field trips and other events because they waited to attend a Honor Thy Children Safe Environment Training.

Currently only one attendance at the training is required (in addition to a current background check not older than 5 years).

Why not make plans to attend a session soon before it's too late?

Should you have any questions regarding your compliance or Safe Environment in general, see your parish/school Safe Environment Coordinator.

If you don't know who that is or you have other questions or concerns feel free to reach out to:

**Scott Fitzgerald**  
Archdiocese of Louisville  
Coordinator of Safe  
Environment Services  
502.471.2132 or via email  
sfitzgerald@archlou.org



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](mailto: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.

## TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

How would you rate when it comes to best Safe Environment Practices? Test your knowledge below

### Scenario A

Classes broke for the holidays. My student has a question about an assignment that can't be easily addressed in an email. Since we both have iPhones we agree to facetime and discuss the work. *What do you think?*

### Scenario B

Your church youth group is expected to only have about 3 or 4 kids at their evening meeting because of vacation and illness. Given the small number only one advisor needs to be present. *What do you think?*

### Scenario C

I tutor students after school and the only room that is available is a conference room at the end of the hall. The student requires there be no distractions so I close the door. *Is there anything wrong with this?*

Page 30 of the Code of Conduct states "Never participate in chat rooms or video chats with minors unless they have been created for a particular ministry or employment related circumstance."

### Scenario B Answer

Page 37 of the Code of Conduct states "Have an adequate number of adults present at events. A minimum of two adults must always be present during activities for minors."

### Scenario C Answer

Page 37 of the Code of Conduct states "Avoid meeting privately with minors in areas where there is no window or where the door cannot remain open. If one-on-one pastoral care of a minor is necessary (e.g. Sacrament of Reconciliation), avoid meeting in isolated environments."

