



Honor Thy Children

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

SAFE ENVIRONMENT IN THE CLASSROOM AS SCHOOL IS BACK IN SESSION

As school gets back in session this week, we're reminded that Safe Environment isn't just for staff and volunteers, it's also in the classroom. ChildHelp's Speak Up/Be Safe curriculum is presented to elementary students within the Archdiocese of Louisville. Childhelp Speak Up Be Safe helps children learn the skills to prevent or interrupt cycles of neglect, bullying, and child abuse—physical, emotional, and sexual. The program uses an ecological approach to

prevention education by providing materials to engage, teachers and school administrators and a developmentally appropriate age and grade level. In addition to increasing children's ability to recognize unsafe situations or abusive behaviors and building resistance skills, lessons focus on helping children build a responsive safety network with peers and adults that the child identifies as safe. The Speak Up Be/Safe Curriculum is made

possible through a grant from Kosair Charities' "FaceIt" movement. The Face It® Movement conceived and created in 2012 as a response to the public outcry against the increasing number of child abuse deaths in the Commonwealth, officially launched in April 2013 as an initiative led by Kosair Charities.



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

A LOOK AT THE SPEAK UP/BE SAFE CURRICULUM

K-2nd Grade

A primary focus at the earliest age groups is to shift the responsibility for child abuse and neglect prevention away from children and onto the adults in their lives. Children learn basic concepts around personal safety and how to identify safe adults.

3rd-5th Grades

Lessons emphasize that adults are responsible for child safety, but by learning and using a few key safety rules, children can help those adults keep them safe. Children learn how to recognize potentially unsafe situations, how to identify safe adults, and how to talk about feeling unsafe.

6th-8th Grades

While adults continue to be responsible for child safety, lessons acknowledge the growing responsibilities and privileges of children in this age group and the new opportunities for potentially unsafe situations. Children learn how to recognize potential risks as well as resistance strategies that can be used until they can talk to a safe adult.



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!



St. Gabriel the Archangel - Louisville

**SOCIALLY DISTANCED
SAFE ENVIRONMENT TRAININGS
CONTINUE THOROUGHOUT
THE ARCHDIOCESE OF LOUISVILLE**



St. Joseph - Bardstown

Because we do live trainings in the Archdiocese, we are able to interact with thousands of individuals (more than 48,000 since the training started in 2003). After the training, we many times have people approach our trainers tell their stories. For example, we were told of the arrest of a father who had been abusing his children because one of his adult children attended a safe environment training and felt empowered to report. Others talk to us about their abuse as children. They tell us how the class helped them to recognize that they need help, and we are able to refer them to the assistance they need. Many attendees who come in with skeptical expressions and crossed arms leave with heartfelt thanks for all they learned.

Do you check the boxes?



- Do you work with children on a regular basis?
- Are you a paid staff member of an Archdiocese of Louisville parish or school?
- Will you be in direct supervision of children other than your own (i.e. field trip chaperone?)

If you answered yes to any of these you must attend a Safe Environment Training and have a background check not older than 5 years.

UPCOMING TRAININGS

In accordance with local, state and federal guidance amid the Covid-19 outbreak, all Safe Environment Trainings are limited to 50 people.

Attendance is on a first come/ first served basis.

No one under 16 will be admitted to the training. This includes infants.

Masks are required and must be worn properly (over the nose and mouth) during the duration of the training

(We do have some extras, but participants are encouraged to bring their own)

9.14.20
St. Dominic

9.15.20
Incarnation

9.17.20
St. Gabriel

9.28.20
St. Augustine-Lebanon

10.5.20
St. Gabriel

10.6.20
St. Margaret Mary

10.20.20
Incarnation

Additional trainings are being scheduled for November, December and into January and will be posted as well as sent to parish/school Safe Environment Coordinators once they are finalized.

Keep checking
www.archlou.org/safe
for updates



UNDERSTANDING THE DYNAMICS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

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

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.

Adults who sexually abuse children seek out vulnerable children - children that are easier to manipulate relative to other children. This means targeting

children with whom they have ready access, as well as those who are left alone by adult caregivers and/or possess low self-esteem.

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 the adult abuser, 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.

MONTHLY SAFE ENVIRONMENT TIP

With school back in session the requests for confirmation of someone's Safe Environment Training are going up.

Each parish and or school needs to keep a copy of each member's certificate of completion on file.

As many sports and extra curricular activities are on hold (especially at the elementary level), now is an excellent time to check your compliance with your parish/school Safe Environment Coordinator.

This is especially true if you plan on coaching/volunteering in the future as COVID 19 restrictions ease.

You must have proof that you completed the Safe Environment Training and have a background check not older than five years before working regularly with children

Reach out to your parish/school Safe Environment Coordinator.

If you don't know who that is or should you have any questions, feel free to reach out to:

Scott Fitzgerald
Archdiocese of Louisville
Coordinator of Safe
Environment Services
502.471.2132 or via email



**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 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.

MYTH VS. FACT

In addition to acknowledging what child sexual abuse is, it is important to dispel myths concerning child sexual abuse. Below are some examples.

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 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.
