



# Honor Thy Children

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

## SPRING IS SPRINGING ARE YOU COMPLIANT?

Archdiocese of Louisville

February 2023

With the onset of the Lenten season and warmer temperatures, we're reminded that spring is near. It's a very busy time for those who both work and volunteer in the church to include those who work with children. 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. This includes attending an initial in-person Safe Environment training as well as an annual five-year refresher training. We believe the

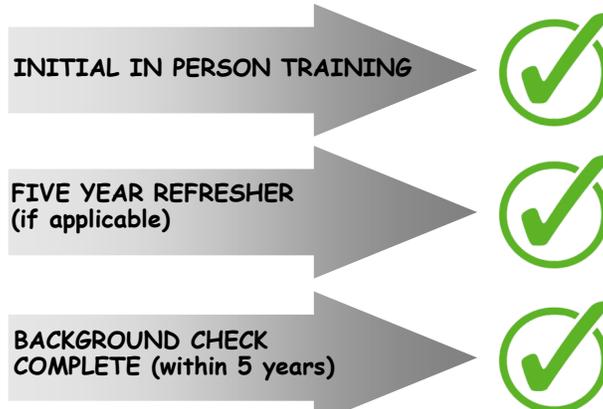
information provided in this training necessary for all in our communities who are working to prevent and respond to childhood sexual abuse. We have tried to be as clear as possible about our assistance to victims, reporting procedures, and education and prevention efforts. If you will be coaching, mentoring, or working with children in any capacity and are not compliant, please make plans to do so now. If you think you've been to a training and/or had a background check recently, now is a good time to confirm your compliance. All parishes and schools are required

to maintain a local database of those working with children. Please see your school/parish Safe Environment Coordinator to ensure they've documented your compliance. Should you have any further questions don't hesitate to contact Scott Fitzgerald, Coordinator of Safe Environment Services ([sfitzgerald@archlou.org](mailto:sfitzgerald@archlou.org)) or (502) 471.2132. 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.

### 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)

## Am I compliant?



(issued by the Archdiocese of Louisville)



If you checked all three, you are compliant and clear to work with children!



If you can't check all three, see your parish/school Safe Environment Coordinator to ensure compliance

# SAFE CAREGIVERS & SAFE SITUATIONS

Most victims of sexual abuse were abused by someone they knew or in a place they were familiar with. You can take steps to surround children with safe caregivers in safe environments.

Abusers often become friendly with potential victims and their families, earning trust, and gaining time alone with children. Observe your child with others and listen to your gut. If you feel uncomfortable with the way an adult is interacting with your child, step in.

The following are some helpful tips from our partners at the "Face It" Movement"

- Ask your babysitter for background checks, including criminal and child abuse/neglect checks.
- Check that all of your child's programs require background checks, personal interviews, and professional recommendations for all adults—including volunteers—who work with children.
- Monitor children's Internet and smartphone use. Offenders have been known to use the Internet to lure children into physical contact.

## EDUCATE & EMPOWER



Talking to your child about their bodies, body safety, and personal boundaries is key in keeping them safe. Child safety is an adult responsibility.

- Use the correct names for body parts, including their genitals, as they are learning to identify them (starting as early as possible).
- Make sure your child knows the difference between "okay" and "not okay" touches. No one should ask to see or touch the private parts of their body, except a medical provider or a caregiver who is helping them clean or use the restroom. No one should show them pictures of private parts. Teach them if those things occur, tell a trusted adult.
- Teach children that once they can bathe and use the restroom on their own, they should not accept such help from adults and older children.
- Teach children that it's okay for them to say "no" if they don't want to hug or kiss someone, including family, and always respect their decision.
- Educate children about the difference between good secrets and bad secrets. A surprise party is a good secret because it isn't kept for long.

***A secret that they are told to keep forever is not okay.***

### UPCOMING TRAININGS

All trainings start at 630p unless otherwise indicated.

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

*If you think you will be working with children please make plans to attend a training at your earliest opportunity.*

**3.6.23**  
St. Bernard

**3.21.23**  
St. Francis Xavier  
Mt. Washington

*More trainings are being scheduled for April, May, June and July and will be posted once finalized.*

*An updated list can always be found at*

[www.archlou.org/safe](http://www.archlou.org/safe)

*Be sure to bookmark this site for updates and/or cancellations as we enter inclement weather season and the website is the primary avenue for communicating changes to the training schedule.*

*It's important to not delay attendance (even if you're unsure when you'll need the training) as we enter inclement weather season, trainings could be postponed or cancelled due to bad weather.*



*Think you're compliant but aren't sure? You can always check in with your school/parish safe environment coordinator to see if your dates are current.*

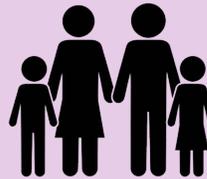
# UNDERSTANDING HOW AN ABUSER WORKS

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.

Abusers gain a child's cooperation through manipulation, threats, and bribery. 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

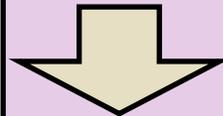
abusive but could serve as the beginning of the grooming process. For the adult abuser, these interactions are sexually charged. Children, having no experience with the notion of "sexually charged" experiences, are unable to put words to what is happening. They only know that something is a "little weird." 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.

## GROOMING OF FAMILY MEMBERS



Family members and caregivers of children also must be groomed as the child is being targeted.

When the adult abuser resides outside the family, trust must be earned from the child's guardians in order to gain private access to the child.



*The closer the relationship of the child to the abuser, the larger the impact on the child*

*Bribery can be both subtle and overt. Bribery may include seeking special time with a child and/or providing gifts such as money and candy. Accepting these bribes create guilt, shame, and a sense of responsibility for the child's sexual abuse. Abusers also rely on the child's inherent narcissism in that they accept responsibility for the abusive relations. The child's feelings of complicity assist in maintaining the child's silence, which in turn, reinforces the child's experience that he or she is responsible for the abuse.*

*A child's shame and embarrassment at having "allowed" the abuse reinforces the secrecy. Soon after the onset of the abuse, children begin to feel complicit in their own abuse. They accept responsibility for causing it and feel as though they deserved it or that they should have stopped it.*

## MONTHLY SAFE ENVIRONMENT TIP

For over twenty years the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People has guided archdiocesan work in responding to cases of childhood sexual abuse by those who serve the church. Our victim assistance efforts and our safe environment programs are audited yearly, and found to be in compliance.

This success would not be the case without your support of these initiatives. As a result of our national audit, we have been encouraged to implement an update for our safe environment training program, that already requires all active employees and volunteers who to attend an in person training. That training **MUST BE UPDATED** every five years by either attending a scheduled in person training or completing an online refresher course.



If you would like to complete the online refresher course, please check in with your parish/school safe environment coordinator to ensure they have your initial in-person training date documented. Once documented, your parish/school will give you instructions for completing the online refresher should you chose this option. If you elect to attend and in person refresher training, you must turn in your certificate of completion to your parish/school. Failure to do so may result in delays in documenting your attendance.

**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](mailto: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)

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.

# HELP IS AVAILABLE

**Archdiocese of Louisville Counseling Referral Services (Family Ministries Office) - 502.636.1044**

Provides services and assistance through the Victim Assistance Coordinator to those who report that they have been abused by a Church employee ([victimassistance@archlou.org](mailto:victimassistance@archlou.org)); provides counseling referrals to individuals, couples, and families; and coordinates safe environment programming for the Archdiocese ([safe@archlou.org](mailto:safe@archlou.org)). [www.ArchLou.org/Family](http://www.ArchLou.org/Family)

**Center for Women and Families - 844.237.2331 Toll Free Crisis Line**

Provides services to victims of sexual abuse and violence in the Kentucky counties of Bullitt, Henry, Jefferson, Oldham, Shelby, Spencer, and Trimble. [www.TheCenterOnline.org](http://www.TheCenterOnline.org)

**NAMI - The National Alliance on Mental Illness - 502.588.2008**

Offers support to individuals suffering with mental illness and their families. This may include abuse, PTSD, anxiety and depression. Services include support groups for the community as well as education. [www.namilouisville.org](http://www.namilouisville.org)

**Family & Children's Place - 502.893.3900**

Broad-based family counseling program serving child and adult victims of violence and families in which a child has been sexually abused by an adult family member or adolescent.  
[www.FamilyAndChildrensPlace.org](http://www.FamilyAndChildrensPlace.org)

**Kentucky Association of Sexual Assault Programs (KASAP) - 502.226.2704 or 866.375.2727**

Network of Rape Crisis Programs in Kentucky.  
[www.KASAP.org](http://www.KASAP.org)

