



# Honor Thy Children

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

## Don't Wait—Get Safe Environment Compliant Today

The Archdiocese of Louisville is deeply committed to ensuring that children and youth who worship, learn, and participate in Church-sponsored activities can do so in the safest and most secure environment possible. One of the most important ways we live out that commitment is through our Safe Environment Training Program.

We strongly encourage employees and volunteers not to wait to complete their required Safe Environment Training. As many of us were reminded during the recent snowstorm, trainings can occasionally be cancelled or rescheduled at short notice due to weather or other unforeseen circumstances. Completing your training as early as possible helps prevent

delays and ensures you are ready to serve when needed.

Even if you are not currently serving in a role that involves children or youth, there's truly never a bad time to become compliant. Ministry needs can change quickly, and should you ever be called upon to help, you'll be grateful to have already completed your Safe Environment requirements.

**All employees and volunteers who have any contact with children or youth (under age 18), for any length of time, are required to attend a 2-hour Safe Environment Training Workshop.**

The current Safe Environment Training schedule is always available at:  
[www.archlou.org/safe](http://www.archlou.org/safe)

In the event of a late cancellation, a broadcast email will be sent throughout the Archdiocese, and the cancellation will be posted on the Safe Environment webpage. Attendees are always encouraged to check the website (and refresh the page) before heading out, especially during inclement weather.

### Know Your Safe Environment Coordinator

Every parish and school in the Archdiocese of Louisville is mandated to have a Safe Environment Coordinator, and it's always a good idea to know who yours is and how to contact them. Your coordinator is a valuable resource for questions about training, compliance, and Safe Environment requirements.

***By completing your Safe Environment Training promptly and staying informed, you are helping protect our children, support our ministries, and strengthen trust within our Church community. Thank you for your continued commitment to keeping our parishes and schools safe, welcoming places for all.***

Archdiocese of  
Louisville

JANUARY  
2026

### 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.pcainc.org](http://www.pcainc.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.

Has it been 5 years since your initial in person training? You must complete your 5 year refresher training

You must also have a satisfactory background check not older than 5 years.

See your Safe Environment Coordinator today to verify your compliance!

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# Speak Up / Be Safe

## Teaching Children Skills for Safety and Confidence

The Archdiocese of Louisville is committed to fostering environments where children are not only protected but also empowered. As part of that commitment, our Catholic schools implement a required Safe Environment curriculum for students called Childhelp Speak Up / Be Safe.

Childhelp Speak Up / Be Safe (SUBS) is the only evidence-based, child-focused curriculum specifically designed to help prevent and interrupt abuse in all its forms. Taught to students from pre-kindergarten through 8th grade the program builds age-appropriate safety skills that help children recognize unsafe situations and know how to seek help.

This comprehensive curriculum addresses a wide range of topics, including:

- Physical, emotional, and sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Bullying and cyberbullying
- Healthy boundaries and relationships

At its heart, Speak Up / Be Safe focuses on strengthening a child's confidence, self-respect, and awareness, while reinforcing that adults are responsible for keeping children safe.

### ELEMENTARY CURRICULUM

#### Grades Pre-K-2

Young students learn that adults are responsible for keeping them safe. Lessons introduce basic personal safety concepts and help children identify safe adults in their lives.

#### Grades 3-5

Students continue to learn about adult responsibility while also being introduced to simple safety rules. They practice recognizing potential risks and identifying trusted adults they can turn to for help.

#### Grades 6-8

As students gain more independence, lessons acknowledge increased responsibility while reinforcing that adults remain responsible for child safety. Students learn resistance strategies and how to seek help when something feels unsafe.

### HIGH SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Each Catholic high school in the Archdiocese of Louisville establishes its own Safe Environment curriculum for grades 9-12.

In general, safe environment education is integrated into theology, health and physical education and biology classes. Topics may include:

Catholic teaching on sexuality  
Healthy dating and family relationships  
Consent and personal boundaries  
Sexual violence and bystander intervention  
How to seek help in an abusive relationship  
Safely ending unhealthy relationships  
Sexting, cyberbullying, and online safety  
Reporting abuse and accessing support



Through Speak Up / Be Safe and ongoing Safe Environment education, our schools strive to nurture students who feel confident, informed, and supported — and who know they are never alone when something doesn't feel right.

For more information about the Speak Up / Be Safe program or Safe Environment efforts in the Archdiocese of Louisville, please contact your school or parish leadership.

# What is Child Sexual Abuse?

Child abuse, including child sexual abuse, has occurred throughout our society for many years. Child abuse is widespread. It cuts across all cultures, religions, and socioeconomic groups. 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 happened. This is a common scenario in post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Many, out of shame, will unfortunately never report the abuse. It is estimated that only 10% of victims report their abuse, which is a fraction of the sexual abuse that 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 example, 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.



When it comes to child sexual abuse, there are many common myths that can unintentionally prevent children from being protected. Research shows that **most abuse is not committed by strangers**, but by someone the child knows and trusts. Another misconception also important to know, is that **children rarely lie about abuse**—the rate of false reporting is no higher than for any other type of crime. Finally, while abuse by clergy has rightly received attention, **there is no evidence that child sexual abuse occurs more frequently in the Catholic Church or in any particular religion, profession, or community**. Abuse occurs across all backgrounds, cultures, and socioeconomic levels.

**Why this matters:** When we understand the realities of abuse, rather than relying on myths, we are better prepared to recognize warning signs, take concerns seriously, and respond quickly and appropriately. Education and awareness are essential tools in creating safe environments where children feel protected, believed, and supported.

## Upcoming Trainings

Check [www.archlou.org/safe](http://www.archlou.org/safe) for the most up-to-date schedule.

Trainings may be postponed or cancelled at short notice due to weather or unforeseen circumstances.

We strongly encourage completing the required in-person training as soon as possible rather than waiting.

Late cancellations will be posted on the website and shared via Archdiocesan broadcast email to parishes and schools.

**IMPORTANT:**  
No one under age 16 will be admitted (including infants).

**Jan 31 - 9:30 a.m.**  
St. Edward School  
(Cafeteria)  
**Spanish presentation only**

**Feb 16 - 6:30 p.m.**  
Flaget Center (Gym)

**Feb 17 - 6:30 p.m.**  
St. Bernard (Gym)

**Feb 23 - 6:30 p.m.**  
St. Margaret Mary  
(Church)

**Notes:**  
Arrive 15 minutes early  
for paperwork

Must attend the full 2  
hours to receive credit

No registration required

**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.



**1.877.KYSAFE-1**

Children may show behavioral or physical changes that signal stress or, in some cases, abuse. Patterns to watch for include: nightmares, fear of certain people, mood swings, regression, sexualized play or language, sudden access to money, self-harm, unexplained pain, bruising or sores.

**If you suspect abuse, you are legally required to contact Child Protective Services (CPS) within 24 hours.** Reporting protects the child, not the reporter—adults acting in good faith are immune from liability, and reports remain confidential. Provide as much information as possible: child's name and location, the suspected abuse, and the suspected perpetrator if known.

*Prompt attention and reporting make a real difference in keeping children safe.*

**Should you have any questions or concerns when reporting abuse, please feel free to contact the Archdiocese of Louisville's Victim Assistance Coordinator, Martine Siegel ([msiegel@archlou.org](mailto:msiegel@archlou.org)) or 502.636.1044**