



Honor Thy Children

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

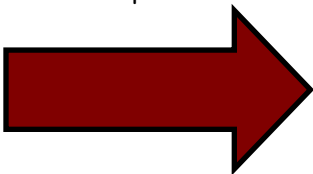
HOW CAN I TELL?

Prevention starts with understanding

According to the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, every 9 minutes, government authorities respond to another report of child sexual abuse.

Child sexual abuse can include sexual contact with a child, but it may also include other actions, like exposing oneself, sharing obscene images, or taking inappropriate photos or videos of a child. These crimes can have a serious impact of the life and development of a child, and can continue to impact the survivor later in life. Learning the warning signs of child sexual abuse is often the first step to protecting a child that is in danger. If you can spot sexual abuse, you can stop it.

How can you tell if your child (or any child) is being sexually abused? Here are some examples.



BEHAVIORS THAT MAY INDICATE ABUSE

FROM THE CHILD

- Not wanting to be let alone with certain people or being afraid to be away from primary caregivers, especially if this is a new behavior.
- Tries to avoid removing clothing to change or bathe
- Resuming behaviors that they had grown out of, such as thumb sucking
- Excessive worry or fearfulness

FROM AN ADULT WHO MAY BE HURTING A CHILD

- Does not respect boundaries or listen when someone tells them "no"
- Engages in touching that a child or child's parents/guardians have indicated as unwanted
- Talks with children about their personal problems or relationships.
- Spends time alone with children outside of their role in the child's life or makes up excuses to be alone with the child.

It's not always easy to identify child sexual abuse—and it can be even more challenging to step in if you suspect something isn't right. If a child tells you that someone makes them uncomfortable, even if they can't tell you anything specific, listen. Talk to someone who can help you figure out if this is something that must be reported. In the meantime, if you are the parent or have influence over the child's schedule, avoid putting the child in a potentially unsafe situation.

"I TOOK A CHILD SAFETY TRAINING IN ANOTHER DIOCESE, WHY DO I HAVE TO TAKE IT AGAIN?"

A common question that gets asked a lot. A training within the Archdiocese of Louisville is required as the Louisville Diocesan specific code of conduct is discussed.

If you are unsure of your training compliance see your parish/school Safe Environment Coordinator or email Scott Fitzgerald, Coordinator of Safe Environment Services (fitzgerald@archlou.org) or call 502.471.2132

Archdiocese of Louisville

Volume VII Issue I

March 2019

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.

EFFECTS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

One of the many topics covered in the Safe Environment Training are the effects sexual abuse has on children. It's important to remember children are individuals, and each is affected differently by abuse.

A number of people could have the trauma of sexual abuse occur in their lives, but each individual will respond and react in varying ways according to his or her personality, family of origin, support systems, gender, age at the time of the abuse, and many other variables too numerous to list. Other factors that impact the magnitude of the damage include duration of abuse, level of intrusiveness/violation of the abuse, type and severity of



threats used to maintain secrecy, relationship to the abuser, the number of perpetrators, and age at the time of disclosure as well as reactions to disclosure.

It is never appropriate to try to predict how a child may be affected by sexual abuse. What someone may deem "mild" sexual abuse may traumatize a child the rest of his or her life. Another child that suffered from what others may describe as "severe" abuse, may, with proper care, heal and live a healthy and productive life. The effects of abuse are unpredictable, and all individuals need support and compassion as they find their unique paths to healing.

A SURVIOR'S STORY

Story credit Elizabeth Transue, MTN News

Tara Walker Lyons is an advocate for a number of issues.

But one issue she is extremely passionate about is one that hits close to home: childhood sexual abuse.

Tara moved to Augusta with her mom at the age of 5. Her parents' divorce was hard on her, but things were about to get even harder.

"Right in the midst of the divorce is when my mom met my stepfather," Tara said.

Tara said as a child she was really outgoing and always participated in school. But her true childhood passion was horses.

"I was always wearing wranglers and ropers to school. I found myself outside a lot," Tara said.

She never expected her love for horses to ever be used against her, until she met her stepfather.

"I didn't know at the time that he would make such a horrible impact on my life, but I still remember the very first time that I laid eyes on him," Tara said.

Tara said the abuse started early. She was 6 years old when it first happened.

"When you are a child and you are sexually abused for the first time,

it's very, very confusing because you don't understand what this is. You don't understand what's going on at all. I still remember the next day, I remember sitting there just thinking, 'What on earth just happened to me?' From that moment on it was just confusion, even throughout the years," Tara said.

The manipulation continued for six more years.

"For me, my predator, my stepfather, used horses. He gave me a horse. He gave me a saddle. He gave me things that were related to my passion. They manipulate that and use that, it's like you have this secret together that is unspoken," Tara said.

It would be at the age of 12 that Tara finally decided to tell law enforcement. A friend, who was also a victim, joined her.

"We said we have to do something. We had told my mom at that point so many times. We told her parents even. We told everyone else and we just felt that the only person left that might be able to help us was the police," Tara said.

In the middle of the night, Tara ran to a Lewis and Clark County Sheriff's deputy's house.

Tara said a woman answered the door, handed her a phone, and had her dial 9-1-1.

Moments later, they were finally

UPCOMING TRAININGS

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

4.15.19

St. Joseph (Bardstown)

4.29.19

Holy Spirit (Louisville)

8.12.19

St. Gregory (Cox's Creek)

9.19.19

St. Augustine (Lebanon)

More trainings are being scheduled for May, June and July and into August.

Keep checking www.archlou.org/safe for updates as trainings cancelled due to inclement weather will be posted here

allowed inside. That's when the deputy came down to assist in the case. "That night he came downstairs and told us we needed to fill out police reports. There was never a time that he didn't make us feel like this wasn't our fault," Tara said.

Tara was then taken to a shelter in Helena.

"I got in the back of the police car and ended up riding with the police officer to Margaret Stewart Children's Shelter in Helena. I think the feeling of riding in the back of the police car was the part that felt the most real and unfair to me because it was me after all that had to sit in the police car. My stepfather never did," Tara said.

In fact, her stepfather would never be arrested or have to register as a sex offender.

Tara said she filed a lawsuit on her 28th birthday. That would follow a deposition where Tara would finally get closure.

"I walked in that room one person, and I left a different person because he admitted. I wish I could give every victim that. I wish every victim could have that because that feeling,

CONT.... "SURVIVOR" (page 4)

REPORTING ABUSE: Q&A

Q. WHO MUST REPORT CHILD ABUSE?

A. As per Kentucky Statute KRS 620.030(1) - Anyone with a reasonable suspicion that a child is dependent, abused or neglected is required to make a report to the Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS). This is done by calling 1-877-KYSAFE1 or 1-877-597-2331 (Toll-Free)

Q. WHAT INFORMATION DO I NEED?

A. When calling try to have the following information available:

- The child's name, sex and approximate age
- The name of the person believed to have been responsible for the abuse or neglect
- A description of the injury, neglect or threatened harm to the child
- The current location of the child; day care or school; home address
- Any immediate risk to the child OR a worker going out to ensure the child's safety (i.e., guns)
- The reporter's name and identifying information IF the caller wishes to give that information; anonymous reports are accepted and investigated.

Q. WHAT LEGAL PROTECTION IS THERE FOR REPORTING SOURCES?

A. Anyone acting upon reasonable cause in the making of a report or acting under KRS 620.030 to 620.050 in good faith shall have immunity from any liability, civil or criminal, that might otherwise be incurred or imposed. Any such participant shall have the same immunity with respect to participation in any judicial proceeding resulting from such report or action. However, any person who knowingly makes a false report and does so with malice shall be guilty of a Class A misdemeanor.

Q. CAN A SOCIAL WORKER TAKE A CHILD OUT OF THE HOME?

A. No. Only the police have that authority if they feel that a child is in imminent danger. A judge can issue an emergency custody order (ECO) for a child to be picked up and held for 72 hours before a hearing. KRS 620.040(3)(b) allows a hospital administrator or a physician treating a child to hold that child without a court order but they must request an ECO within 72 hours.

Should you have any questions about reporting abuse feel free to call Archdiocese of Louisville Victim Assistance Coordinator Martine Siegel any time at 502.636.1044 or email msiegel@archlou.org.

MONTHLY SAFE ENVIRONMENT TIP

Are you going to be working regularly with children in the fall? How about over the summer at say vacation bible school or summer daycare?

Perhaps you've already been to the required Safe Environment Training and have a background check, but is your background check current?



Anyone working regularly with children must have completed the Archdiocese of Louisville's Safe Environment Training and have a background check no older than five years.

Are you due an update? Unsure? Now is the time to check with your school/parish Safe Environment Coordinator

If you don't know who that is, feel free to contact **Scott Fitzgerald** Coordinator of Safe Environment Services (fitzgerald@archlou.org) or phone (502) 471.2132

Don't be turned away at the last minute because you let your background check lapse.

If you're unsure the next few months are a good time to check in with your parish or school to ensure you are compliant, especially if you're going to volunteer in the fall.

Avoid the fall rush!

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 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.

SURVIVOR (CONT...)

that day was one of the best feelings and at the same time one of the worst," Tara said. "I knew immediately that day that my life was going to be different and it was. I just started walking a healthier path. Mentally, physically." Tara said he would go on to complete a community-based sex offender treatment program.

Today, Tara tells her story to inspire other victims to share their stories.

"I think now more than ever, victims are being heard and that's the key," Tara said. "When I first started speaking out I started to look for advocates. I started to look for somebody in Montana that was working on this issue that I could connect with and team up with and learn from. I found out immediately that

there was nobody that was really working on this at the time. I decided right then and there that I didn't want any other victims to feel that way."

Tara is a mom to a two-year-old and a seven-year-old. She's making sure they have the resources to know if something bad happens to them.

"My daughter is seven and I give her honest information. I give her straight facts and I say, 'I am always here for you no matter what and it will never be your fault if anything ever happens to you,'" Tara said.

And that's where Tara's Law comes into play. She hopes every child is taught about childhood sexual abuse. The bill would provide public schools with the framework to help educate

both children and educators on how to address the issue.

"I found out in the newspaper that the sponsor named it after me, Tara's Law," Tara said.

Tara travels the country advocating for survivors. "I would like officers to understand that sometimes you need to look at people and ask yourself not 'What's wrong with you?' but 'What happened to you?'" Tara said. "Come from it from an angle of compassion and empathy. I know that police officers already have such a huge job when dealing with sexual abuse cases, but just a simple gesture of making a victim feel comforted and making a victim feel heard can go for miles in that victim's journey."