

St. James Youth Ministry

Safe Environment Training

- The following training materials have been adapted from Creating Safe and Sacred Places - Identifying, Preventing and Healing Sexual Abuse by Gerard McGlone, SJ, PhD and Mary Shrader.
- We appreciate your time and participation in this very important training. We understand the subject matter is of a sensitive nature; please be sure to ask your Youth Minister, Pastor or parent if you have any questions or would like additional information.
- Please direct any specific questions to saintjamesym@gmail.com

From the Archdiocese...

- To ensure the safety of the children and youth in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, all youth volunteers - both junior high and high school students, including students who are already 18, who work or volunteer with children/youth must receive training on the Boundary Guidelines before undertaking their ministry in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and must sign the Code of Conduct form to verify they understand their obligation.

Just the Facts

Creating Safe and Sacred Places

The following has been created to address some of the more common misconceptions about sexual abuse. The United States Catholic Conference of Bishops has worked to help all parishes implement Safe Environment Training for all in ministry and in Religious Education programs.

Read through each slide and make your selection; the second slide will go into detail about the correct answer. The goal of this 'quiz' is more to educate than to test your knowledge.

Thank you for taking the time to learn about this important subject.

Can a person be sexually abused without being touched?

- a. yes
- b. no

a. Yes

- ◉ In reality, sexual abuse can take on various forms. Exposure to pornography or inappropriate photography of children are forms of reportable abuse.

What percentage of the time does a victim of abuse know his or her abuser?

- a. 50%
- b. 66%
- c. 75%
- d. 90%

d. 90 %

- Sexual abuse happens most often with people who know the victim. Stranger abuse is fairly rare. Abuse also happens in familiar places. Family members, baby-sitters, caretakers or supervisors and those who are familiar to children can be abusers.

Who is the most common sex offender?

- a. a homosexual
- b. a poor person
- c. a white married male
- d. someone who was previously abused

c. a white married male

- Most often, sex offenders are white married males, but sex offenders can be found in every socio economic classification, every race, every sexual orientation, and every description. Contrary to the impression given by the media, sexual offenders are also found in every religious background.

Who is more at risk for sexual abuse ?

- ⦿ a. Kids who don't know the rules of personal safety
- ⦿ b. Kids who do not go to church
- ⦿ c. Kids who are from upper income families

a. Kids who don't know the rules of personal safety

- Children are at risk for sexual abuse whether they live in rural or urban settings, whether they go to church or not, whether they are from lower or upper income families. Abuse cuts across all socio-economic boundaries. But children are more at risk if they have not been taught about personal safety, so that they don't know how to protect themselves against abuse.

Who is more at risk for sexual abuse?

- a. boys
- b. girls
- c. the same risk for both

b. & c.

- The reported statistics indicate that girls are abused more often, but experts say that the actual number is probably quite even. Thus, if you said "girls" that is the correct answer according to statistics of children who have reported their abuse. However, c is probably the more correct answer.

Do most children readily tell an adult, usually a parent, when something serious like sexual abuse happens to them?

a. yes

b. no

b. no

- No. Children frequently do not tell about being sexually abused, especially if the abuser is a member of their family. Those who have broken their silence may not be believed. Abused children often struggle with feeling that they must be bad if God allowed this to happen to them. They might also feel like they will get in trouble if they tell.

Why is abuse not often reported immediately?

- ⦿ a. most reported cases turn out to be false accusations
- ⦿ b. children do not realize they have the ability to make the abuse stop by telling
- ⦿ c. the abuser threatens them if they tell

b. children do not realize they have the ability to make it stop by telling

- B is the most correct answer, but there are lots of different reasons why abuse is not reported immediately. There are often no witnesses. The abuser is often someone who has power and influence over the child, but most children are not threatened with physical violence. Victims may be told to keep it a secret, or sometimes do not understand that they have the right to tell. They may not be capable of understanding that they have the power to break away from the abuse.

Are most offenders
prosecuted and
punished?

- a. yes
- b. no

b. no

- Only a few of those who commit sexual assaults are apprehended and convicted for their crimes. Most convicted sex offenders are eventually released into the community under probation or parole supervision.

Of those who abuse,
how many were abused
themselves?

- a. 10 %
- b. 22 %
- c. 30 %
- d. 48 %

c. 30 %

- Most sex offenders were NOT sexually assaulted as children and most children who are sexually assaulted do not sexually assault others. Not all abusers are acting out of revenge for their past victimization. Factors that may influence a victim to become an abuser include when the abuse happened, what kind of treatment the victim received, how the family reacted to the abuse, how many times the abuse took place, and what kind of abuse was inflicted on the victim.

Four Steps to Creating a Safe and Sacred Place

- ① Practice asking questions.
- ① Trust your instincts.
- ① Be clear about what you want and need.
- ① Get involved.

How would I respond?

Think about how you would respond to these scenarios; like any training, practicing your response to the situation helps promote a sense of understanding and confidence. Share your results with a peer or a parent.

- If a friend told me that he or she had been sexually abused as I child, I would...
- If I were in a situation with someone where I felt uncomfortable and wanted to get out of the situation for my safety, I could tell the person....
- If someone in my community were accused of sexually abusing someone, I would feel....

To Whom Do I Report a Concern?

- If you believe that a teen with whom you are volunteering has been abused, you should talk with one of the following as soon as possible...
- Youth Minister/Confirmation Coordinator
- A Core Team Leader/ Adult Leader
- Your Priest or Deacon
- Your Parent/Guardian

What do I say?

If you find yourself in a situation where you must report questionable behavior, or behaviors that cause you concern, use the following to start the conversation...

- "I have a concern about..."
- "I am uncomfortable around...because..."
- "I was just told by ...and wanted you to be aware."
- "I need help dealing with this particular situation."

You Have Rights

- I have the right to say no to unhealthy behaviors.
- I have the right to tell if something makes me uncomfortable.
- I am not responsible for the inappropriate behavior of others.
- When others engage in unhealthy behaviors, it is not my fault.
- I have the right to safety and security and privacy of my own body.

CONGRATULATIONS!

- Thank you for taking the time to complete this very important training. Return to the [website](#) & complete the remainder of your training.