



# Honor Thy Children

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

## BACK TO SCHOOL Safe Environment



It's back to school and time for Safe Environment Compliance!

Over 340 people attended two Safe Environment Trainings this month at the Flaget Retreat Center and St. Aloysius in Pewee Valley.

Anyone working with children within the Archdiocese of Louisville **MUST** be Safe Environment compliant.



### COMPLIANCE MEANS...

- Initial mandatory attendance at an Archdiocese of Louisville (in-person training)
- 5 year refresher training either on-line or in-person (you **MUST** attend the in-person session first)
- A satisfactory Archdiocese of Louisville issued background check not older than five years

Archdiocese of  
Louisville

July  
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.pcain.org](http://www.pcain.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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# ONLINE REFRESHER TRAINING

The Archdiocese of Louisville has partnered with Catholic Mutual Group to provide an online Safe Environment (*refresher*) training.



CATHOLIC  
MUTUAL GROUP

## IMPORTANT

Members **MUST** attend a mandatory (in-person) training before they can take the online refresher course

If you're due the five year refresher, check in with your parish/school Safe Environment Coordinator. Once they verify your (in-person) date & record in the parish/school database, they will provide you with instructions for the online course.

Taking the online course without first attending the mandatory (in-person) training does not make you compliant.

If you can't locate your parish/school Safe Environment Coordinator, contact Scott Fitzgerald with the Archdiocese of Louisville ([sfitzgerald@archlou.org](mailto:sfitzgerald@archlou.org))



## FALL SPORTS

*Fall sports are ramping up and it's a reminder that it's the school's athletic director's responsibility to ensure all coaches and assistants are Safe Environment complaint and on record at the school*

Parents are always welcome to check with the school/parish Safe Environment Coordinator regarding the status of their child's coach



# DYNAMICS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE: GROOMING AND MANIPULATION

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.

previously established boundary. 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 to gain private access to the child. 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

child for any bad things occurring because of the child telling, while dismissing the wrongdoing of the sexual violation. The threat frequently involves killing someone or something that the child loves, such as a sibling, parent, or pet. This threat is frightening enough to keep the child fearful of revealing the abuse. 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. Should you have any questions surrounding grooming and/or abuse, 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,

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 nor mal so that each progressive, intrusive step is experienced as only a slight violation of the

own abuse. They accept responsibility for causing it and feel as though they deserved it or that they should have stopped it. Threats ensure the child's secrecy. "If you tell, you'll get in trouble," "If you tell, your mommy and daddy will be sad," "If you tell, I'll have to go away" are classic examples of powerful threats used to gain control over children. The threats place responsibility onto the



## Upcoming Trainings

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

All trainings begin at 630 p.m. unless otherwise noted

**8.10.26**  
Flaget (Gym)

**8.17.26**  
St. Joseph (Bardstown)

**8.24.26**  
St. Bernard (Gym)

**8.31.26**  
St. Patrick

**9.15.26**  
St. Aloysius-  
Pewee Valley

**9.28.26**  
St. Margaret Mary

**10.10.26**  
(SPANISH SPEAKING  
ONLY)  
St. Edward  
(9:30 a.m.)

More trainings are planned for October and November and will be posted once finalized.

While you may not be required to attend now, members are strongly encouraged to attend as soon as possible as trainings are subject to postponement/ cancellation given weather, facilities, etc.



**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](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.

## **TAKE NOTE...**

Because the Catholic Church serves thousands of children and youth through its parishes, schools, and ministries, we are committed to providing a safe environment for all. Our Code of Conduct outlines the expectations and best practices for employees and volunteers working with minors.

These guidelines apply in ministry and employment settings and are not intended to govern normal family relationships.

- Avoid being alone with a minor in a residence, rectory, sleeping facility, locker room, rest room, dressing facility, or other closed rooms.
- Never take an overnight trip alone with a minor.
- Avoid driving alone in a vehicle with a young person.
- Avoid providing overnight accommodation for minors in rectories or private homes.
- Exercise caution in communicating with young people through e-mail, through social media, or through the Internet. Only share work/ministry related e-mail addresses with minors.
- Ensure that all social media utilized in ministry with minors are approved and monitored by the appropriate administrator (pastor, principal, director). Ensure that parents are informed about all social media communication utilized by the group/ ministry in question.

**These are just a few examples. For a more detailed list and guidance, refer to the Code of Conduct found on page 35 of the book "Restoring Trust: The Sexual Abuse Policies of the Archdiocese of Louisville" you were provided with at your mandatory initial in-person Safe Environment Training.**

