

FACTS ABOUT SEXUAL ABUSE AND SEXUAL ABUSERS

Question 1: What system protects children at my church?

Question 2: Does our system address the following facts?

***Sexual Molesters will seek access to children where protective barriers are low.**

- Secular organizations tend to be ahead of the Church in implementing effective safety measures.
- Protective barriers in the Church tend to be critically low, creating a target for predators.
- Ongoing failure to address this issue results in increased risk to children in Church programs.

***Less than 10% of sexual molesters will EVER encounter the criminal justice system.**

- A criminal background check – even if working *perfectly* – will identify only a *fraction* of abusers.
- Sexual abusers KNOW when there is no criminal history to be found.
- Criminal background checks are vital, but have limitations: NOT A SILVER BULLET.
- A criminal background check ALONE is an ineffective security system.

***Meta-analysis of 22 American studies reveals 30-40% of girls and 13% of boys experience sexual abuse before age 18. SEXUAL ABUSE IS AN ISSUE OF EPIDEMIC PROPORTION.**

***A national study using information from law enforcement agencies nationwide found 14% of sexual assault victims are ages 0-5, 20% are ages 6-11 and 33% are ages 12-17.**

*** Studies using law enforcement and victim self-reported data found that more than 90% of perpetrators of sexual offenses against minors were male.**

***66% of molestation victims will not tell until adulthood (if ever).**

***90% of victims are abused by someone they *know and trust*.**

- Amber alerts (the ‘snatch and grab’) are a fraction of sexual abuse occurrences.
- ‘Matching tags’ for small children provide an inadequate ‘security system’.

***Sexual molesters groom children AND gatekeepers prior to sexual behavior.**

- Staff members and volunteers are gatekeepers!
- Employees and volunteers MUST understand and recognize the molester’s ‘grooming process’.

***There is NO visual profile for molesters.**

- Most molesters appear helpful, trustworthy and responsible.
- Abusers come from all segments of society. Many are married, educated, with families.

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Love and Norris also serve as directors of MinistrySafe, a consulting organization designed to help churches and Christian ministries understand and address child safety risks related to sexual abuse. For additional information visit www.MinistrySafe.com, or call 817-737-SAFE (7233).