



Child Abuse and Sexual Misconduct

CHURCH SAFETY | PERSONAL AWARENESS

Full Armor Church Training Series

DID YOU KNOW

- **1 in 5 girls and 1 in 20 boys is a victim of child sexual abuse.**
- **Self-report studies show that 20% of adult females and 5-10% of adult males recall a childhood sexual assault or sexual abuse incident.**
- **During a one-year period in the U.S., 16% of youth ages 14 to 17 had been sexually victimized.**
- **Over the course of their lifetime, 28% of U.S. youth ages 14 to 17 had been sexually victimized.**
- **Children are most vulnerable to sexual abuse between the ages of 7 and 13.**

victimsofcrime.org/media/reporting-on-child-sexual-abuse/child-sexual-abuse-statistics

Keeping Churches Safe



www.fullarmorchurch.com

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

Youth and child-care programs are a vital part of every growing church. However, without proper safeguards in place, these ministries can greatly increase our risk for exploitation and criminal or civil liability.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO

Every church should implement the following 4 safety measures:

- 1. Proper screening of volunteers and employees** – Every person working within your ministry, as a volunteer or employee, should complete an application and undergo a background screening process. The courts have overwhelmingly ruled that churches failing to use a “reasonable standard of care” can be held directly liable. All volunteers and workers should have background checks completed prior to serving around minors and every six-months. [Our affordable options.](#)
- 2. Train workers on how to recognize the signs of sexual abuse** – There are a variety of ways in which you can educate your workers on how to recognize and report misconduct or suspected abuse. This can be done through ministry workshops, media tools, or by providing written material during the application process. Whichever method you use, make sure to document the completion of this training for each worker.
- 3. Establish adequate supervision protocols** – You should have clearly defined policies for those working around minors. These guidelines should outline appropriate behavior and responses and be in written form, included within job descriptions, and made available to every worker. Consider developing sign-in procedures, using a two adult per classroom supervision model, and ensure there is an ability to readily observe and monitor workers and students.
- 4. Promptly respond and report incidents of abuse** – Concerns or allegations of abuse should be immediately addressed and reported. A failure to follow state reporting guidelines can result in serious penalties against you or the church.