

The Office of Safe Environment observes: **April – Child Abuse Prevention Month**

April 2019

What are the ways in which we can work together to prevent abuse of our most vulnerable:

The Safe Environment Ministry of the Archdiocese of Anchorage joins Dioceses throughout the United States to observe “April as Child Abuse Prevention Month,” focusing on the promotion of Safe Environments within our Catholic Communities and the Commitment to help in the healing of anyone who has been abused. The Archdiocese of Anchorage can only be effective with your assistance!

Please help us in our efforts:

Ways to Protect Children from Abuse and

Offer Outreach to Victims/Survivors:

- * Say something when a relationship between an adult and a minor or vulnerable person does not seem appropriate, lacks boundaries or you are concerned about physical, sexual, emotional, financial abuse or neglect. Talk with someone about your concerns.
- * When in doubt, consult someone who is knowledgeable such as an advocacy agency, your parish, school or diocese’s safe environment representative or the authorities.
- * Report all allegations of abuse to your local Law Enforcement or The Office of Children’s Services as soon as possible.
- * Learn about the signs of abuse by taking the Archdiocesan online safe environment training accessed from the Archdiocese’s website and available for anyone. www.anchdiocese.org
- * Ensure your child(ren) is/are attending the *Circle of Grace* class(es) in your parish and/or your Catholic school.
- * Tell your children it is okay to say “no” if anyone makes them feel uncomfortable or touches them inappropriately.
- * Tell your children you trust them. If your child makes a report to you, believe him or her. Tell them it is not their fault and bring the allegation to the appropriate public authorities.

Be mindful that:

- * Sexual abuse is about the victim: The individual who has suffered a violation of trust can be impacted throughout his or her entire life. The sense of violation goes deep and feelings of anger, hurt, and betrayal can build long after the abuse has taken place.
- * Feeling heard leads toward healing: Relief from hurt and anger often comes when one feels heard, when one’s pain and concerns are taken seriously, their suffering, pain and anger are acknowledged and there is accountability.



Resource Information Websites:

- Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault:- www.andvsa.org
- Darkness To Light, End Child Sexual Abuse—www.d2l.org
- Standing Together Against Rape—staralaska.com **Crisis Line: (800) 478-8999**
- AWAIC, Alaska Women’s Aid in Crisis, Anchorage—www.awaic.org **907-272-0100**
- Alaska Senior and Disability Services—dhss.alaska.gov/dsds
- United States Conference of Catholic Bishops—www.usccb.org
- National Center for Missing and Exploited Children—www.missingkids.com
- USCCB Anti-Trafficking Initiatives—MRSTraff@usccb.org

If you know of someone who has been harmed by abuse, support them by encouraging them to seek help.

***The Archdiocese’s
Victim’s Assistance
Coordinator’s number is
907-297-7786***