

2023



CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

Archdiocese of Newark RESOURCE PACKET



ARCHDIOCESE
of NEWARK

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Message from the Director

Dear Friends,

During Child Abuse Prevention Month, the Department for the Protection of the Faithful encourages all of you to learn about how you can help prevent child abuse. In concert with our Virtus Protecting God's Children suite of courses, including the Empowering God's Children lessons, taught in our Catholic schools and in our parish faith formation programs, the resources within will help us to 'evangelize' safety for children during the month of April and beyond.

To maximize impact, this resource packet includes lessons for teachers, parent letters, church bulletin announcements, newsletter articles and collateral materials for schools and parishes.

We hope your school or religious education program will participate in some of the month's commemorations, which include Blue Sunday, Wear Blue Day, the Pinwheels for Prevention® and Blue Ribbon campaigns.

This year, Saturday, April 1st is Wear Blue day and we encourage everyone in our community, adults and children alike, to demonstrate the importance of families and communities working together to prevent child abuse **by wearing the color blue on that day, and on the day before, Friday, March 31, while at work.** Take a photo of everyone wearing blue, and post it to Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to show your support for the cause. Make your photos stand out by using props like blue pinwheels from Pinwheels for Prevention.®

On behalf of Cardinal Tobin, I would like to thank you for your support. By participating in these activities, you are joining thousands of other communities, organizations and individuals across the country who are putting children first and are engaging in activities to raise awareness and to promote the prevention of child abuse. Special thanks to the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, which for several years has produced this resource packet, and their generous offer to share the contents.

With gratitude for all you do for the most vulnerable,



Karen Clark
Director, Department for the Protection of the Faithful



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Packet Information

History of National Child Abuse Prevention Month

Child Abuse Prevention Month was established in 1979 and began to be observed each April since its first presidential proclamation in 1983.

This month-long observance reminds us of our responsibility to make positive choices that impact the safety and well-being of children. We are called through scripture and teaching to protect the life and dignity of the human person. Throughout the year, but especially in the month of April, all are asked to increase awareness, to educate ourselves and the community, and to seek healing for those who have been so tragically impacted by this horror.

To this end, we encourage our parishes, schools, and programs to show their solidarity to this effort by wearing blue ribbons, dressing in blue clothes on March 31st, creating pinwheel gardens, decorating windows with pinwheels, and by praying for the healing for those who have suffered.

As we continue our commitment to promoting the safety of children and preventing child abuse, we give thanks for the many members of our community who join in the mission to stop abuse and create positive, healthy environments for all children.

Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People

In the Archdiocese of Newark we are committed to protecting children and adults from harm. Our work with young people and vulnerable adults is directed by the [Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People](#), a comprehensive set of procedures established by the [United States Conference of Catholic Bishops](#) (USCCB) in June 2002 and revised in 2005, 2011 and 2018.

The Charter directs action for:

- ◇ Creating a safe environment for children and young people;
- ◇ Providing healing and reconciliation to victims and survivors;
- ◇ Responding promptly and effectively to allegations of sexual abuse of minors by Catholic clergy;
- ◇ Cooperating with civil authorities;



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- ◇ Disciplining offenders;
- ◇ Providing means of accountability for the future to ensure issues continue to be effectively dealt with through the [Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection](#) and the [National Review Board](#).

We invite you to use this information as well as the activities for ideas for observing National Child Abuse Prevention Month. These resources come from a variety of sources, including the United States Conference for Catholic Bishops (USCCB), Prevent Child Abuse America, and BlueSunday.org.

Using this Packet

This packet has been designed to give you information and ideas for observing National Child Abuse Prevention Month. These resources come from a variety of sources, including Prevent Child Abuse America, the United States Conference for Catholic Bishops (USCCB), [childfamilyresources.org](#), and [BlueSunday.org](#), as well as the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

Permission for Use

You are encouraged to use the packet materials as they are currently written or adapt them to fit your own needs. If you adapt any of the material please give credit to the original source.

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2023 Activity Guide

Blue Ribbon Campaign

Blue ribbons are the symbol for National Child Abuse Prevention Month. Wearing a blue ribbon throughout the month is a simple way to demonstrate your support and send the message that child abuse and protecting children is of the utmost priority for your parish or school.

Pinwheels for Prevention®

Pinwheels are a symbol of a carefree childhood and pinwheel gardens are an outward sign of awareness and commitment to prevent child abuse. They can be planted in patches of grass, planters, and garden beds. They can even be ‘planted’ by posting colored pictures in office and school windows. Pinwheels for Prevention® events are a great opportunity to show our solidarity with those who have been affected by child abuse, work to prevent future abuse, and share information about the services we offer with the larger community.

Wear Blue Day —Wear the Color Blue!

This year, Wear Blue Day is Saturday, April 1. We encourage the entire Archdiocesan community to come together to show solidarity. Everyone in our community, adults and children alike, are encouraged to demonstrate the importance of families and communities working together to prevent child abuse **by wearing the color blue on Friday, March 31**. The Archdiocese’s Wear Blue Day posters and flyers are included in this packet to help you get the word out and encourage participation.

Blue Sunday National Day of Prayer

Beginning in 1994 with 20 churches, Blue Sunday has been taking place the **last Sunday of April** and has grown to include over seven million participants on five continents. Each Archdiocesan parish is encouraged to take a moment during their Masses on Blue Sunday to pray for abused and exploited children and for those who rescue them. Resources for your Blue Sunday prayer service are included.



Handout

Basic Facts about Child Sexual Abuse

Source: **DoSomething.org**

1. It's estimated that at least 1 in 7 children in the US has experienced child abuse and/or neglect in the past year.[\[1\]](#)
2. Neglect is the most common form of child abuse, followed by physical abuse, sexual abuse, and psychological abuse.[\[2\]](#)
3. In 2018, about 16% of children who were abused experienced more than one kind of maltreatment.[\[3\]](#)
4. Boys and girls experience similar rates of childhood abuse (48.6% and 51% respectively).[\[4\]](#)
5. Rates of child abuse and neglect are 5 times higher for children in families with low socio-economic status compared to children in families with higher socio-economic status.[\[5\]](#)
6. Children younger than one year old are the most vulnerable to maltreatment, accounting for almost half of child fatalities from abuse in 2018.[\[6\]](#)
7. In 2018, 76% of child abuse perpetrators were a parent to their victim.[\[7\]](#)
8. In 2018, 62% of children placed in foster care were removed from their homes due to abusive neglect, totaling over 160,000 children.[\[8\]](#)
9. Children who experienced any form of violence in childhood have a 13% greater likelihood of not graduating from high school.[\[9\]](#)
10. Adult survivors of childhood abuse are more likely to experience mental health difficulties, including depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, PTSD, eating disorders, and substance use disorders.[\[10\]](#)
11. Adult survivors of childhood abuse are more likely to engage in high-risk behaviors like smoking, alcohol and drug use, and unsafe sex. They're also more likely to report overall lower health than those who haven't experienced childhood abuse.[\[11\]](#)

Additional Resources

National Child Abuse Hotline: 24/7 at 1-800-422-4453

National Domestic Violence Hotline: 24/7 at 1-800-799-7233

National Sexual Assault Hotline: 24/7 at 1-800-656-4673

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 24/7 at 1-800-273-8255

How can adults reduce the risk of children being abused?

- ◇ Adults can develop positive, open communication with children. Talk to them about their day, friends, feelings, concerns, etc. When children talk to you, listen and be supportive.
- ◇ Model and teach about healthy relationships. Help children to create and express boundaries about being touched.
- ◇ Teach children about healthy sexual development. Give them the correct names for ALL body parts.



Handout

Basic Facts about Child Sexual Abuse

- ◇ Teach children that secrets about touching and being touched are not safe secrets to keep.
- ◇ Help children to identify adults they trust in whom they can confide.
- ◇ Monitor children's internet use. Talk to them about the dangers of internet predators.
- ◇ If a child or adolescent exhibits inappropriate sexual behavior, talk with a professional to assess the need for help.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Helpline: 24/7 at 1-800-622-4357

Crisis Text Line: 24/7 text DS to 741741

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "Child Abuse & Neglect: Fast Facts." Accessed July 31, 2020. <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/fastfact.html>
2. U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau. "Child Maltreatment 2018." Accessed July 31, 2020. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/research-data-technology/statistics-research/child-maltreatment>
3. U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau. "Child Maltreatment 2018." Accessed July 31, 2020. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/research-data-technology/statistics-research/child-maltreatment>
4. The National Resource Center for Reaching Victims. "Youth Victimization Fact Sheet." Accessed July 31, 2020. <https://education.victimsofcrime.org/?mdocs-file=360>
5. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "Child Abuse & Neglect: Fast Facts." Accessed July 31, 2020. <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/fastfact.html>
6. U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau. "Child Maltreatment 2018." Accessed July 31, 2020. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/research-data-technology/statistics-research/child-maltreatment>
7. U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau. "Child Maltreatment 2018." Accessed July 31, 2020. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/research-data-technology/statistics-research/child-maltreatment>
8. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau. "The AFCARS Report #26". Accessed August 3, 2020. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/afcarsreport26.pdf>.
9. World Health Organization. "Child Maltreatment." Accessed July 31, 2020. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/child-maltreatment>.
10. Cameranesi, Margherita et al. "Linking a History of Childhood Abuse to Adult Health Among Canadians: A Structural Equation Modelling Analysis" International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health. May 31, 2019. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6603908/>.
11. Springer, Kristen et al. "The Long-term Health Outcomes of Childhood Abuse." Journal of General Internal Medicine. October 18, 2003. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1494926/>.



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Archdiocese of Newark Reporting and Response Protocols

In the Archdiocese of Newark, criminal background checks are required before the first day of service by all clergy and employees. Same is required of volunteers who encounter minors as part of their service. Every five years, the background check is re-run. All checks except for school teachers are done through Sterling. School teachers are fingerprinted as part of the NJ DOE process and are valid as long as the person is a NJ school teacher. In person Virtus *Protecting God's Children* workshop is required in the first 30 days of service by all clergy and employees. Same is required for volunteers who encounter minors as part of their service. Every five years, the training must be updated, either with another in-person class, or via a monthly and annual commitment.

Reporting:

In accordance with New Jersey law, any citizen who has cause to believe a minor may have been or is being abused is required to report his or her suspicions to the New Jersey Division of Child Protection and Permanency. CP&P maintains a 24-hour child abuse hotline at **1-877-NJ ABUSE (652-2873)**.

In addition to reporting to the New Jersey Division of Child Protection and Permanency, Church personnel shall immediately report any suspected or known abuse of minors to the Liaison under the Memorandum of Understanding.

In addition to reporting to the New Jersey Division of Child Protection and Permanency (CP&P) and the MOU Liaison, Church personnel shall report any suspected or known abuse of minors that may have been perpetrated by Church personnel directly to the Director, Office of Child and Youth Protection. Reports of suspected abuse will be treated as confidential to the extent possible.

Response:

1. When an allegation of sexual misconduct with a minor has been made against a clergy member, employee, or volunteer of the Archdiocese, and has been made known to the Archdiocese, whether directly from the alleged survivor or through another entity, the alleged survivor can expect that the Archdiocese, usually the Director of the Department for the Protection of the Faithful, will promptly report all allegations of abuse of a minor, past or present, to the prosecutor's office, will report the allegation to civil authorities, and will acknowledge the allegation in writing to the alleged survivor or their counsel.
2. The alleged survivor is encouraged to personally report any allegation of sexual misconduct directly to both ecclesiastical and law enforcement authorities.
3. Archdiocesan investigations may proceed after clearance from law enforcement.

Learn more about the Archdiocese of Newark's policies on our website: [Protection of the Faithful | Archdiocese of Newark \(rcan.org\)](https://www.archdioceseofnewark.org/Protection-of-the-Faithful)

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

Pinwheels for Prevention[®] Resources



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Pinwheels for Prevention® Overview

Why Pinwheels for Prevention?

Pinwheels are a symbol for innocence and joy. Pinwheels are an uplifting symbol used during Child Abuse Prevention Month to promote healthy childhoods. The color blue is a symbol of hope and heavenly grace. We encourage our community to display a pinwheel throughout the month of April to support the end of child abuse and exploitation.

Because We All Play a Role in the Lives of Children!

Each April, the Office for Child and Youth Protection (OCYP) under the Department for the Protection of the Faithful, and the Archdiocesan Schools Office sponsor Pinwheels for Prevention,™ in commemoration of National Child Abuse Prevention Month.

We invite your school/religious education program to get involved by encouraging kindergarten through second grade students to make or color a pinwheel using one of the activity sheets included in this packet. These handouts may also be downloaded from the following links:

[Pinwheel Coloring Sheet](#)

[Making Your Own Pinwheel](#)

Your pinwheels can then be displayed in windows throughout the month of April where they may be seen by members of the community, demonstrating our solidarity in the fight against child abuse!

We encourage you to **take a picture** of your display and post it to Facebook, Twitter and Instagram with #PromiseToProtect to show your support for the cause. Make your photos stand out by using props like blue pinwheels from Pinwheels for Prevention.



Pinwheels for Prevention® : Activity Implementation

Day before Activity

Because conversations around child abuse and personal safety can be sensitive, it is important that the letter to parents is sent home one or two days prior to introducing the activity. This will allow parents/guardians an opportunity to opt their child out of the activity if they wish.



Introducing the Activity

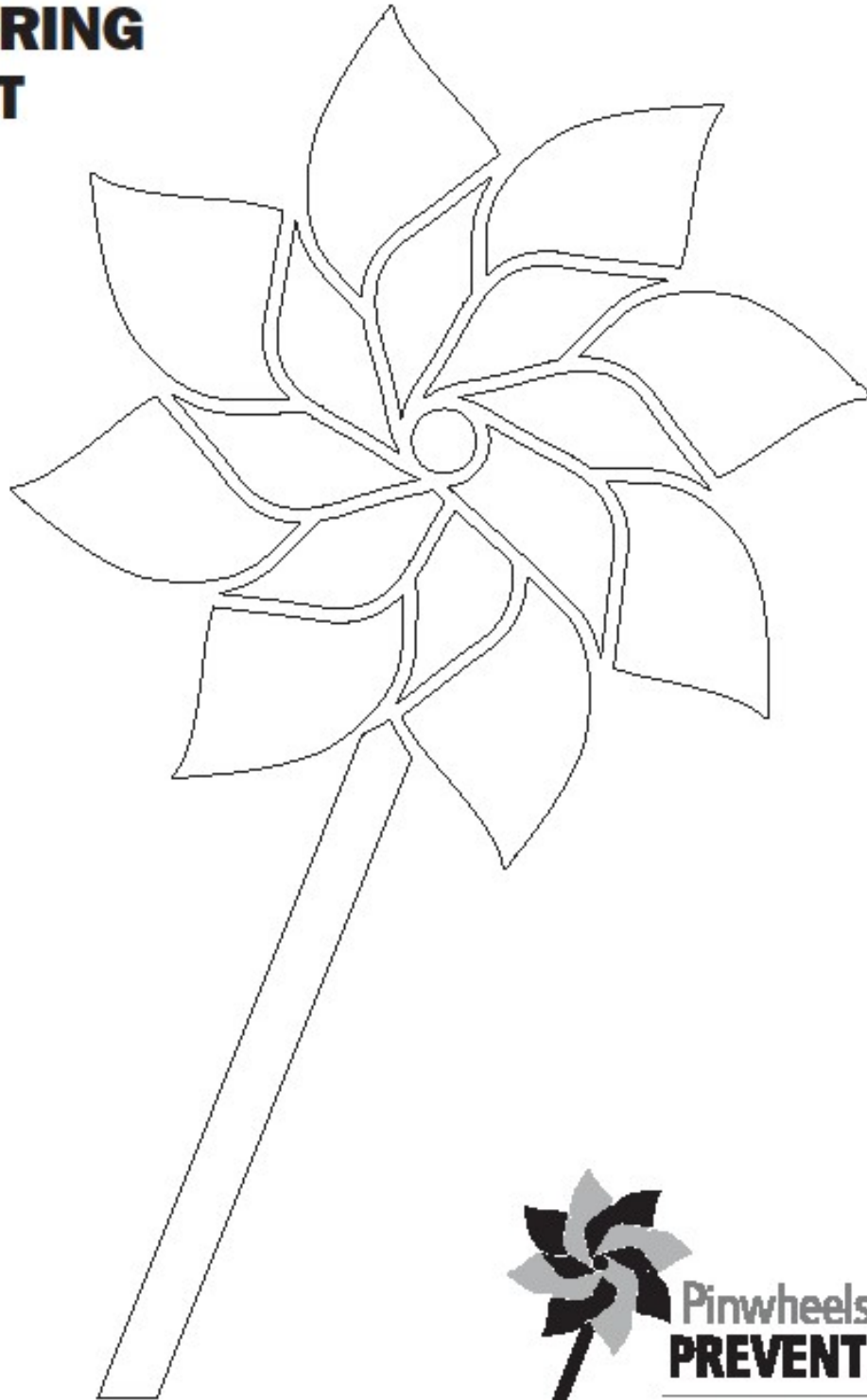
- ◇ Child Abuse Awareness Month is a time for everyone across America to take a stand against hurting children. Explain to students that they will be coloring pinwheels and putting them in their school's windows for everyone to see and be reminded not to hurt children. Let them know that other children are doing this activity and they will see pinwheel's in the windows of schools and parishes throughout the Archdiocese.
- ◇ Child abuse can be explained as situations when grownups do not take care of children the way they should or maybe even hurt them. You can use the following age-appropriate examples: children not always having enough food to eat, not having a way to get to school, or not being cared for when they are sick.
- ◇ This concept of different kinds of touch is introduced in the personal safety programs in the Archdiocese's Catholic school classrooms and should be familiar to students. Ask children to describe good, bad and confusing touches.
- ◇ The concept of private parts is introduced during the child safety programs taught in the Archdiocese's first grade classrooms. Children should be able to identify their private parts as the parts of their bodies covered by a bathing suit. Ask children why they cover private parts and discuss the concept of privacy. Ask children what they should do if someone touches them in a way that confuses them?

Following the Activity

Provide students with any of the handouts provided in the Resources for Families section.



PINWHEEL COLORING SHEET



preventchildabuse.org



Pinwheels for
PREVENTION

**Prevent Child Abuse
America**



ARCHDIOCESE
of NEWARK



919-829-8009
www.preventchildabusenc.org

 **Prevent Child Abuse**
North Carolina



MAKING YOUR OWN PINWHEEL

Here's a craft project that will allow children a chance to participate in your community's **Pinwheels for Prevention** activities. This activity can be used in schools, daycare centers, after-school programs, church groups, etc.

Materials

- a push pin
- a square piece of construction paper (about 8.5" x 8.5")
- a sharpened pencil with eraser
- scissors

Procedure

1. Lay the square paper flat on a table and draw a line diagonally from each corner to the opposite corner.
2. Mark the center of the square where the two lines cross and punch a small hole through it with the pencil tip.
3. Next, cut along each line stopping about an inch from the hole in the center of the square.
4. Take the pin and punch a hole in the top left corner of each of the four flaps. (No two holes should be next to each other.)
5. Pick-up a flap at a punched corner and carefully curve it over toward the center hole, securing it with the pin.
6. Repeat this for the other flaps.
7. When all four flaps are held by the pin, carefully lift the paper without letting the flaps unfurl.
8. Lay the pencil flat on a table and carefully push the point of the push pin into the side of the eraser.
9. Now your pinwheel is complete and ready to go. Pick-up the pinwheel near the pencil point and let it catch the wind.

preventchildabuse.org



Pinwheels for
PREVENTION

**Prevent Child Abuse
America**

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

Blue Ribbon Campaign



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The History of the Blue Ribbon Campaign:

The Blue-Ribbon Campaign began in Virginia in 1989 when a grandmother, Bonnie W. Finney, tied a blue ribbon to the antenna of her van to symbolize the bruises of her grandson, but it also “made people wonder.” The story she told to inquisitive community members was a tragic story about the abuse of her grandchildren, which ultimately led to her grandson’s brutal death.

The story of Bonnie Finney demonstrates the effect that just one concerned citizen can have on raising public awareness of child abuse and in promoting prevention. Since Bonnie Finney first tied that blue ribbon to her van antenna, millions of people across the country have participated in blue ribbon campaigns. Each year, more people join the effort by wearing blue ribbons, encouraging others to wear and display them, and getting involved in community activities to “make people wonder” about the significance of the blue ribbon.



CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

Parish Resources



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Parish Resources

In this section, you will find resources created for our parishes to celebrate Blue Sunday and commemorate Child Abuse Prevention Month throughout the month of April.

Included you will find:

- Sample prayers
- Petitions
- Suggestions for homily talking points
- Bible verses
- Bulletin inserts

Additional resources for parishes may be found on the United States Conference for Catholic Bishops (USCCB) [website](#) and well as on the Blue Sunday National Day of Prayer [website](#).



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Sample Prayers for Blue Sunday

Sample Prayer One

Lord, thank You for our children,
For them we kneel and pray.
Help us teach them of Your kindness,
Of Your mercy and Your way.
Help us show them of Your love,
Your strength and safety, too.
Help us show them who You are.
Help us treat them like You do.

Let's pray, educate ourselves,
and volunteer for the children
of our nation until black and blue
are just colors in their crayon box.

Sample Prayer Two

Leader: God, you bless us with children, in our church, in our families, and in our community.

People: We give you thanks for young lives, full of hope and promise.

Leader: Let nothing harm your precious children, God.

People: Make us protectors of our precious children, Lord.

Leader: May our church be a place of safety for all who are in our care.

People: May it be a place of healing and hope for those who have experienced abuse or neglect.

Leader: God, we place our children under the shelter of your wings,

People: And you entrust us with their protection.

Leader: Loving God, give us grace to be faithful in this work.

All: Amen.



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Sample Prayers for Blue Sunday

Sample Prayer Three

Dear Lord,

We ask *You* to bless these *Your* holy people who have participated in the Church's efforts to help stop child sexual abuse.

Open their hearts to *Your* call to be the "ears, eyes and voice of children and young people" everywhere.

Give them the vision and grace needed to fulfill the special commitments that each of them has made to making their homes, churches, schools, communities and world a safer place for all God's Children.

Amen

Sample Prayer Four

Dear Lord, We ask *You* to bless these *Your* holy people who have participated in the Church's efforts to help stop child sexual abuse.

Open their hearts to *Your* call to be the "ears, eyes and voice of children and young people" everywhere.

Give them the vision and grace needed to fulfill the special commitments that each of them has made to making their homes, churches, schools, communities and world a safer place for all God's Children.

Amen

Sample Prayer Five

Holy Spirit, comforter of hearts, heal your people's wounds and transform brokenness into wholeness.

Grant us the courage and wisdom, humility and grace, to act with justice.

Breathe wisdom into our prayers and labors.

Grant that all harmed by abuse may find peace and justice.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

Amen



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Petitions

- ◇ For the Church and its leaders, especially our Holy Father, the bishops and all entrusted with the care of the Lord's flock, that they may truly fill the role of shepherd and protect all in their flock, especially children and young people, we pray to the Lord...
- ◇ For civic leaders entrusted with upholding the common good and justice for all that they may act in ways that show their commitment to the protection of all, especially children and young people, we pray to the Lord...
- ◇ For parents, mentors, teachers, coaches and all who work with children and young people, that they may look after them with the watchful eye of the shepherd, we pray to the Lord...
- ◇ For families who are the first to show God's love, that they may have the necessary support to provide safe and nurturing environments for children and young people, we pray to the Lord...
- ◇ For those who have suffered abuse, that they may experience God's profound love for them and God's healing powers, we pray to the Lord...
- ◇ For those who provide help for the abused: counselors, therapists, and advocates that they may act with wisdom and compassion in their healing ministry, we pray to the Lord...
- ◇ For those affected by abuse in anyway, that they may have the courage to tell their story, to reach for healing, we pray to the Lord...

Homily Helps

Talking Points

- ◇ Throughout the Gospel, Christ calls upon his followers to care for the most vulnerable among us, especially children. Our faith also calls for us to uphold the value of human life and the dignity of the human person. The protection of children is the responsibility of the entire Church, including the faithful.
- ◇ During Child Abuse Prevention Month, we are reminded of the call to be instruments of justice, working for the common good of all, which includes the protection of children. As Jesus entrusts to Peter the care of the flock, we are reminded that this responsibility belongs to everyone as a matter of charity and justice. Child Abuse Prevention Month should lead to heightened awareness of the need to be vigilant about providing a safe environment for all within the Church and for our communities.
- ◇ Recent statistics tell us one out of every four girls, and one out of every six boys, are assaulted before they turn 18. If those statistics are correct, on every Sunday in our congregation are people who have been abused and are feeling the pain of that abuse. Reaching out to all victims of abuse is critical in bringing hope and the love of Christ to them. Our diocese is here to provide anyone suffering from abuse with steps towards healing.

Bible Verses

- ◇ Honor your father and your mother, that you may have a long life in the land the LORD your God is giving you. (EX 20:12)
- ◇ Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and reject not your mother's teaching; A graceful diadem will they be for your head; a pendant for your neck. (PV 1: 8-9)
- ◇ Train the young in the way they should go; even when old, they will not swerve from it. (PV 22:6)



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Bible Verses (Continued)

- ◇ At that time the disciples approached Jesus and said, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" He called a child over, placed it in their midst, and said, "Amen, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever receives one child such as this in my name receives me." (MT 18: 2-6)
- ◇ "See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that their angels in heaven always look upon the face of my heavenly Father." (MT 18:10)
- ◇ Taking a child he placed it in their midst, and putting his arms around it he said to them, "Whoever receives one child such as this in my name, receives me; and whoever receives me, receives not me but the One who sent me." (MK 9: 36-37)
- ◇ And people were bringing children to him that he might touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this he became indignant and said to them, "Let the children come to me; do not prevent them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Amen, I say to you, whoever does not accept the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it." Then he embraced them and blessed them, placing his hands on them. (MK 10: 13-16)

Source: United States Conference for Catholic Bishops *Child Abuse Prevention Month Resource Guide*



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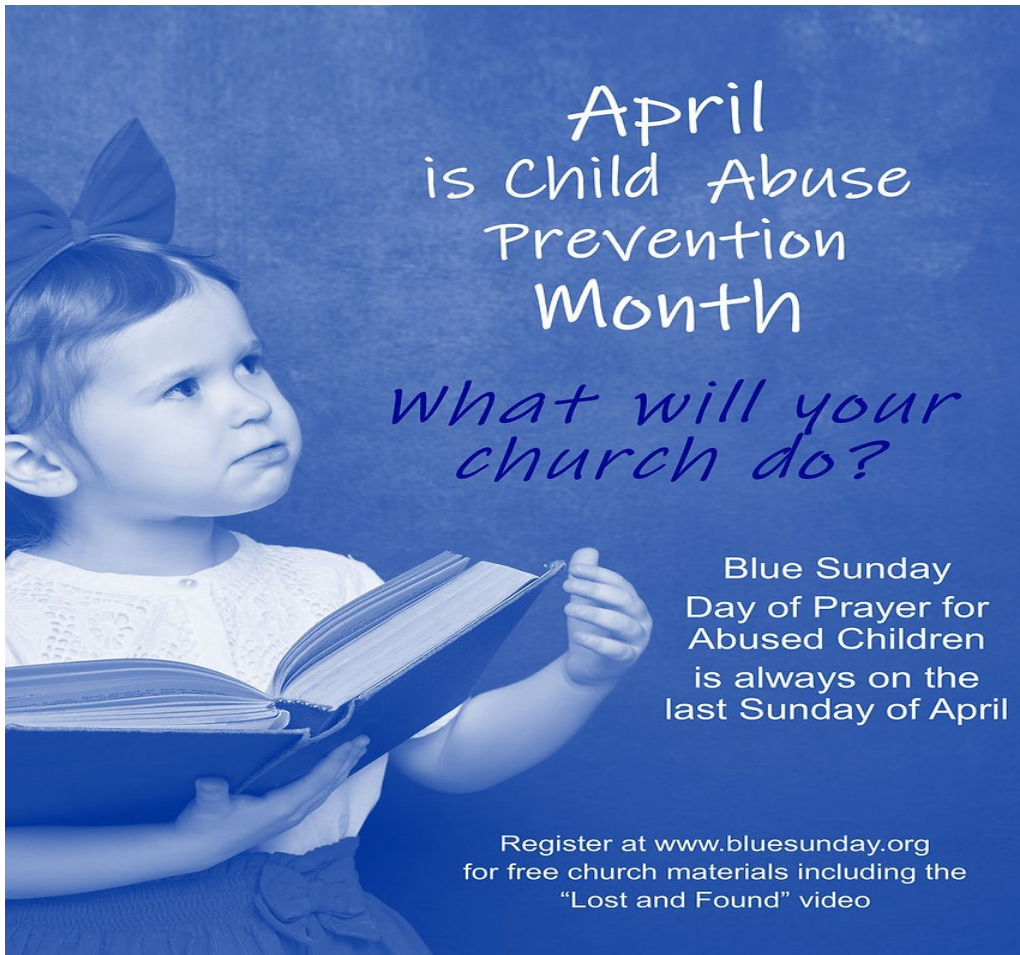
Bulletin Blurbs for April

- ◇ April 2: Palm Sunday: The Archdiocese of Newark is committed to helping survivors of childhood sexual abuse heal. Gina Criscuolo, the Coordinator of the Office of Accompaniment, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, provides compassionate and supportive assistance to those who have been the victims/survivors of child sexual abuse. Please visit www.rcan.org and click Safe Environment, or call (973) 497-4210.
- ◇ April 9: Easter Sunday: Safe Environment training is taking place in all dioceses of the United States. In the Archdiocese of Newark, over 100,000 adults have received training to recognize, respond and report child sexual abuse and exploitation since 2003, in our multi-class in-person and online curriculum. Call Ralph Lilore, the Coordinator of the Office of Child and Youth Protection, for more information on this training. He can be reached at (973) 497-4578.
- ◇ April 16: All our Catholic school children, all children in parish faith formation programs receive annual training in how to keep themselves safe. Do you know the risks children face from their use of the Internet and cell phone apps? Do you speak about these risks with the children in your life? Would you know how to report a disclosure? Find out more about this training by going to www.rcan.org, and clicking Safe Environment, and then click Empowering God's Children.
- ◇ April 23: Do you need help having conversations with the children in your life about how to keep themselves safe? There is a one-hour module you can take to help. There is no charge for this training—just email sect@rcan.org
- ◇ April 30: Keep the conversation alive—maintain appropriate boundaries with youth, and know that there is hope for them to grow up safe and free from abuse. Take the Virtus Protecting God's Children workshop. Sign up at www.virtus.org

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Blue Sunday National Day of Prayer

Beginning in 1994 with 20 churches, Blue Sunday takes place every year on the **last Sunday in April** and has grown to include over seven million participants on five continents. All Archdiocese parishes are encouraged to take a moment during their Masses on Blue Sunday which will be held on April 30, 2023, to pray for abused and exploited children and for those who have rescued them.



April
is Child Abuse
Prevention
Month

*What will your
church do?*

Blue Sunday
Day of Prayer for
Abused Children
is always on the
last Sunday of April

Register at www.bluesunday.org
for free church materials including the
"Lost and Found" video

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

Wear Blue Day Resources



Wear Blue Day Suggestions for Participation

Why Wear Blue?

Wear Blue Day is a project of the National Exchange Club. The project was created to educate members and the community about the scope, nature, and consequences of child abuse and child sexual abuse and to promote positive efforts in the community to end this problem. Historically the project invited all member to wear blue on Mondays during April. The intention is to draw attention to the issue by wearing blue, and letting others know what Blue Monday is about.

Why wear blue?

- Wearing blue on Wear Blue Day shows your commitment to preventing child abuse and supporting strong families and healthy children of our Archdiocesan community.
- Wearing blue raises awareness and encourages others to support child abuse prevention efforts.
- Wearing blue shows that you believe that all children matter and deserve to have happy childhoods.

Any school or parish could take in this project, traditionally observed on the **last Monday in April**, but this year observed on Saturday, April 1, and the day before (the last workday of March) as part of a commitment to address this issue in our schools and communities and raise awareness about the plight of many children in our environments. More info is at [Wear Blue Day | Child & Family Resources \(childfamilyresources.org\)](https://www.childfamilyresources.org) .

- ◇ Don't forget to tell the staff about this endeavor as well. Take pictures and post on social media and send them to the Department for the Protection of the Faithful to be shared on our website at sect@rcan.org



CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

Resources for Families (handouts)

Handout

Reconnect With Families

Source: [5 Simple Ways to Reconnect with Your Family | Guide for Busy Parents \(jacquieellis.com\)](https://www.jacquieellis.com/5-simple-ways-to-reconnect-with-your-family/)

Being busy can complicate life and create a disconnect within your family. Work schedules, school, extra-curricular activities, and social commitments are common factors for a busy life for many of us. Add technology to the mix and we can easily appear to be connecting with our family, but we truly aren't. Here are 5 simple ways to reconnect with your family.

1. Put down the electronics
2. Become interested in their passion
3. Plan a Family fun night
4. Enjoy backyard barbecues and campfires
5. Take road trips, even short ones

- ◇ Staying connected builds healthy, strong relationships that help families in stressful times. It helps married couples be more than just parents to their kids. Kids learn to have healthy relationships with others and to know that their parents have their back in tough times.
- ◇ Most of all, finding ways to reconnect with your family will create long-lasting memories. Memories that don't have to cost thousands of dollars but are worth infinitely more.

How can adults reduce the risk of children being abused?

- ◇ Adults can develop positive, open communication with children. Talk to them about their day, friends, feelings, concerns, etc. When children talk to you, listen and be supportive.
- ◇ Model and teach about healthy relationships. Help children to create and express boundaries about being touched.
- ◇ Teach children about healthy sexual development. Give them the correct names for ALL body parts.
- ◇ Teach children that secrets about touching and being touched are not safe secrets to keep.
- ◇ Help children to identify adults they trust with whom they can confide.
- ◇ Monitor children's internet use. Talk to them about the dangers of internet predators.
- ◇ If a child or adolescent exhibits inappropriate sexual behavior, talk with a professional to assess the need for help.

Handout

Prevention Messages for Children by Age

Based on research, parents should teach the following sexual abuse prevention concepts at each of the following ages.

Pre-K and Kindergarten Age

- ◇ Teach about personal boundaries and the concept of privacy by modeling behavior.
- ◇ Teach children about private parts (parts of the body covered by a bathing suit).
- ◇ Explain that no one should touch the private parts of their bodies except a doctor or parent to help keep them clean and safe.
- ◇ Teach children If someone touches their private parts they should tell you or an adult right away and keep telling until someone believes them.

Elementary School

- ◇ Continue to discuss privacy and that private parts are private.
- ◇ Children can be taught topics that require more maturity. These can include anatomy, reproduction and impending changes that will come with puberty.
- ◇ Monitor children's understanding of topics related to sexuality.
- ◇ Take advantage of teachable moments and find opportunities to discuss topics of interest to the child.

Middle and High School Age

- ◇ This is the perfect time for parents to discuss family values, and religious and moral beliefs around relationships.
- ◇ Discussions should continue to emphasize body ownership, respectful relationships, and avoiding harmful situations and self-respect.

Handout

Mensajes de prevención para niños

Según las investigaciones, los padres deben enseñar los siguientes conceptos de prevención de abuso sexual en cada una de las siguientes edades:

Edad prekinder y kindergarten

- ◇ Enseñe lo que son los límites personales y el concepto de la privacidad a través de un modelo del comportamiento.
- ◇ Enseñe a los niños sobre las partes privadas (las partes del cuerpo que cubre un traje de baño).
- ◇ Explíqueles que nadie debe tocar las partes privadas de sus cuerpos excepto un doctor o padre para ayudarlos a mantenerlas limpias y seguras.
- ◇ Enseñe a los niños que si alguien toca sus partes privadas, ellos deben decírselo a usted o a un adulto de inmediato y seguir diciéndolo hasta que alguien les crea.

Escuela elemental

- ◇ Siga hablando sobre la privacidad y que las partes privadas son privadas.
- ◇ A los niños se les pueden enseñar temas que requieren más madurez. Estos pueden incluir anatomía, reproducción y los cambios inminentes que acompañan a la pubertad.
- ◇ Monitoree la comprensión de los niños sobre los temas relacionados con la sexualidad.
- ◇ Aproveche los momentos educativos y busque las oportunidades para hablar sobre temas de interés para el niño.

Escuela secundaria y superior

Handout

Protective Factors for Reducing the Likelihood of Child Abuse

Individual or Group	Protective Factors
Individual/Child Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good health Positive peer relationships Strong, positive social networks Hobbies/interests High self-esteem Independence Secure attachment with parent/s Social skills Positive disposition
Family/Parental Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure attachment with child Positive parent-child relationship Supportive family environment Extended family networks High level of parental education Parental resilience Concrete support for parents Sound parental coping skills Awareness of stages in child development
Community/Environmental Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong, positive social networks Stable housing Employment Family expectations of pro-social behavior Well-resourced schools available in neighborhood Access to health and social services

Handout

Happy Family Coloring Activity

Happy Families

Write a story or draw a picture of your family doing something from the happy families list.



Show respect even when they disagree

Take turns talking and listening

Share the chores

Play together

Give hugs everyday

Learn to apologize and to forgive

Do things together

Protect each other

Learn Strong Happy Families - Their Family Strengths Research Project



Handout

Familias Felices

Familias Felices

Escribe una historia o dibuja a tu familia haciendo algo de la lista de Familias Felices.



Mostrando respeto aún cuando no están de acuerdo

Tomando turnos para hablar y escuchar

Compartiendo el trabajo cotidiano

Jugando juntos

Abrasándose diariamente

Aprendiendo a disculparse y a perdonar las ofensas

Haciendo alguna cosa juntos

Protegiéndose mutuamente

Handout

Happy Family Activity Discussion Guide

Happy Families:

1. Show respect even when they disagree

There is a right way and a wrong way to settle a fight. Hitting each other is always wrong. Using hurtful words is always wrong. You don't have to agree about everything.

2. Take turns talking and listening

It is fun to know what everyone is thinking. Don't interrupt or make fun of others when they say something you don't agree with.

3. Share the chores

Instead of dreading chores make a game of it. See who can finish first or whose room is cleanest. Cleaning time can double as music time. Turn up the music or better yet sing! Do a little everyday then your room won't be so hard to clean. Ask your parents what you can do to help instead of waiting to be asked. This makes parents very happy. Warning: It might even make them faint!

4. Play together

Parents stay very busy. Playing together doesn't have to mean a video or board game. You can make a game out of anything. How about playing I Spy, Tic Tac Toe, or telling stories or jokes.

5. Give hugs everyday

Don't just get hugs be a hugger!

6. Learn to apologize and to forgive

Everyone makes mistakes sometimes. The first person to apologize always feels better about themselves. Practice saying, "I'm really sad and I'm really sorry for what I've done." It makes it easier to say when you really mean it.

Forgiving means you choose to overlook and forget when someone hurts you. When someone says they are sorry believe them. Their actions will show if they were being honest.

If someone physically hurts you tell an adult even if they ask for your forgiveness.

7. Do things together

Being together is important. You don't always have to do things that cost money. Go for walks. Read together or read to a younger brother or sister. Cook together. Visit parks, nature refuges, libraries, museum, church, or extended family. Looking at old family photos is always fun.

**8. Protect each other**

Parents protect you by taking you to the doctor and dentist. Knowing where you are at all times is a parent's job. When you are playing outside check in with your parents.

Parents aren't always going to be around so remember when you are alone never talk to strangers and never tell a stranger on the phone that you are home alone.

If you go online tell your parents if someone asks you for your name or where you live. Not everyone online is who they say they are. Protect yourself and your family by not telling about yourself or your family to anyone online.



Handout

Las Familias Felices

Las Familias Felices:**1. Muestran respeto mutuo aun cuando no están de acuerdo**

Existe una forma correcta y otra incorrecta de reconciliar una pelea. Golpearse mutuamente es siempre incorrecto. Lo mismo que es usar palabras hirientes. Tú no tienes que estar de acuerdo en todo.

2. Asignando turnos para hablar y escuchar

Es muy divertido saber lo que todos están pensando. No interrumpas ni te burles de los demás cuando no estés de acuerdo con lo que digan.

3. Comparten el trabajo cotidiano

En lugar de quejarte del trabajo cotidiano, conviértelo en juego. Algo como, ver quien termina primero de limpiar su habitación o quien hizo mejor trabajo. Escuchando música puede aliviar el trabajo. Aumenta un poco el volumen de la música y mejor que eso, canta! Limpia un poco diariamente, de esa forma, tu habitación no será tan difícil de limpiar. Pregunta a tus padres en que puedes ayudar antes que te lo pidan. Esto alegra mucho a los padres. **Precución:** esto último tal vez los haga desmayar.

4. Juegan juntos

Los padres tienen mucho trabajo. El jugar juntos no necesariamente tiene que ser con un juego de mesa o un juego video. Se puede hacer un juego de cualquier cosa. Algo como "I Spy" Tic Tac Toe, o contar historias y chistes.

5. Se dan abrazos todos los días

No solamente recibir abrazos; ser un abrazador de tus seres queridos.

6. Aprenden a pedir disculpas y a perdonar

Todos cometemos errores en ocasiones. La primera persona que pide disculpas siempre se siente mejor. Practica diciendo, "Estoy muy triste y arrepentido por lo que hice" esto es más fácil decirlo cuando lo sientes de verdad. Perdonar quiere decir que tú decides tolerar o pasar por alto la ofensa y olvidar cuando alguien te lastima. Cuando alguien se

disculpa y te dice que siente mucho haberte lastimado tú necesitas creerle. Sus acciones demostrarán si son honestos.

7. Hacen algunas actividades juntos

Es importante que la familia este unida. No siempre se tienen que hacer cosas que cuestan dinero. Salir a caminar juntos o leer un libro a los hermanos más pequeños. Cocinar, visitar algún parque, librería o museo una Iglesia o familia. Ver juntos viejas fotografías de familia es siempre divertido.

**Se protegen mutuamente**

Tus padres te protegen cuando te llevan al doctor y al dentista. Es también trabajo de los padres el saber siempre donde estas. Avisa siempre a tus papas cuando juegues afuera de la casa.

No es posible que tus padres estén siempre cerca de ti. Cuando estés solo, no hables con desconocidos y nunca digas en el teléfono que te encuentras solo en la casa.

Informa inmediatamente a tus padres si entras en "línea" en tu computadora y alguien te pregunta por tu nombre y dirección. No todas las personas que se comunican en línea de internet son quien dicen ser. Protégete a ti mismo y a tu familia no dando ninguna información en "línea"

Handout

Screen Time Dangers

On average, children ages 8-12 in the United States spend 4-6 hours a day watching or using screens, and teens spend up to 9 hours. While screens can entertain, teach, and keep children occupied, too much use may lead to problems.

Parents may not always know what their children are viewing, or how much time they are spending with screens. Children may be exposed to:

- ◇ Violence and risk-taking behaviors
- ◇ Videos of stunts or challenges that may inspire unsafe behavior
- ◇ Sexual content
- ◇ Negative stereotypes
- ◇ Substance use
- ◇ Cyberbullies and predators
- ◇ Targeted advertising
- ◇ Misleading or inaccurate information

Too much screen time may lead to:

- ◇ Sleep problems
- ◇ Lower grades in school
- ◇ Reading fewer books
- ◇ Less time with family and friends
- ◇ Not enough outdoor or physical activity
- ◇ Weight problems
- ◇ Mood problems
- ◇ Poor self-image and body image issues
- ◇ Fear of missing out
- ◇ Less time learning other ways to relax and have fun

Handout

Screen Time Dangers

Consider the following as a guideline:

- ◇ Until 18 months of age, limit screen use to video chatting along with an adult (for example, with a parent who is out of town).
- ◇ Between 18- and 24-months screen time should be limited to watching educational programming with a caregiver.
- ◇ For children 2-5, limit non-educational screen time to about 1 hour per weekday and 3 hours on the weekend days.
- ◇ For ages 6 and older, encourage healthy habits and limit activities that include screens.
- ◇ Turn off all screens during family meals and outings.
- ◇ Learn about and use parental controls.
- ◇ Avoid using screens as pacifiers, babysitters, or to stop tantrums.
- ◇ Turn off screens and remove them from bedrooms 30-60 minutes before bedtime.

Screens are here to stay and can offer many positives. It's never too early to develop a screen-time plan with your family. Let your children share their ideas and concerns. Some additional tips to keep in mind are:

- ◇ Familiarize yourself with programming to make sure it is age appropriate.
- ◇ Talk to your child about what they are seeing. Point out good behavior, such as cooperation, friendship, and concern for others. Make connections to meaningful events or places of interest.
- ◇ Be aware of advertising and how it influences choices.
- ◇ Encourage your child to learn other activities such as sports, music, art, and hobbies that do not involve screens.
- ◇ Set a good example with your own safe and healthy screen habits.
- ◇ Teach children about online privacy and safety.
- ◇ Actively decide when your child is ready for a personal device.
- ◇ Encourage using screens in ways that build creativity and connection with family and friends.
- ◇ Consider your child or teen's maturity and habits. The right plan for one family may not be a good fit for another

Source: American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry article 2020