



## WATCH

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### 1. Watch for physical boundary violations.

- ▶ Roughhousing, wrestling, or tickling
- ▶ Touching too much
- ▶ “Accidentally” touching inappropriately
- ▶ Encouraging children to pile on top of an adult
- ▶ Having children sit on an adult's lap
- ▶ Holding or hugging when the child resists
- ▶ Hugs with too much body contact

### 2. Watch for emotional boundary violations.

- ▶ Spending a great deal of time with a child
- ▶ Calling or emailing a child frequently
- ▶ Getting involved in many of the child's activities
- ▶ Acting possessive of the child

### 3. Watch for behavioral boundary violations.

- ▶ Ridiculing the beliefs of a child's parents
- ▶ Allowing children to do things against their parent's wishes
- ▶ Offering children cigarettes, alcohol, or drugs
- ▶ Allowing children to look at pornography or to visit inappropriate Internet sites

### 4. Watch for warning signs that a child may have been abused.

These behavioral warning signs may indicate that a child has been abused:

- ▶ The child changes his or her routines
- ▶ The child begins acting differently
- ▶ The child starts complaining about activities or people he or she previously enjoyed
- ▶ The child withdraws from his or her parents
- ▶ The child stops spending time with friends

Watch for these sudden changes in a child's behavior:

- ▶ Bathroom difficulty such as bed-wetting or daytime accidents
- ▶ Increased moodiness or depression
- ▶ Increased aggressive behavior
- ▶ Decline in academic performance
- ▶ Difficulties getting along with peers
- ▶ Increased inappropriate sexual behavior



## ACT

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### 1. Act when you notice warning signs in adults.

- ▶ Talk to the person you suspect.
- ▶ Explain to the person you suspect that you do not allow the actions or behaviors.
- ▶ Express your concerns to the person supervising the program where you believe boundary violations may be occurring.
- ▶ Remove your child from the situation.
- ▶ If you suspect abuse, call protective services or the police.

### 2. Act when you notice warning signs in your child.

- ▶ Ask your child questions like, "What is going on in your life?" or "Why are you suddenly behaving differently?"
- ▶ Let your child know he or she can tell you anything.
- ▶ Assure your child of your love and desire to keep him or her safe.

## TEACH

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### 1. Teach our children to help protect themselves.

Teach children about their bodies.

- ▶ Teach them the names of their body parts, including their private parts.
- ▶ Once they know the names of their private parts, teach them how those private parts are different from the other parts of the body, such as eyes, ears, feet, and arms.
- ▶ Teach children that most people are not allowed to touch their private parts.

Teach children what to do if someone tries to violate their boundaries.

1. They can tell the person to stop!
2. They can get away from the person.
3. They can tell their parents.
4. They can tell another adult who can protect them.

### 2. Teach our children they can talk to us about anything.

- ▶ Maintain open lines of communication.
- ▶ Don't act embarrassed when talking to your children.
- ▶ Build a sense of trust.
- ▶ Talk with children about sexual abuse the way that you talk to them about any other danger.
- ▶ Let children know they won't be in trouble for telling you if something happens.
- ▶ Tell your children you want to take care of them and keep them safe.
- ▶ Let them know you love them.



## SCREENING

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**Screening lets applicants know that we take the safety of children very seriously.**

What steps are involved in careful screening?

- ▶ Use a standard application.
- ▶ Conduct a face-to-face interview.
- ▶ Check references.
- ▶ Complete a criminal background check.
- ▶ Check local, state, and federal sex offender registries.

## INTERACTING

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**When everyone knows what is and is not appropriate, we can more easily identify interactions that break the rules. People who go beyond the parameters place themselves in a position to be misunderstood.**

What are some examples of interactions that are positive and appropriate between adults in ministries and children?

- ▶ Verbal praise
- ▶ Special recognition
- ▶ Age-appropriate hugs
- ▶ Arm around the shoulder
- ▶ High fives

What are some examples of interactions that are not appropriate between adults in ministries and children?

- ▶ Holding an older child in your lap
- ▶ Inviting kids to spend the night
- ▶ Wrestling
- ▶ Massages
- ▶ Repeatedly bumping into a child



## MONITORING

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**Monitoring allows us to detect problems before they turn into an incident or allegation of abuse.**

How can we monitor our programs?

- ▶ Involve more than one adult in each program and activity.
- ▶ Write a supervision plan.
- ▶ Encourage parents to visit and drop in.
- ▶ Church officials should review new programs carefully.
- ▶ Remove obstructions from doors and windows.
- ▶ Keep unused rooms locked.

## TRAINING

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**What do adults need to know?**

- ▶ How sexual abuse happens and how molesters behave.
- ▶ How to recognize the difference between appropriate actions and inappropriate actions between adults and children.
- ▶ How to ask questions and talk to our supervisors if we notice something suspicious.
- ▶ Why it's important to respond quickly if we see things that concern us.
- ▶ How we can all know the rules and expectations through our diocesan policies.

## RESPONDING

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**The sooner we react, the more likely we are to actually help prevent abuse. If abuse has already occurred, the sooner it is stopped, the more time the child has to heal.**

What do we do if we see someone break a policy or if we suspect abuse? What are some ways we can respond?

- ▶ Talk to the person involved.
- ▶ Talk to the program director or the person's supervisor.
- ▶ Report anonymously.
- ▶ Report to protective services or the police.