



# MINISTRYSAFE

## Preventing Sexual Abuse: 5-Part Safety System

### I. SEXUAL ABUSE AWARENESS TRAINING

- \*foundational piece of an educational model
- \*gives employees and volunteers ‘eyes to see and ears to hear’ grooming behaviors
- \*policies and procedures will have limited impact without the “why”
- \*explains safety principles behind policies
- \*compliant with current and anticipated legislation (i.e. Texas Youth Camp Act)

### II. SKILLFUL SCREENING TRAINING

- \*intensive, yet critical piece of the system
- \*trains screeners to properly use forms and process created to elicit high-risk responses
- \*trains screeners to recognize high risk behaviors and life patterns
- \*dove-tails with Awareness Training, Background Check and Monitoring

### III. APPROPRIATE CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK

- \*necessary, though no stand-alone piece of safety system (not a “silver bullet”)
- \*depth of background check should match degree and structure of access to children

### IV. TAILORED POLICIES & PROCEDURES

- \*“policies are what you DO ... not what you SAY you do”
- \*tailored to specific programming – no “one-size-fits-all” forms
- \*policies are marginally effective without Awareness Training
- \*beyond the basics: includes bathroom checks, six-month member rule etc.

### V. MONITORING AND OVERSIGHT

- \*ensuring that you DO what you SAY you do
- \*periodic review of the system: new programming, performance reviews, accountability
- \*monitoring tools

**Administrators: Watch our FREE “Overview of a Safety System” videos**

[www.ministrysafe.com/safety](http://www.ministrysafe.com/safety)

# FACTS ABOUT SEXUAL ABUSE AND SEXUAL ABUSERS

**Question 1:** what system is in place at my church to protect children?

**Question 2:** does that system account for the following facts?

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

- Understanding this, secular entities are implementing training and other measures.
- The protective barriers in the Church are already critically low ... already a target.
- The Church's continued failure to respond makes the Church a larger target.

**\*Only 10% of sexual predators will EVER encounter the criminal justice system.**

- As a result, your criminal background check – even if it works perfectly – will only identify a *fraction* of those who want to abuse children in your programs.
- Sexual abusers KNOW when there is nothing for you to find – even if you run a check.
- Background checks are important, but have limitations: NOT A SILVER BULLET!
- If a background check is ALL we do, our security blanket is the size of a place mat.

**\*1 of 3 girls and 1 of 6 boys will be sexually molested before reaching age 18.**

THIS IS AN ISSUE OF EPIDEMIC PROPORTION ... AND IS GROWING.

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

**\*Male molesters preferring boys will have an average of 150 victims before prosecution.**

**\*Male molesters preferring girls will have an average of 52 victims before prosecution.**

**\*85% of convicted molesters are men; 15% of convicted molesters are women.**

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

- Amber alerts and the 'snatch and grab' are a fraction of sexual abuse occurrences.
- if your 'security system' is simply the 'matching tag' for small children, it is not enough.
- the 'matching tag' system is important, but is designed to protect children from the 10%.
- the greater risk is from those we allow in classrooms – or from one with 'matching tag'!

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

- staff members and volunteer leaders are gatekeepers
- staff members and volunteer leaders MUST understand and recognize grooming process

**\*There is NO visual profile for a molester.**

- most molesters appear helpful, trustworthy, kind and safe
- to recognize a molester, gatekeepers MUST understand and recognize grooming process

***Material prepared by Gregory Love and Kimberlee Norris – both are sexual abuse lawyers who practice law through Love & Norris ([www.lovenorris.com](http://www.lovenorris.com)), and are directors of MinistrySafe, an entity that designs and implements sexual abuse safety systems for churches ([www.ministrysafe.com](http://www.ministrysafe.com)).***