

Safe Environment of the Archdiocese



ARCHDIOCESE OF OKLAHOMA CITY

OFFICE OF SAFE ENVIRONMENT

March, 2017

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month



As a Catholic Church let's be a part of the solution!

In the last few newsletters I have mentioned several times that **April is Child Abuse Prevention Month**. Hopefully, our facilitators have prepared in some way to do something special in observance of this very important month.

In my view, God has a way of bringing good out of evil. There is no doubt that the scandals in the

Catholic Church around sexual abuse were a horrendous experience for all concerned. However, the blessing is that it has brought to the forefront the fact that child abuse is not a Catholic Church issue but an issue that permeates all of society—Church and secular alike. Any community or parish who believes they are exempt from child abuse or the potential for child abuse are not facing the facts and statistics that are before us as a society.

If we are going to protect our children, we must take our Safe Environment Program seriously. The only way that society is ever able to eradicate any

problem is through education. That is what our SE Programs need to be about. Educating our employees, volunteers, and parishioners about abuse, the signs of abuse, how to report abuse, etc. is a major part of the solution to this societal problem.

It is my hope that every single parish/mission in our Archdiocese will do something, however small, to highlight Child Abuse Prevention Month.

One way to do that is to take part in the Blue Ribbon Tree project. See next page for more information.

God bless you for your efforts and your work.

Sister Kay, C.N.D.

Parish Bulletin Announcement

Time is moving along rapidly and April is just around the corner! That means it will be time for your **fourth** parish bulletin announcement of Safe Environment. The insert should appear in July, October, January and **April**.

You may find a copy of the required insert in your Manual, **Section VII, pg. 2**.

As I am doing local audits, I continue to find parishes that are not publishing the **full announcement** as listed in Section VII, page 2. It is the **complete**

announcement that must be published four times a year. Just publishing the hotline numbers does not meet this requirement of our protocol.

We have promised to protect children. The only way we can do that is to build awareness.



“THE CHURCH MUST TAKE WHATEVER STEPS ARE NECESSARY TO ENSURE CHILDREN ARE PROTECTED.”

(POPE FRANCIS)

IS YOUR PARISH DOING ALL THAT IS NECESSARY?

ARE YOU FOI EVERY PART OF OUR I TOCO

HOPEFULLY, THE ANSWERS ARE “YES”.

To report **SUSPECTED** abuse call the DHS hotline:

1-800-522-3511

If the suspected abuse involves Archdiocesan personnel also call the Pastoral hotline at:

405-720-9879

“Suspected” Abuse



Should I or shouldn't I???

When the news reports incidents of child abuse, they usually include someone who said they suspected something, but they either didn't know for sure or didn't want to get involved.

In the February 17th *Daily Oklahoman* newspaper there appeared a disturbing story that should serve as a strong reminder to all of us. The story reported that the principal at an OK elementary school failed to report the alleged molestation of four girls, resulting in 10 other children being victimized. In addition, a math teacher at the school is accused of failing to report a similar allegation.

Charges are being brought against the principal and the math teacher for

“failure to report”. Both the principal and the math teacher said they failed to report to the police, to DHS or to the parents because they believed the children were lying.

This sad story which happened in our own State, should serve as a reminder that it is not up to us to **investigate!** Our training DVD stresses several times, “**if you see something, say something**”. We are legally and morally bound to report even the **SUSPICION** of abuse.

See the reporting number on the front of this bulletin.

Build a Blue Ribbon Tree

In April, a major activity sponsored by the State is the building of Blue Ribbon Trees. Photos and tree registration are due at the State by **Wednesday, April 5th** to be included in the Day at the Capital.

All Blue Ribbon Tree materials are now available for download at:

[http://ok.gov.health.Child and Family Health/Family Support and Prevention](http://ok.gov.health.Child.and.Family.Health/Family.Support.and.Prevention)

Service/Office of Child Abuse Prevention/Child Abuse Prevention Awareness/Child Abuse Prevention Month Day.

Even if you do not take part in the Capital photo project, it would be great if every parish, school, and religious education program did something to build a Blue Ribbon Tree. It's another opportunity to educate people on the

problem of child abuse in our society.

Also, send your pictures to me: cpowers@archokc.org. I will put together our own slide show. Be sure to identify the name of the parish or school. This will be shown at our April 27th in-service.

For the state blue ribbon project send **directly** to them following the directions on the website address on the left.



Put blue ribbons on this tree!



Day at the Capital: April 11th

If possible, stop by the Capital building on the morning of Wednesday, April 11th. This is the annual day to hear about the many services provided by Child Abuse Prevention Organizations in our State. They are doing great work and would appreciate our support.

Annual In-Service—April 27, 2017



Hopefully, all facilitators have on your calendar the above date. This is our annual in-service training day. However, it is not just for facilitators. Please invite your pastor, associate pastor, DRE, youth minister, school principal, parents, or anyone who is concerned about our youth. As you know, this year we have been focusing on pornography and the serious effect it is having on our youth and even family life. The more I research this topic the more concerned I become for the future of our youth. It is so important that we educate ourselves and our parents on the depth of this problem and learn ways of

counter acting it.

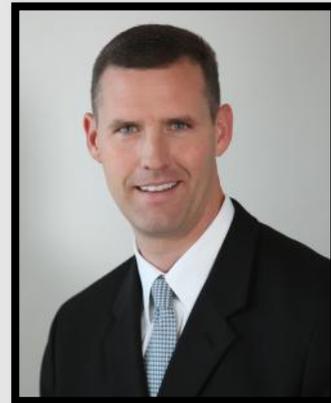
Next week I will be sending out a flyer and a registration form for attendance. Registration is so important as we need to make sure we have adequate space in our Conference Center. The time parameter will be: **Registration begins at 9:00am. The program will begin at 9:30 and end by noon.**

Our Presenter

Ryan Foley is the Vice President of Business Development for Covenant Eyes. Since serving in the U.S. Air Force, Ryan has continually worked in the technology field with a particular focus on security.

Ryan joined Covenant Eyes in 2012 and is now applying his passion for security and safety in support of families, working to protect them from internet pornography.

He speaks regularly and provides Internet safety workshops at schools, parishes, and to other faith-based organizations.



Mr. Ryan Foley

National Meeting



Early Sunday morning, Feb. 26th, I will be leaving for the National Safe Environment Conference sponsored by the USCCB. It is always a good conference with great information and speakers. I will not be back until Wednesday night, March 1st (Ash Wednesday). Therefore, the Safe Environment Office will be closed on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of next week. I will, however, monitor email so please feel free to contact me via email if necessary.

Just a reminder—if you need data base assistance call:
Rose Mary Story, data base administrator at: 405-721-5651,
Ext. 154.

Pornography and Teens



“Never before in the history of telecommunications media in the US has so much indecent (and obscene) material been so easily accessible by so many minors in so many American homes with so few restrictions.” (US Department of Justice)

“Research reveals many systemic effects of internet pornography that are undermining an already vulnerable culture of marriage and family. Even more disturbing is the fact that the first internet generations have not reached full-maturity, so the upper-limits of this impact have yet to be realized.”
(Jill Manning, Sociologist)

“A warm and communicative parent-child relationship is the most important factor (in reducing porn use among children). In addition, open parent-child channels for communicating about sexual and media experiences, sex education at home or school, and parental participation with children on the internet are constructive influences. Finally, for boys already at risk for antisocial behavior, parents should carefully monitor and severely limit access to pornography on file-sharing networks and elsewhere.”
(Dr. Patricia M. Greenfield)

Some Startling Statistics:

In 2012, Tru Research conducted 2,017 online interviews with teens, ages 13-17, and parents of teens:

◆71% of teens have done something to hide what they do online from their parents (this includes clearing browser history, minimizing a browser when in view, deleting inappropriate videos, lying about behavior, using a phone instead of a computer, blocking parents with social media privacy settings, using private browsing, disabling parental controls, or having e-mail or social media accounts unknown to parents).

◆32% of teens admit to intentionally accessing nude or pornographic content online. Of these, 43% do so on a weekly basis. Only 12% of parents knew their teens were accessing pornography.

In 2001, a study by the Kaiser Family Foundation discovered among all online youth ages 15-17:

◆70% say they have accidentally stumbled across pornography online.

◆9% say this happens very often; 14% somewhat often; 47% not too often.

According to a report commissioned by Congress, in 2004 some 70 million individuals visit pornographic web sites each week; **about 11 million of them are younger than 18.**

Given the dates of the above research statistics, there is no doubt in my mind that, in 2017, these numbers have only risen dramatically!
(Sr. Catherine Powers, Archdiocesan Safe Environment Coordinator)



WE NEED TO WORK TOGETHER TO PROTECT OUR YOUTH!

