



Protecting our Future

**Creating a Safer Environment for
those Entrusted to Your
Church's Care.**

Protecting our Future

The practices discussed in this presentation have been compiled based on the experiences of churches and ministries across our state and the country. As a result, they are a recommended starting point for discussing how best to protect children in ministry today.

It is important to note, however, the following information does not constitute legal advice, nor is it a suggestion that these are the only ways to handle protections issues.

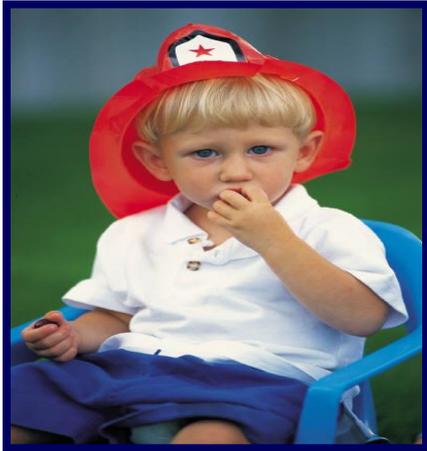
It is strongly recommended that church leaders seek out legal counsel when crafting and implementing their own protection policies.



**For years, child abuse has been a
growing problem in our society.**

“Sexual assault continues to represent the most rapidly growing violent crime in America, claiming a victim every four seconds.”

—Lonnie Bristow, M.D., President American Medical Association 1995



“1 in 20 boys will be a victim of child sexual abuse.”

“1 in 5 girls will be a victim of child sexual abuse.”

-National Center for The Victims of Crime

<http://www.victimsofcrime.org/news-center/reporter-resources/child-sexual-abuse/child-sexual-abuse-statistics>





1.3 Million +/- children are sexually assaulted annually.

- The Gallup Poll

Churches are becoming the **targets** of liability suits.

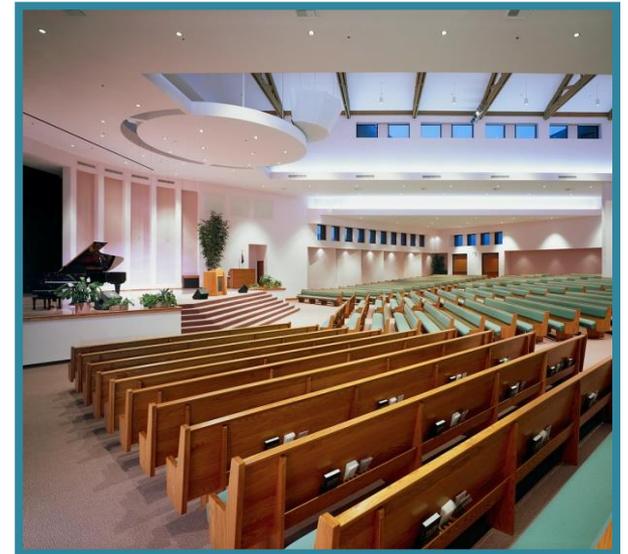
“The American Bar Association has hosted ... conferences on “How to Sue Churches.”

- Church Law & Tax Report



Why Should we be **concerned**?
It is the **right** thing to do!

If you were sexually abused by a church leader, how would it affect your views about God and the church?



We have a responsibility to protect the children God has entrusted to our care!!

PROTECT OUR FUTURE BY:

1. Establishing a Process for **Selecting Workers**
2. Developing a **Response Plan**
3. Providing Adequate **Insurance**
4. Properly **Supervising Workers**
5. **Training Workers**
6. Create a church **Policy** for picking up Children
7. Creating **Balance**



Establish a Process for Selecting Workers

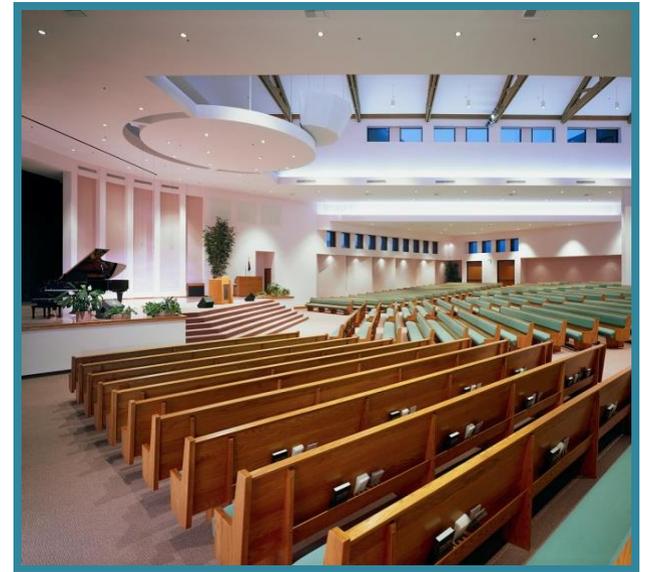
How many of you are in settings where you know everyone in the church?



Establish a Process for Selecting Workers

90% of all sexual abuse is committed by someone who is known and trusted by the child.

-Protecting the Gift



Establish a Process for Selecting Workers

1. SIX MONTH RULE

- **No immediate access to children**
- **Demonstrates church knows the people working with their children**



2. WRITTEN APPLICATION

Establish a Process for Selecting Workers

3. REFERENCE CHECKS

- **Standard Questionnaire**
- **Confirm Reference responses**



Establish a Process for Selecting Workers

“The average child molester victimizes between 30 and 60 children before he is ever caught.”

– Protecting the Gift



Establish a Process for Selecting Workers

4. BACKGROUND CHECKS

5. INTERVIEW



Develop a Plan for Response



1. Take every allegation **seriously**.
2. Remove the alleged perpetrator from the situation until a proper **investigation** has been conducted.
3. Report **allegations** to the authorities as required by law.
4. Do not **rush to judgment**.

Develop a Plan for Response



5. **Contact attorney and Insurance Company.**
6. **Minister to the victim and family.**
7. **Share information only as necessary.**

Provide Adequate Insurance

Two Types of Coverage:

1. **Sexual Molestation**

Coverage should include an action taken by a church staff member or a **volunteer** toward a **minor** in the church's care.



Provide Adequate Insurance

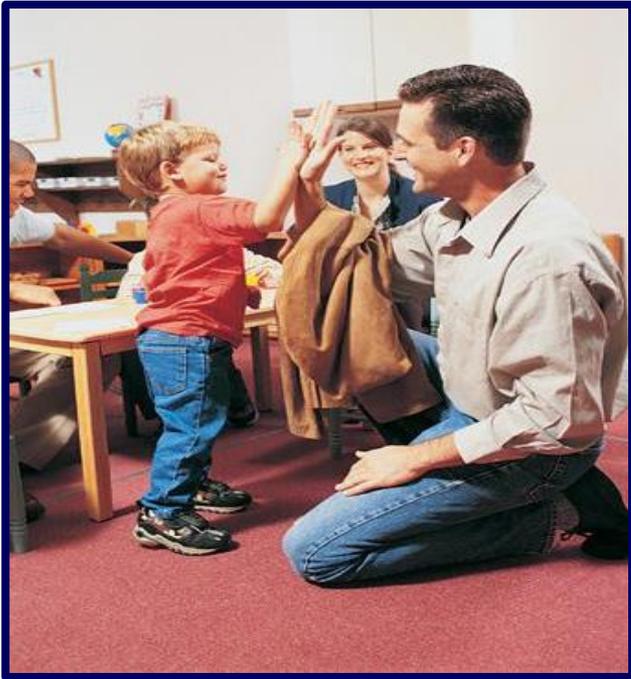
Two Types of Coverage:

2. Sexual Harassment Coverage should include sexual misconduct by a staff member directed toward another staff member.

* **Note: Sexual harassment insurance does not cover churches in cases of molestation.**



Properly Supervising Workers



- **Two Adult Rule**
- **Supervision in each ministry**
- **Establish a procedure to report misconduct or abuse**

Training Workers



- To follow **policies.**
- To recognize signs of **abuse and neglect.**
- To proper displays of **affection.**
- Methods of **discipline.**
- To handle **emergencies.**

Create a Policy for picking up Children

1. Collect **information** about child, parents or guardians, and who has permission to pick up child.
2. Develop **practices** that ensures children are picked up only by those with permission.
3. Determine how to handle any **breakdowns**.

Create Balance



Resources for developing policies

GuideOne.com

https://www.guideone.com/safetyresources/churches/Downloads/sm_childprotect_sample.pdf

ProtectMyMinistry.com

<http://protectmyministry.com/>

Reducing the Risk

<http://store.churchlawtodaystore.com/reducingrisk.html>

SBC Website

<http://www.sbc.net/churchresources/sexabuseprevention.asp>