

Responding Appropriately

If You See or Suspect Child Abuse (including sexual abuse)

1. Your duty is to the victim
2. Inform the supervisor if appropriate
3. You are mandated by law to report the abuse to the state
 - 800-292-9582
 - New Castle County: 302-425-7490
 - Kent County: 302-674-1112
 - Sussex County: 302-644-4974
 - online reporting available at www.lseethesigns.org

How To Respond If You Witness A Boundary Violation
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Talk to the person involved<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Express the boundary violation and point out the Safe Church guidelines set by the ministry• Report the boundary violation to the person's supervisor<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ This will help to keep track of repeat offenses
How to Respond If You Witness Abuse (including sexual abuse)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remove the child and place in the care of another safe adult• Document what you witnessed<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Consider using the Child Abuse or Neglect Reporting Form found in <i>Parish Resources</i>• Report what you saw to child protective services
How to Respond if a Child/Youth Discloses Abuse to You
<p>While they are disclosing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Refrain from agreeing to keep a secret for the child. Remind the child that some secrets must be told if they involve someone being hurt.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Respect the privacy of the child by not telling any more people than necessary• Listen without interruption• Believe what they are telling you to be true<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Let the child/youth know that you believe them• Do not push for information or ask questions• Avoid expressing shock or outrage• Do not threaten or condemn the alleged perpetrator• Tell the child/youth that he or she was right to disclose• Assure the child/youth the abuse was not his or her fault <p>When they are finished</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Find a place for the child/youth to go and someone to be with where they feel safe<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ You do not have to tell this person what is going on, just that the child/youth is "having a bad day/can they sit with you for a while?"○ If available and appropriate, the priest is the best person and should be informed of the situation• Write down everything the child/youth disclosed to you<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ direct quotes are best if you can remember them• Call Child Protective Services<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ If you are uncomfortable doing this ask your supervisor or priest to sit with you during the call• Do not confront the alleged perpetrator yourself