



Special points of interest:

God Cares About Children
 News from the Director

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To Protect

Office of Victim Assistance & Safe Environment Archdiocese of San Antonio

TEEN VICTIMS

It is a commonly known fact that the ages 16-24 are statistically the time that a teen is at most risk for sexual assault. The senior year of high school and the freshman year of college are the most reported time frame of sexual assaults of teens.

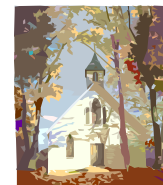
In grades 7-9, sexual harassment is the most common form of sexual abuse among peers for both males and females. Most females are victimized by peers. It is also reported that 56% of teenagers are sexually assaulted by a date. A friend is the perpetrator 30% of the time, and 11% of females reported that their boyfriends had raped them. Only, 3% of sexual assaults of teens were victimized by a stranger.

More importantly are the numbers of teen victims who fail to report sex crimes. We know 78% of teenage victims never tell their parents about the sexual assault. Only an

estimated 5-6% call the police or rape crisis center. Yet, 70% of teen victims share their experiences with their best friend.

Therefore, as a new school year approaches and religious educational programs also begin please plan to include Safe Environment Training for all youth. Teens are wanting to talk about God's plan for them and how His plan promotes healthy relationships. Teens should learn how to:

- Identify risky behaviors
- Recognize if a situation is potentially abusive
- Avoid or escape dangerous circumstances
- Gain confidence to discuss abuse issues with adults
- Access resources and services available in their local areas, both rural and urban



OVERCOMING CHURCH RESISTANCE

Many pastors, leaders and parents are concerned about child sexual abuse. However, there is still concern and hesitation about child abuse prevention in the church. Concerns include parents worry that children will receive too much explicit information about sexuality and other parents worry that their children will become fearful of others and worry about evil. However, children with a lack of information and resources are better targets for people who seek out

children to abuse.

A pastor's support for child abuse prevention is key to overcoming resistance in a church. Even if the pastor has not taken a lead in the past, pastoral support is important for anyone proposing child abuse prevention in the religious education program. Pastor can show support by attending the Safe Environment volunteer and staff trainings and talking about the program in his liturgy. Continued on page 2

Olivia Santoyo: OVASE Coordinator of the Quarter

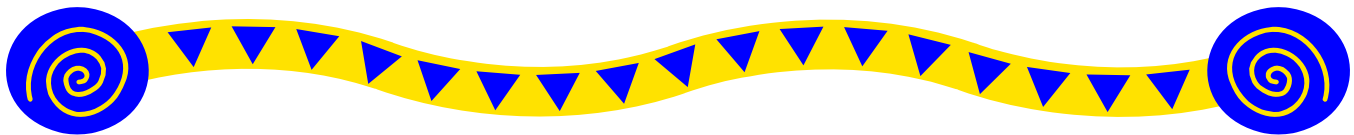
Mrs. Olivia Santoyo has been chosen as the Office of Victim Assistance & Safe Environment Coordinator of the Quarter. Mrs. Santoyo has been a member of St. John Berchman for over fifty years. She has demonstrated leadership by her involvement in all community activities and impresses people quite easily. She is very hard working and is always more than ready to help anybody with anything she can.

where Mrs. Santoyo has demonstrated the qualities of enthusiasm, reliability and trustworthiness.

Mrs. Santoyo is part of a great safe environment education team at St. John Berchman. This team has always gone above and beyond in educating their church staff and volunteers on child abuse prevention. Our thanks and gratitude go out to Mrs. Santoyo for her hard work and dedication.



There have been several instances



Overcoming Church Resistance Continued

This support can help overcome parents' fear and advocate to survivors and families that the church is serious and committed to preventing child abuse. Lastly, providing consistent information and training for staff and volunteers is very crucial. Religious education teachers also need to know how to utilize the Yello Dyno and Child Lures curricula.



OVASE also offers supplemental curricula that help plan and outline teaching objectives and a variety of activities, the lessons contain theological concepts, scriptures, prayers, songs and other forms of worship experiences for students. All lessons are designed to involve youth so that they may learn through participation in small-group activities, questions, and general discussions.

OVASE has supplemental resources and materials to help teachers with teaching these programs. Please contact Norma @ 734-7786 to order supplemental materials and or borrow resource materials. A list of current materials can be found on page 4.

Parenting Training on Child Abuse Prevention

The Office of Victim Assistance & Safe Environment continues to promote all parishes and schools in the Archdiocese of San Antonio to offer a parent training as the new year begins. In the past we have had some parishes and schools be very successful at getting parent participation.

During registration or the first day of religious education classes is usually the best time to plan a parent meeting. This meeting/ training provides an opportunity for parents to be educated first and alerted to the materials and curriculum their children will be learning. Parents will then be better prepared to respond to the questions and concerns their children voice.

A clear explanation of what will be presented usually addresses the concerns and minimizes resistance. It is mandatory that all parents receive the Bishop's parent letter in English and Spanish before the youth begin classes.



God Cares About Children

Utilizing theological and Biblical concepts can be very helpful when teaching child abuse prevention. There are several curriculums available through OVASE that can be borrowed and or purchased that can be used with your weekly lessons. For example the following story can help to meet the objectives of (1) increasing the child's awareness that God values children, (2) to empower children so that they can try to protect themselves by saying "no" to a potentially abusive situation, (3) to help children understand child abuse.

The story of Samuel (1 Samuel 3: 1-19) is about a boy who hears the voice of God. Not only does God speak directly to this child, but God also entrusts an important message to him. In the Hebrew Scriptures' world of priests and prophets, Samuel is chosen by God. As he layed in his bed at night, he hears a voice that he mistakes as the voice of Eli, the priest. Finally, Samuel realizes that God has a special message for him to tell Eli and the people.

In our society as well as in ancient times, many adults would question whether children are capable of hearing the voice of God. Some would even argue that children are not responsible or mature enough for God to entrust them with an important message. Yet this biblical text reminds us that God valued Samuel and spoke directly to him.

Even though Samuel is only one child, he remains an example of the value of children in the eyes of God. God speaks to adults and God also speaks directly to children. This is one of the ways that we know God values children.

Because children are special, they have rights. They have the rights to shelter, food, clothing, education. Children's rights include the right to say "no" to an adult who wants to abuse a child. Many times saying "no" does not stop the abuse from happening. It is very important to tell the children that abuse is not his or her fault whether the child has said "no" or not.

OVASE

Curriculum & Material Order Form

TITLE	PRICE	REQUESTED # # ENGLISH	REQUESTED # SPANISH	TOTAL
Yello Dyno Puppet	\$295.00		NA	
Tricky People VHS	\$59.95		NA	
Tricky People DVD	\$59.95		NA	
Can't Fool Me VHS	\$59.95		NA	
Can't Fool Me CD	\$15.95		NA	
Child Lures-Student Video	\$28.38		NA	
Child Lures Prevention Program Curriculum Kit	\$489.00		NA	
Raising Safe Kids Book	\$15.00		NA	
Pro Kit-PK-I	\$395.00		NA	
Yello Dyno Pro Kit 2-3	\$295.00		NA	
Yello Dyno Pro Kit 4-5	\$295.00		NA	
Yello Dyno Safe Kids Pack	\$29.00		NA	
Child Lures Parent Guides:English/Spanish	\$1.00			
Your Body Belongs to You Coloring & Activity Bk	\$1.00		NA	
My Body Belongs To Me Educational Activities Bk	\$1.00		NA	
Child Lures: 3-6 Student Personal Safety WkBk	\$1.00		NA	
Who Can You Trust Parent-Child Learning Activities Bk	\$1.00		NA	
What Every Parent Should Know About Sexting	\$1.00		NA	
Spider Man Comic Book I: Tips on Physical Abuse	\$1.00		NA	
Yello Dyno Fun Way Safe Kids Coloring Bk	\$1.00		NA	
Spider Man Comic Book II: Tips on Verbal Abuse	\$1.00		NA	
Parent Guide to Cyber Safety: English/Spanish	\$1.00			

Scheduled Training

AUGUST

7th La Vernia, St. Ann –TBA

Safe Environment Training

SEPTEMBER

1st St. Paul Community Center-Annex

6pm-7pm Safe Environment Training

15th St. Paul Community Center-Annex

6pm-7pm Safe Environment Training

29th St. Paul Community Center-Annex

6pm-7pm Safe Environment Training

OCTOBER

6th Our Lady of Mt. Carmel

6:30pm Safe Environment Training

13th St. Paul Community Center-Annex

6pm-7pm Safe Environment Training

27th St. Paul Community Center-Annex

6pm-7pm Safe Environment Training

THE DIRECTOR'S CUT

Thank you for all your hard work in making the 2009-2010 year a good one. We have received tons of reports and feedback on training. I'm so amazed by everyone's dedication and hard work. But, here we go again. Time to start getting ready for the 2010-2011 year and of course: It is Audit time!!!

The Auditors will be here from September 13th through September 17th. They will audit the Pastoral Center, OVASE, parishes, and schools.

There is no need to panic, just make sure that your documentation is up to date and that it matches what OVASE has. Make sure you have a copy of trainings, reports, sign-in sheets and any other documentation for this audit period. This information should be kept at the parish or school and be readily available and accessible by the pastor.

Please make sure that all your reports for the 2009-2010 year have been tuned in to OVASE. If not, do so as soon as possible. We will be contacting pastors for all reports soon. If for some reason you did not complete the Safe Environment Training for the year, please contact OVASE so that a plan of action can be created.

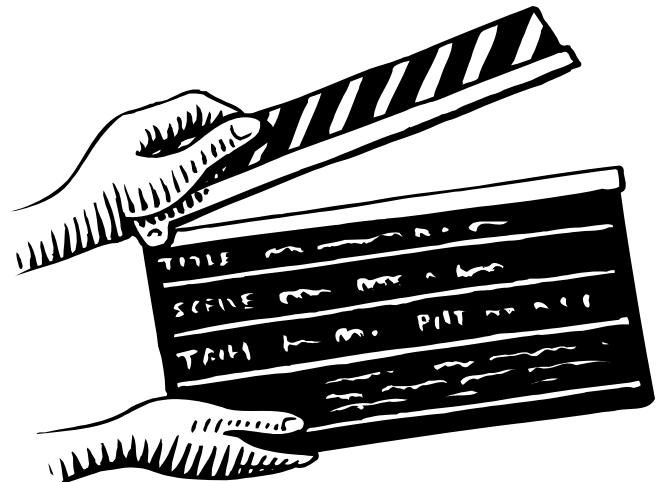
As a reminder, it is mandated by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops that all children/

youth and all adults who minister to children/youth must receive Safe Environment Training. **This is not an option.**

Through struggle and strife we must always remember why we are in this ministry. To protect children and youth. We are all working as **one** to make sure that every child and youth is protected from harm.

Thank you,

-Steve Martinez





Office of Victim Assistance & Safe Environment

St. Paul Community Center
1201 Donaldson
San Antonio, TX 78228

Tel: 210-734-7786 or 1-877-700-1888

Fax: 210-738-8278 E-mail: ovase@archsa.org