

**Special points of interest:**

Safe Environment Training  
Changes for Adults

Keeping Your Family Strong

"News from the Director"

**In this issue:**

Coordinators Order 2  
for Child Abuse  
Prevention Month

Online Safety 3

Blue Sunday 4

Scheduled Training 5  
Dates

**April 2014****Volume 9, Issue 1**

# To Protect

## Office of Victim Assistance & Safe Environment

### *Every Child Matters*

#### APRIL IS CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH



During the month of April, people across the country come together to raise awareness about child abuse and neglect prevention. It is also a campaign to remember all those children who have been abused. As a community we can play an important role in valuing children and strengthening their families.

In 2013 there were 5,846 confirmed victims of child abuse/neglect in Bexar County according to the Texas Department of Family & Protective Services Data Book.

The Archdiocese of San Antonio remains committed to do all that it can to prevent abuse. For more information on how to keep children safe from abuse and neglect, visit [www.archsa.org](http://www.archsa.org) and click on To Protect.

**Prayer & Challenge**

Lord, thank You for our children,  
For them we kneel and pray.  
Help us teach them of Your kindness,  
Of Your mercy and Your way.  
Help us show them of Your love,  
Your strength and safety, too.  
Help us show them who You are.  
Help us treat them like You do.

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Let's pray, educate ourselves,  
and volunteer for the children  
of our nation until black and blue  
are just colors in their crayon box.  
~Janet Magee

## Safe Environment Training Changes for Adults

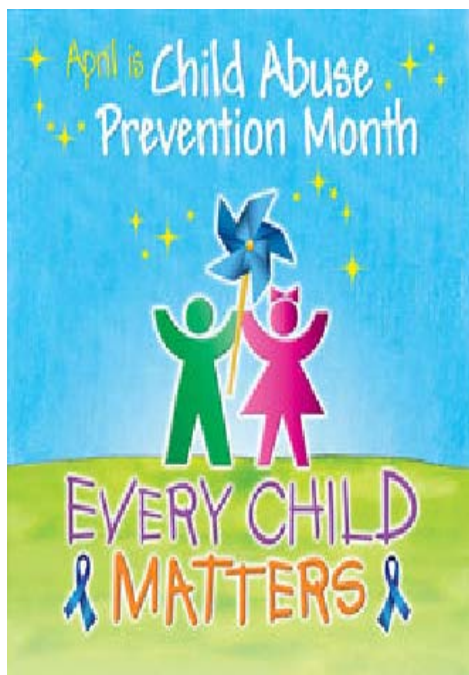
The Office of Victim Assistance & Safe Environment have implemented new changes to the Adult Safe Environment Training. OVASE has created a shorter refresher training for all adults who minister to children that need to renew their certificates. These changes are for those staff/volunteers who have received the full training.

There will be an online refresher available beginning July 1, 2014. It will cover the same information on child abuse prevention, reporting and setting healthy boundaries. OVASE will send out more information about training for coordinators during the summer.

For more information, please contact OVASE at (210) 734-7786 or [ovase@archsa.org](mailto:ovase@archsa.org).



## OVASE Coordinators Order Your Child Abuse Prevention Materials



During the month of April the Archdiocese of San Antonio parishes and Catholic schools will be participating in the fight against child abuse campaign. Show your support by placing your orders now from OVASE for one free promotional item for each child at your parish and school! This years items include Every Child Matters Frisbees available for all ages and posters shown here. These colorful posters raise awareness about this important event, and the other side states Every Child Matters to encourage everyone to make a positive difference to every child.

Please review the insert list of handouts available for training. These handouts have been broken down by age group. Also remember that OVASE has a library of DVDs and toolkits to help train children, call to reserve and checkout for April.

# Keep Your Family Strong



Every family has strengths, and every family faces challenges. Having a network of caring family, friends, and neighbors can be helpful during tough times. Here are some ideas to build a strong network:

- Participate in neighborhood activities such as picnics or block parties.
- Make a play date with friends who have children the same age as yours.
- Find a church that welcomes and supports parents.
- Go to a nearby park with your kids; talk with other parents there.
- Look for a parent support group in your area or join one online.

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month. Visit [HelpandHope.org](http://HelpandHope.org) to learn about activities and programs in your community that support parents and promote healthy families.

Source: 2013 Resource Guide. Preventing Child Maltreatment and Promoting Well-Being: A Network for Action. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

## How to Plan and Host an Online Safety Presentation

Net Cetera has a community outreach toolkit available for free. You can order a copy or print from [bulkorder.ftg.gov](http://bulkorder.ftg.gov). This toolkit includes the Net Cetera DVD which includes videos for parents and kids to spark conversation or use as part of a presentation. Videos for kids include: Heads UP, Stop, Think Click, The Protection Connection, Share with Care,



and Stand up to Cyber bullying. It also has PowerPoint slides in English and Spanish on chatting with kids and parents about being online. The best part of the kit is that it provides helpful information on how to plan and host a successful online safety presentation. The website also allows you to bulk order handouts for your audience.

# Safe Environment Training

## Available Resources

### Pre K – Kinder

Yellow Dyno's Fun Way to Safe Kids

### K – 1<sup>st</sup>

Keeping my body safe!

### 1<sup>st</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup>

My Body Belongs to Me

### 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup>

Know What? Your body is yours!

### 2<sup>nd</sup>

Be Smart: Say "NO" to Strangers

### 3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup>

Who Knew? The Internet Safety

My Safe Body

### 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>

Student Personal Safety Workbook

### 4<sup>th</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup>

Who Knew? The Stop the Hurting

It's OK to Tell!

### 7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>

Heads Up: Stop Think Connect

Understanding and Preventing dating violence

Let's Talk Teens

The Truth About Sexting

### Adults

Signs That An Adult May Be A Threat To A Child

Protecting Children from Sexual Abuse

Online Sexual Predators

Child Abuse – How to report it and help stop it

10 Ways to increase your child's Internet Safety

Talking with Children About Child Abuse

Reporting child abuse

# Join the Archdiocese of San Antonio To Help Children Heal

## 15TH ANNUAL NATIONAL BLUE SUNDAY DAY OF PRAYER APRIL 27TH

The day when churches take time in their service to pray for the victims of child abuse and for those who rescue them.

We pray because they shouldn't have to pray alone.

Won't you ask your church to join in this life-changing effort?

It's free.  
Nothing to join.  
Just prayer.

WHOEVER RECEIVES ONE LITTLE CHILD  
LIKE THIS IN MY NAME RECEIVES ME.  
MATTHEW 18:5

*Did you know there are over 3 million confirmed cases of child abuse in our nation annually?*

*Did you know that of the 1640 child deaths from child abuse that most were under the age of 3?*

*Did you know your church can make a difference?*

*It can and it starts by praying.*

Blue  
Sunday

Register your  
church at:

[WWW.BLUESUNDAY.ORG](http://WWW.BLUESUNDAY.ORG)





# Scheduled Training

## April

## May

- 8th** San Antonio Children's Shelter 3:15pm Safe Environment Training
- 10:15am Safe Environment Training **23rd** St. Paul Community Center-Annex 6pm-7pm Safe Environment Training
- 9th** St. Paul Community Center-Annex 6pm-7pm Safe Environment Training **21st** St. Paul Community Center-Annex 6pm-7pm Safe Environment Training
- 10th** St. Paul Community Center-Annex 6pm-7pm Safe Environment Training **28th** San Antonio Children's Shelter 6pm-7pm Safe Environment Training
- 9:30am-4pm **New Coordinator Training**
- 22nd** San Antonio Children's Shelter

### THE DIRECTOR'S CUT

The Office of Victim Assistance & Safe Environment continues to adapt and change to the times. The office will soon place refresher trainings online. There will be at least four different trainings available for those who have already taken the full Adult Safe Environment Training.

We are still working out the details of the refresher training but we will let you know as soon as we decide on how to implement the program. The ultimate goal is to make sure that everyone within the Archdiocese continues to grow and learn about abuse prevention. The office also wants to lessen the burden of training that is upon the Safe Environment Coordinator.

As the catechetical/school year comes to a close, we must remember the following items:

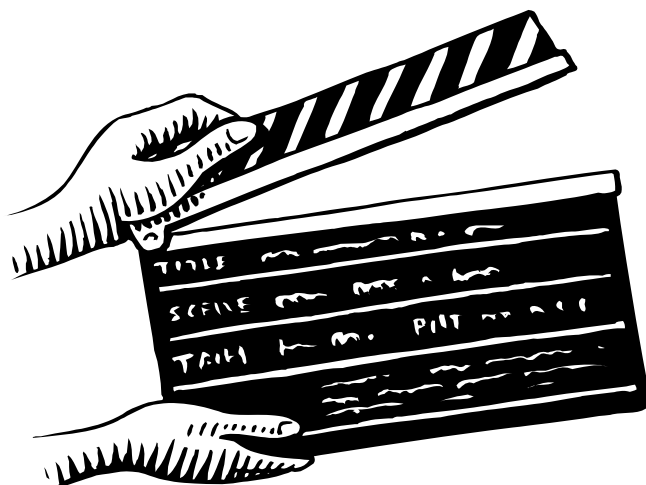
- Send us your Reporting Forms of the numbers that have been trained
- Turn in any Sign-In sheets of trainings you have conducted
- Have your pastor/principal sign the Pastor Letter confirming that training have been conducted at your site. You may sign the form for your pastor/principal if he/she is unavailable.
- For those sites with VBS, insure that the staff is trained on abuse prevention
- If you plan to resign as the Safe Environment Coordinator, please notify your pastor and our office.

If you are feeling overwhelmed or just need some help, contact our office so we can lend a hand. OVASE is here to help, so if you need anything or have questions contact us.

I am proud to announce that we are making a difference within our community. The number of children and youth deaths related to abuse and neglect have decreased. The more we educate adults and children on abuse, the more we can effect change. This ministry can be taxing but you have made the safety of children your priority. The Archdiocese of San Antonio continues to grow and flourish because of your work in this ministry. We are all working towards a goal where everyone is safe from harm.

Thank you,

-Steve Martinez





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