



**Special points of interest:**

Coordinators Protect Your Catholic Community Through Prevention

“Too Small to Fail” New Campaign launched by the Center for the Next Generation

News from the Director

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**April 2013**

**Volume 8, Issue 1**

# To Protect

**Office of Victim Assistance & Safe Environment**

## Stand Up for Children

### APRIL IS NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

Child abuse remains a serious problem in our community. According to the Department of Family and Protective Services, there were 6205 cases of child abuse/neglect and 19 abuse/neglect related deaths in Bexar County for 2012. Child abuse is preventable. In order to prevent child abuse the Archdiocese of San Antonio Office of Victim Assistance & Safe Environment will participate in educating adults, parents, children, and the community on the importance of reporting any suspected abuse of a child.

Always remember that there are four types of abuse: Physical, emotional/verbal, Sexual and Neglect. According to Texas Law all adults who have any suspicion that a child is being abused is mandated to report to authorities. Most children know their abusers and many times are fearful to speak out about the abuse. The majority of victims never report the abuse or may not understand what is happening to them.

Abuse happens to children of all races, ages and social economic backgrounds. Take a stand and join the Archdiocese of SA and OVASE to **STAND UP for CHILDREN!**



## 10 Reasons To Stand Up For Children!

10. Children are the heart of our future.
9. Everyone can make a difference in a child's life.
8. Its easier to build strong children than to repair broken adults.
7. All children are special.
6. There is no excuse for child abuse.
5. Children thrive when adults care.
4. Protecting children is everyone's job.
3. Each child deserves to be cherished.
2. Children are our most valuable natural resource.
1. Because they can't always stand up for themselves.



## Coordinators Participate in Child Abuse Prevention Month & Order Your Promotional Items Today



During the month of April the Archdiocese of San Antonio Parishes and Catholic Schools will be participating in the Blue Ribbon Awareness Campaign. Show your support and share awareness by **STANDING UP** For **CHILDREN!** Please place your order from **OVASE** for one free promotional item for each child at your parish and school.

# Blue Sunday Child Abuse Prevention Initiative News

Blue Sunday Child Abuse Prevention Initiative News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

March 1, 2013

CONTACT: Janet Magee

Phone :(956) 299-0564

Address: P.O. Box 730 Port Isabel, Texas 78578

Email: janetmagee@bluesunday.org

According to the latest Child Maltreatment Report by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 1570 children died from child abuse and over 3 million others were also confirmed victims of child abuse in 2011. One is too many.

Blue Sunday Child Abuse Prevention Initiative believes change can occur when working hand in hand with the faith community to raise awareness and bring relief for the victims of child abuse. "We are encouraging churches to join the millions already committed to participating in National Blue Sunday.

Blue Sunday began over 14 years ago when 20 churches took time in during their worship service on the last Sunday of April (Child Abuse Prevention Month) to pray for the victims of child abuse and those who rescue them. The effort has grown to include more than 2.5 million participants.

It is imperative for the faith community to become leaders in child abuse prevention and relief efforts.

Churches are encouraged to do the following –

1. Take time during your service on April 28 to pray for 3 things:

- The children who are victims of child abuse
- Those who rescue and serve abused children
- Direction to become active participants in the battle

against child abuse

2. Register your church for Blue Sunday at [www.bluesunday.org](http://www.bluesunday.org)

For more information call (956) 299-0564

3. Additional ideas to consider -

- Display or wear blue ribbons
- Honor church members or community leaders who go "above and beyond" to help children
- Invite local foster family or adoption agencies to set up information booths
- Take up a collection for a local agency such as Child Welfare Boards located in every county or parish.
- Hand out printed materials sharing the Blue Sunday Prayer /Challenge and Signs of Child Abuse available at [www.bluesunday.org](http://www.bluesunday.org)



**Blue Sunday Child Abuse Prevention Initiative is dedicated to helping communities reach out to the needs of abused children and to support those who rescue them. We are a 501 C 3 nonprofit organization..**

# ADOLESCENTS & TEENS ARE MOST AT RISK OF SEXUAL ASSAULT



Many years ago as a sexual assault advocate part of the daily duties included responding to the local hospital to assist victims of sexual assault understand their rights to the justice system and to sit and support them through a sexual assault examination. One day a young teen age girl ended up in the hospital emergency room after being found in an alley way. Walking into the ER her first words were please don't call my parents.

Her biggest fear was that her father would be angry because he warned her that the boy she cared about would hurt her and she was too young for a relationship. Knowing that dad would never allow her to date she decided one

night to sneak out this does not mean that they her window to consented to the abuse. Anyone meet this young man under the age of 18 can never who she thought was consent to sex with an adult. the one of her Therefore this 19 year old clearly dreams. committed sexual assault and probably knew that under these circumstances she was highly unlikely to tell anyone about the abuse.

He turned out to be her worst nightmare. After drinking at a party they went back to his place where he allowed his two friends to sexually assault her. She shared her feelings of shame, guilt, and most of all betrayal of the one she loved. But above all this, she worried about what her father would think. After a few hours she agreed to call her mother and father in order to get consent for the exam.

Her father barged in and his first words were: "I told you so!". Although dad's words were based on his own feelings of not being able to protect his daughter he blamed her for the sexual assault.

Sexual assault is never the fault of the victim. If a person said "no" and is forced into sex,; it's sexual assault. If a person decided not to fight back or cooperate out of fear,

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## RESOURCES:

### OVASE

(210) 734-7786

1-877-700-1888

San Antonio Rape Crisis Center

(210) 349-7273

San Antonio Police Department  
Victim's Advocacy Section

(210) 207-7141

Rape Abuse & Incest National Network  
1-800-656-HOPE(4673)

Texas Association Against Sexual  
Assault

(512) 474-7190

[www.taasa.org](http://www.taasa.org)

# Scheduled Training

## APRIL

**3rd** St. Paul Community Center-Annex  
6pm-7pm Safe Environment Training

**4th** St. Paul Community Center-Annex  
9:30am-4pm **New Coordinator  
Training**

**16th** St. John Daycare Center  
6:30pm-7:30pm Safe Environment  
Training

**17th** St. Paul Community Center-Annex  
6pm-7pm Safe Environment Training

## MAY

**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  
1pm-4pm **Coordinator Refresher**

## THE DIRECTOR'S CUT

As Easter is a time of renewal for our faith, Child Abuse Awareness Month, is a time of renewal to our dedication of stopping abuse and neglect. We must continue to work towards a safe environment where everyone is safe from harm and treated with respect.

The Texas Department of Family & Protective Services recently posted the child abuse/neglect statistics for 2012. Within the 19 counties that make up the Archdiocese of San Antonio, there were 8279 confirmed victims, over 18 thousand CPS investigations, and 25 abuse/neglect related deaths.

These numbers are shocking and heartbreaking. This is why this ministry is vital to the Archdiocese and to the community. The more we educate adults and children on abuse, the stronger our community will be at preventing abuse/neglect from occurring.

President Obama released the following statement concerning child abuse:

"America is a country where all of us should be able to pursue our own measure of happiness and live free from fear. But for the millions of children who have experienced abuse or neglect, it is a promise that goes tragically unfulfilled."

To read the complete press release:

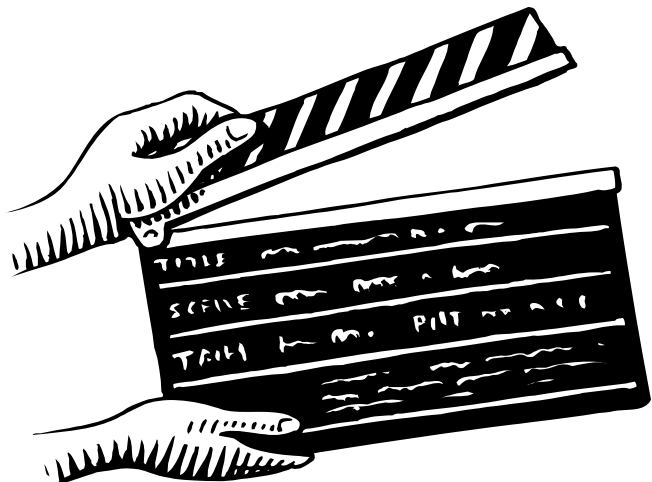
[http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/03/29/presidential-proclamation-national-](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/03/29/presidential-proclamation-national-child-abuse-prevention-month-2013)

[child-abuse-prevention-month-2013](#)

I want to remind you that this Archdiocese is blessed to have so many hard working volunteers. Without your help, this ministry would not reach the tens of thousands that need to hear our message. You are a cornerstone in the fight against abuse and neglect.

Thank you,

-Steve Martinez, LCSW, LSOTP





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