

“The need for strong policies regarding child abuse cannot be exaggerated. We know abuse still happens, all too frequently. We need to say, ‘Absolutely we need this’ instead of, ‘It doesn’t happen here.’”

– Mary Kuhns
Retired clergy/therapist, Claremont, CA

“We have an obligation to make church and church events safe places for all children.”

– Gradye Parsons
Stated Clerk of the General Assembly
2008-2016

“Not only does abuse destroy lives, families and congregations, it destroys people’s ultimate faith and trust in God and the Church.”

– Donna Wells
Stated Clerk, Greater Atlanta Presbytery

“The protection and nurture of every child is a sacred trust we accept as we baptize children, a trust we confirm in our vigilance to prevent the sexual abuse of any child.”

– Nancy Ramsey
Presbyterian Mission Agency Board

Toll-free Abuse Prevention Helpline
866 607-SAFE (7233)

This service is provided for all PC(USA) congregations and members by:

Insurance Board
Praesidium Inc.
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

InsuranceBoard.org/abuse_prevention

Is your church safe?

“Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs.”

– MARK 10:14



How safe is your church?



- One out of four girls and one out of six boys will be abused before the age of 18.
- 80 percent of abuse does not get reported.
- Abuse destroys a child's well-being and sense of trust.
- Sexual predators seek out trusting environments where children are present.
- Churches are vulnerable because of close relationships, trusting environments and immediate access to children.
- Allegations of abuse threaten the church's mission and reputation.
- Court awards in abuse cases can cost churches millions of dollars.

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Toll-free Abuse Prevention Helpline

The Helpline is staffed by Praesidium experts, the national leader in abuse prevention.

Callers receive expert advice on how to best respond to suspicious behaviors, suspected abuse, as well as prevention and receive guidance on:

- Responding to suspicious interactions between employee and child.
- Responding to an allegation of abuse.
- Determining when and how to report to authorities.
- Learning to respond compassionately to victims, families and the congregation.
- Responding to media requests.
- Identifying risks in programs.
- Screening employees and volunteers.
- Managing high-risk activities such as monitoring bathrooms and interacting with youth on social media.
- Developing a safety plan for an offender in the congregation.



What can you do to prevent abuse in your church?

Abuse Prevention Resources available to PC(USA) churches

- The 24-hour toll-free Helpline provides expert staff to assist churches in managing concerns and incidents of abuse.
- Discounted criminal background checks search millions of records nationwide to provide the most accurate information on criminal history.
- Free Armatus online abuse prevention training offered through the Insurance Board and developed by Praesidium effectively helps church leaders manage the risk of abuse.
- A policy template is provided for churches to create their own Child Protection Policy.
- Online Self-Assessment Tool allows churches or youth conference sponsors to accurately and confidentially identify potential gaps in the abuse risk management practices across the entire church.
- Churches get a report providing direct links to resources, helping them build an action plan for closing risk gaps.