

## *The Problem of Child Sexual Abuse in our National Community*

Sexual abuse or molestation involves the exploitation of a vulnerable person for the sexual stimulation or gratification of an older, stronger, more influential person.

It is at epidemic proportions in our nation.

According to the National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect, in 2000, an average of 2,400 children were found to be victims of child sexual abuse every day.

Children of all races and ethnicities experience child abuse.

Children of all ages experience abuse. The youngest children are most vulnerable.

1 in 3 girls and 1 in 7 boys by age 18 has been sexually abused.

Child molesters are well known to the victim in 85% of reported cases.

Adolescent males commit 56% of reported child molestation cases.

## *The Problem of Child Sexual Abuse in Our Church Community*

In the last two decades, hundreds of children have been sexually abused in our churches.

It continues to be the number one catastrophic risk facing churches today.

The American society, now well aware of the problem, no longer tolerates excuses from church leaders who do not provide a safe place for children.

### *Can you imagine a child being sexually abused in your church? It can happen!*

Churches that lag behind in the screening of potential children and youth workers will not receive preferential treatment if a case of abuse should happen under their jurisdiction.

Jurors show no sympathy to church leaders who rely upon “faith and trust.”

Churches without a prevention program are finding it difficult to obtain liability coverage for child sexual abuse.

### *No church is immune . . .*

## *The Impact of A Case of Child Sexual Abuse in Your Church*

A *single case* can shatter the life of an individual and family, can devastate a church, divide the congregation, and destroy a ministry.

The first child sexual abuse lawsuit was filed against a church in 1984. Since then hundreds of claims have been filed, with judgments exceeding \$75,000,000.

Children who are sexually abused suffer long-term, in some cases, lifetime effects. It robs them of their childhood . . .

Children suffer depression, anxiety, regressive behaviors, such as a return to thumb-sucking, or bed-wetting, running away, poor academic performance, behavior problems, sexual acting out . . .

Other symptoms include posttraumatic distress disorder, guilt, fear, sexual dysfunction, eating disorders, alcoholism, drug addiction, promiscuity, prostitution . . .

If sexual abuse occurs in the church, additionally, there is damage to one’s personal faith and ability to trust God.

## *. . . But, There Is Good News . . .*

*The “Reducing the Risk II” Program* has been designed to help your church

- ❑ Provide a safe and secure environment for children who are entrusted to you
- ❑ Safeguard your church and its members.
- ❑ Provide vital information to church leaders
- ❑ Identify important qualities and characteristics of potential children and youth workers, paid and volunteer
- ❑ Reduce the legal risk and liability by reducing the risk of negligent selection if a problem should occur later.

## *“Reducing the Risk II” Program*

This program addresses the most critical legal and moral problem facing the church today, and shows church leaders how to implement an effective prevention program to lessen the risk.

- ❑ Making Your Church Safe From Sexual Abuse (overview).
- ❑ Understanding Child Sexual Abuse
- ❑ Reducing the Church’s Legal Vulnerability
- ❑ Understanding the Behavioral Profiles of Molesters
- ❑ Safeguarding the Church Through Training
- ❑ Selecting and Screening Workers
- ❑ Principles of Supervision
- ❑ Responding to Allegations
- ❑ Implementing a Prevention Program in Your Church

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”Reducing the Risk II” Videos by Church Law & Tax Report, Matthews, NC

Supplemented and presented by FSK

## *About the Presenter*



& NC.

Dr. Long, who has a Doctorate of Ministry Degree, and master’s degrees in both social work and counseling, has 36 years of postmasters clinical experience, and 29 years of volunteer and paid Christian ministry experience. Dr. Long is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker in VA

She is credited with developing and operating a church owned Counseling Ministry in a 6000+-member church for 6½ years. She is currently in private practice at Christian Psychotherapy Services in Virginia Beach, Virginia where she works with individuals, couples and families. She daily ministers to adolescent and adult victims of child sexual abuse. Carolyn, a mother and grandmother of one, is a member of Pleasant Grove Baptist Church also in Virginia Beach.

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# Protecting the Children by Reducing the Risk

*Keeping the Children in Your Church Safe from Child Sexual Abuse*



### ***A Prevention Program***

Developed by Church Law & Tax Report  
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