



CHILD ABUSE AWARENESS



Office of Communications
Diocese of Norwich

APRIL IS NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH. IT IS MOST APPROPRIATE THAT CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH IS HELD DURING THE EASTER SEASON. THERE IS NO BETTER TIME THAN EASTER TO CELEBRATE THE PROTECTION OF OUR MOST VALUABLE GIFT FROM GOD - OUR CHILDREN. THIS BULLETIN INSERT IS THE THIRD OF A FOUR-PART SERIES.

WHAT ELSE DO I NEED TO KNOW?

- IN SURVEYS OF ADULTS, ONE OUT OF FOUR WOMEN AND ONE OUT OF TEN MEN REPORTED THAT THEY WERE SEXUALLY MOLESTED BEFORE THEY WERE EIGHTEEN YEARS OLD. IF THIS TREND CONTINUES, WE CAN EXPECT THAT ONE IN FOUR WOMEN AND ONE IN TEN MEN WILL BE VICTIMIZED BEFORE THEY ARE EIGHTEEN YEARS OLD.
- THERE ARE AN ESTIMATED FORTY MILLION SURVIVORS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE LIVING IN THE UNITED STATES TODAY.
- IT IS ESTIMATED THAT 9.6% OF ALL SCHOOL CHILDREN WILL BE MOLESTED BY AN EDUCATOR OR AN EMPLOYEE OF A SCHOOL.
- SEVERAL STUDIES ESTIMATE THAT ONLY ABOUT 6% OF ALL CHILDREN REPORT SEXUAL ABUSE BY AN ADULT TO SOMEONE WHO CAN DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT. THE OTHER 94% EITHER DO NOT TELL ANYONE OR ELSE SPEAK ABOUT IT ONLY TO A FRIEND - WHO IS USUALLY SWORN TO SECRECY.
- THE WARNING SIGNS OF ADULTS WHO PRESENT A RISK OF HARM TO CHILDREN INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING: THE PERSON (1) SEEKS TO BE ALONE WITH CHILDREN IN AREAS WHERE NO ONE CAN MONITOR THE INTERACTION; (2) ALLOWS CHILDREN TO DO THINGS THEIR PARENTS WOULD NOT PERMIT; (3) IS CONSISTENTLY MORE EXCITED TO BE WITH CHILDREN THAN WITH ADULTS; (4) DISCOURAGES OTHER ADULTS FROM PARTICIPATING WITH HIM OR HER IN ACTIVITIES INVOLVING CHILDREN.
- GET TO KNOW THE ADULTS WHO SHOW UP AT THE VARIOUS LOCATIONS IN THE COMMUNITY WHERE CHILDREN GATHER AND WHERE THEY PLAY TOGETHER. BE WARY OF ANY ADULT WHO SEEMS MORE INTERESTED IN CREATING A RELATIONSHIP WITH A CHILD THAN WITH OTHER ADULTS. USE THE CONNECTICUT SEX OFFENDER REGISTRY AS A RESOURCE: WWW.CT.GOV/DPS.
- DRAMATIC BEHAVIORAL CHANGES IN A CHILD (E.G., EXTREME MOOD SWINGS, WITHDRAWAL, BED WETTING, NIGHTMARES, SLEEP DISORDERS, EXCESSIVE CRYING OR FEARS) CAN SIGNAL ABUSE. WHEN CHILDREN EXHIBIT DRAMATIC BEHAVIORAL CHANGES, ADULTS MUST FIND OUT WHAT CAUSED THE CHANGES. BEING AWARE OF WHAT IS HAPPENING WITH OUR CHILDREN MEANS TALKING TO, LISTENING TO, AND OBSERVING THEM AT EVERY OPPORTUNITY.

[NEXT WEEK: WHAT CAN PARENTS AND GRANDPARENTS DO?]