

Reporting Abuse

If you suspect a child is being abused or neglected, please report it! It is not your job to investigate or have overwhelming proof before reporting. Leave the investigation up to the professionals. Please contact your county child protection agency and provide as much information as possible such as:

- The name and address of the child you suspect is being abused or neglected;
- The age of the child;
- The name and address of the parents or caretakers;
- The name of the person you suspect is abusing or neglecting the child and the address if available;
- The reason you suspect the child is being abuse and neglected;
- Any other information which may be helpful to the investigation; and
- You have the option of giving your name or reporting anonymously. Giving your name can help the investigator clarify information. The agency will not give your name to the person suspected of abusing the child.

Please Note: All of the above information is not needed to make a report. If you are not sure you have enough information to report, always err on the safety of the child. Children Services screens all reports to determine if there is enough information to investigate.

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services provides two dedicated reporting lines—one for reporting child abuse and another for reporting adult abuse. Each number connects callers directly to the appropriate child or adult protective services or local law enforcement office in their county.

Ohio's Centralized Reporting Numbers

- **For Children:**
 - The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services provides a single phone number to report suspected child abuse or neglect statewide: 855-O-H-CHILD (855-642-4453)
- **For Adults:**
 - The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services provides a single phone number to report suspected adult abuse or neglect statewide: 855-OHIO-APS (855-644-6277)

If you are aware of a youth being sexually exploited online, make a report to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children 24/7 CyberTipline at www.CyberTipline.org, and contact law enforcement.

If you suspect a child is in imminent danger from abuse, **please call 911 immediately.**

If you suspect a child is being abused or neglected by a member of the clergy or any

employee or volunteer at a Parish, Catholic School, or any Catholic organization or apostolate in the Diocese of Columbus, please report it immediately to your county

child protection agency! After you have contacted the civil authorities, please contact the appropriate diocesan personnel so a safe environment can be maintained, and an investigation can be facilitated by an independent review board.

Remember, protecting children means never minding your own business. No matter how uncomfortable it may feel, **you** could be the only voice that child has. Please speak up.

For more information and resources, visit www.columbuscatholic.org/safe.

Safe Environment Contact Information:

Meredith Gaul, Diocesan Safe Environment Coordinator

614-241-2568, Opt. 3

mgaul@columbuscatholic.org

Megan Matthews, Diocesan Safe Environment Coordinator

614-241-2568, Opt. 1

mmatthews@columbuscatholic.org

Laura Lewis, Diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator

866-448-0217

llewis@columbuscatholic.org

helpisavailable@columbuscatholic.org

24/7 Safe Environment Emergency Report Line: 614-779-1966