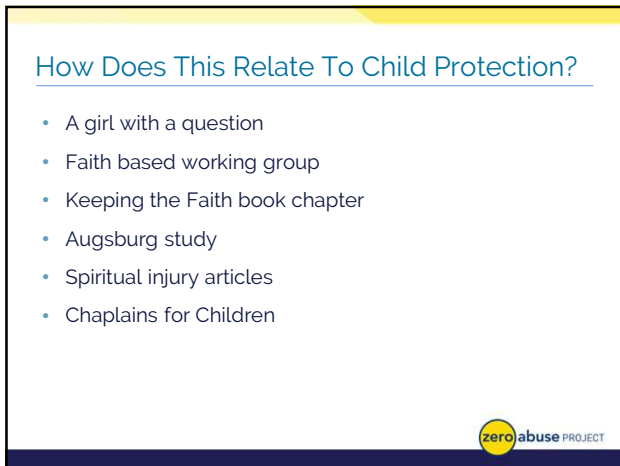
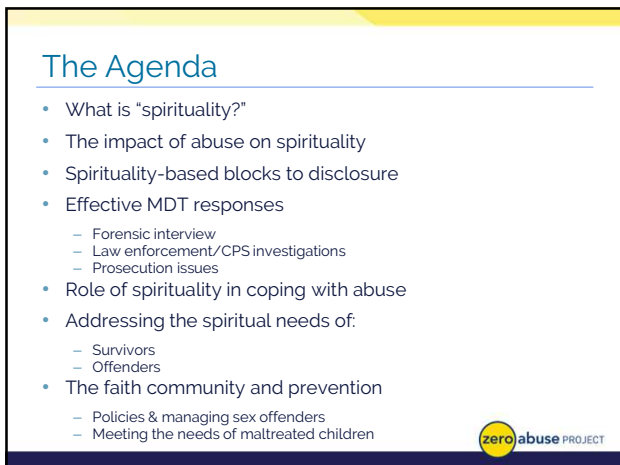


1



2




3

What is Spirituality?

- "Relating to religion or religious belief; relating to, or affecting the human spirit or soul as opposed to material or physical things."¹
- Spirituality has been defined as a "search or quest for the Sacred" or as a "private, personal, affective experience with 'the Divine.'"²

¹ The Oxford American Dictionary (2003)
² Walker (2009)



4

The role of spiritual care

Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy
2009, Vol. 1, No. 2, 130-145


© 2009 American Psychological Association
1942-9681/09/\$12.00 DOI: 10.1037/a0016211

Changes in Personal Religion/Spirituality During and After Childhood Abuse: A Review and Synthesis

Donald F. Walker, Henri Webb Reid, Tiffany O'Neill, and Lindsay Brown
Richmont Graduate University

Psychologists have begun to consider the potential role of traumatic experiences on the victim's spirituality and religiousness as well as the role personal religious and spiritual faith might have in recovery from abuse. In this review, the authors were particularly interested in these issues as they pertain to childhood abuse. The authors identified 34 studies of child abuse as they relate to spirituality and religiosity that included information on a total of 19,090 participants. The studies were classified according to both the form of abuse and the form of religiousness or spirituality that were examined. The majority of studies indicated either some decline in religiousness or spirituality ($N = 14$) or a combination of both growth and decline ($N = 12$). Seven studies gave preliminary indications that religiousness/spirituality can moderate the development of posttraumatic symptoms or symptoms associated with other Axis I disorders. The authors discuss implications for both therapy and future research.

Keywords: childhood abuse, religion and spirituality




5

The impact of abuse on spirituality

- A study of 527 child abuse victims (physical, sexual or emotional) found these victims had a "significant" spiritual injury
- The injuries included feelings of guilt, anger, grief, despair, doubt, fear of death and belief God is unfair.
- However, the victims reported praying more frequently & having a "spiritual experience."¹

¹Lawson, et al. Child Abuse & Neglect (1998)



6

Spiritual impact of abuse by clergy

- Clergy use "religious cover" to justify abuse (i.e. their "good works" overshadow the abuse; God gave this child to me)
- Clergy often communicate this cover to the victims
- When this happens, church attendance of these survivors decreases, less likely to trust God, and their relationship with God "ceases to grow."

McLaughlin, Devastated Spirituality: The Impact of Clergy Sexual Abuse on the Survivor's Relationship with God (1994)



7

Impact of clergy abuse



An Exploratory Study on Mental Health, Social Problems and Spiritual Damage in Victims of Child Sexual Abuse by Catholic Clergy and Other Perpetrators

Noel Ferré, Lorna Gómez-Tello, Anna Segura & Francisco Muñoz-Galván

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- Victims of clergy CSA 4 times more likely to see their beliefs in God negatively impacted.
- This was a "significant predictor for experiencing most of the mental health and social problems analyzed."
- These victims were more than twice as likely to have "suicidal phenomena"



8

How often do offenders use religious cover?

- 93% of sex offenders describe themselves as "religious" (Abel study of 3,952 male offenders)
- In a survey of 2,864 church leaders, 20% knew of a sex offender attending/member of their church ¹
- Hard core offenders maintaining significant involvement with religious institutions "had more sexual offense convictions, more victims, and younger victims." ²
- Why?
- Church provides "cheap Grace", gullible religious people, and easy access to children

¹Christianity Today 2010

²Eshuys & Smallbone, Religious Affiliations Among Adult Sexual Offenders (2006)




9

“

“Mr. Geier, now 59, said that between the ages of 14 and 15, starting around 1965, Father Murphy molested him four times in a closet at the school. The priest, a hearing man fluent in sign language, said that God wanted him to teach the boy about sex but that he had to keep it quiet because it was under the sacrament of confession. Mr. Geier said he felt sick.”

— Laurie Goodstein, New York Times, March 26, 2010




10

“

“Pedophiles need to become more positive and make the claim that pedophilia is an acceptable expression of God’s will for love and unity among human beings.”

— Ralph Underwager, ordained Missouri Synod Lutheran minister. Journal of Paedophilia (1993)



11

How is religion used in the abuse of a child?

Jack Schaap, Indiana Pastor, Claimed Jesus Wanted Him To Have Sex With Teenage Girl

The Huffington Post | By Meredith Bennett Smith | Posted: 03/14/2013 4:53 pm EDT | Updated: 03/15/2013 12:26 pm EDT

Recommended 11,215 people recommend this.



Jack Schaap, a former megachurch pastor accused of having sex with a teenage girl, gives an animated sermon on “Publishing the Shame.”



12

Pastor Schaap

- Schaap's teenage victim "particularly susceptible to this offense due to her mental state." *Probation pre-sentence report*
- Schaap sees an e-mail the teenager in his church is "frightened, confused, and emotionally traumatized" and was engaging in "self-destructive behaviors."
- The e-mail notes the child has "a tender heart and...is still very teachable and moldable."



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Pastor Schaap

- One week later, Schaap begins to "counsel" victim
- Among the victim's troubles, she discloses an emotional breakup with boyfriend
- Schaap transitions from pastor to friend to child molester—sexually assaulting the teenager in 3 states



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Schaap's letter to victim

"You opened your heart wide to me—you made me more than a Pastor/Rescuer—you made me your friend, your confidant, your beloved...In our 'fantasy talk' you have affectionately spoken of being 'my wife.' That is exactly what Christ desires for us. He wants to marry us & become eternal lovers! I tried to craftily catch your heart...Thank you for the privilege of helping a struggling teenager...You have such a wonderful life ahead of you. I must be careful not to spoil that with my selfish fantasy desires...When we get scared, Jesus sends his spirit to live within us...I must follow the example of Christ. I have espoused you to Him as a chaste virgin..."



15

Victim's letter to Schaap

"I was in love with you and I would not admit that I was a victim...I also felt so guilty and partially responsible, like maybe it was my fault...Then I became really angry towards God. For a second I did not believe in God. I thought there can't be a God because he would not let this happen and if there is a God, I hate him because he let this happen because you told me that he was OK with this.."



16

Victim's letter to judge

"My entire life the Church has been my universe. Growing up, I watched (Schaap) in Church, listening to his sermons three times a week. I was raised by my parents and teachers to trust and obey my pastor. He was a celebrity to me, a father figure, and a man of God...I felt most safe when I was in Church. I first met (Schaap) when I was in kindergarten, and still had my baby teeth..."



17

Victim's letter to judge

"As my pastor, I sought guidance and counseling when I was in need of help. He told me to confide in him...He told me I was special, that he loved me, and that he wanted to marry me. He told me that I was his precious gift from God...he made me believe what we were doing was okay and right in the eyes of God. I felt so special when he texted me from the holy alter during his sermons..."



18

What can MDTs do?



- Be aware of potential spiritual injuries that may impair disclosure of abuse

Vieth (2011; 2018)



19

Look For Clues

- Prior to conducting the interview, look at the intake form for clues about spiritual blocks
- Example: "I think God is mad at me."
- Also look at the setting of abuse (clergy perpetrator, abuse in a religious setting, etc)
- Do we know anything about the child's belief system? (small towns have an advantage here; Missouri case)



20

Select An Appropriate Setting For Interview

- CAC or child friendly room for interviews
- If an emergency interview is needed, be cognizant that a spirituality-based block may be harder to overcome if the interview is in a church affiliated school or even a home filled with religious symbols.¹
- Example: "When daddy does sex to me I feel sad...My Mister Jesus he just watched and he didn't make it stop."
- Another example "just focus on the cross."

¹ Christa Brown, *This Little Light* (2009); DVD All God's Children



21

Be Alert For Signs Of Spiritual Block

- Sometimes the child may boldly do or say something suggesting a block or problem (i.e. "Am I still a virgin in God's eyes?")
- The dynamics of abuse may suggest a block (i.e. girl molested after being compelled to say bedtime prayers and father says "You see, God is OK with what are doing—or he would have stopped this.")



22

Addressing Blocks in the Interview



23

Offer Reassurance

- "You're not in trouble with *me*."
- "*This* is a safe place."
- "You know, I talk to lots of boys (or girls). No matter what happened, it's not your fault."



24

Assure the child that someone will help him/her address spiritual questions

- Child: Am I still a virgin in God's eyes?
- Interviewer asks the question back ("How come you ask that?")
- What if the child insists on an answer?



25

Locate Evidence of Grooming

- "Clergy... are no different than other child sex abusers with regard to grooming."
- Study of 18 credibly accused Minnesota monks
 - Average of 3.61 grooming behaviors utilized
- Pair with expert testimony
- Is offering heaven a form of grooming?



Source: Spratitz & Bowen (2019)



26

Interrogating The Clergy Offender



- Offenders engaged in religious/cognitive distortions including:
 - Victims "colluded" in their abuse
 - Victims "initiated" their abuse
 - Abuse was a "relationship"
 - Abuse was "good" for victims (e.g. Murphy)



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Addressing Spiritual Injuries



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Bring Spirituality Questions, Blocks/Problems To The Team

- Develop a plan to address the spiritual injuries in the same way we would address physical/emotional damage
- Select a therapist skilled at addressing child abuse and who shares the child's faith or is well-versed in the child's faith tradition and is sensitive to the child's spiritual needs¹
- Have one or more faith members as part of team
- Consider the value of spirituality in helping the child cope (i.e victim witness forms) (works at Mayo)

¹Gonsiorek, et al 2009



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Issues For Prosecutors

- Consider a clergy person as a support person
- The value of prayer before trial
- How will you explain these dynamics to the jury?
- Is the use of religion a form of grooming?



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Rules of Evidence vs. Trauma Explanation

- RULE 610. RELIGIOUS BELIEFS OR OPINIONS**
 Evidence of a witness's religious beliefs or opinions is not admissible to attack or support the witness's credibility.
- Case scenario: 13-year-old victim says she didn't tell about abuse for 8 years because she was a Christian and she believed sex outside of marriage was "sinful."
- Should she be able to explain to the jury her reason for the delay?



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Clergy-penitent Privilege

University at Buffalo School of Law
Digital Commons @ University at Buffalo School of Law

Journal Articles

Faculty Scholarship

10-2017

Exorcising the Clergy Privilege

Christine P. Bartholomew
University at Buffalo School of Law

Commentary Child Abuse and the Lutheran Confessional: A Call to Elevate Christ's Teachings on Children above Church Traditions

October 2017
Professor of the Faculty of Education and Health and
Director of Research and Outreach at the Law School

In the United States, clergy are considered custodians of a state's confidential information. Clergy members are often required to maintain confidentiality of information shared with them in the course of their ministry. This duty of confidentiality is a cornerstone of the clergy-penitent privilege, which is a fundamental principle of the legal system. The privilege is designed to protect the confidentiality of information shared between a clergy member and a penitent, and is a key component of the clergy-penitent privilege. The privilege is designed to protect the confidentiality of information shared between a clergy member and a penitent, and is a key component of the clergy-penitent privilege.

While there is some support for the doctrine of clergy-penitent privilege, the doctrine is not supported by the majority of states. The majority of states do not support the concept of keeping a confessional if it risks the reporting, abuse or death of a child or requires the pastor to violate civil or criminal laws designed to protect children from abuse.

Christine P. Bartholomew, *Exorcising the Clergy Privilege*, 46 *Journal of Law, Religion & Ethics* 103 (2017). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12207-017-9288-8>



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The Potential Benefit of Spiritual Care



33

The Role of Spirituality in Coping with Abuse

- Researchers have found a victim's "spiritual coping behavior" may play a positive or negative role in the ability to cope with the abuse
- Victims of severe abuse and very young victims are more likely to remain "stuck" in their spiritual development (i.e. remain angry with God)
- Nonetheless many victims reporting "greater resolution" of childhood abuse were able to "actively turn to their spirituality to cope...rather than attempt to cope on their own."¹

¹ Gall, Spirituality and Coping with Life Stress Among Adult Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse. 30 Child Abuse & Neglect 829 (2006)



34

More Research

- Religious and spiritual forms of coping "contribute to decreased symptoms, greater self esteem, and overall greater life satisfaction."¹
- Religiousness can moderate posttraumatic symptoms for child abuse survivors.²
- In a study of 2,964 female child sexual abuse survivors, researchers noted "significantly more posttraumatic symptoms" in survivors with no current religious practices.³

¹ Bryant-Davis 2012
² Walker 2009
³ Elliott 1994



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Spirituality and ACEs



Home Profiles Research Units **Research Output**

Enter search terms...

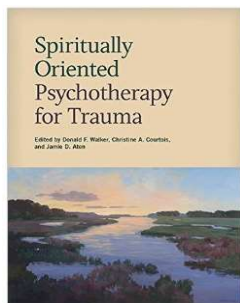
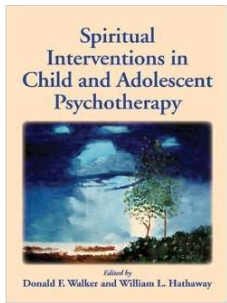
The Role of Religious Involvement in the Relationship Between Early Trauma and Health Outcomes Among Adult Survivors

Katia G. Reinert, Jacquelyn C. Campbell, Karen Bandeen-Roche, Jerry W. Lee, Sarah Stanton
 School of Nursing, Bloomberg School of Public Health



36

APA Notes Importance of Spiritual Impact



40

Collaboration with Mental Health

- Clergy as consultant
- Therapist as consultant
- Referrals
- Limited collaboration
- Full collaboration
 - Therapy and spiritual guidance offered as integrated whole

Billich 2000



41

The Importance of Sacred Texts

- Many maltreated children abused or neglected by an offender who used a sacred text¹
- This damage can be "powerfully undone when challenged using other passages from clients' religious and spiritual tradition."²
- The case of the minister using Genesis

¹ Bottoms, et al (2003)
² Walker, et al. (2014)



42

God May Not Answer The "Why" Questions



Job by Léon Bonnat (1880)

(Pargament 2005)



43



"One of the other vital functions of the church, and one that I think we've forgotten, is the art of lamenting. People who have suffered severe trauma, such as sexual abuse, need to lament. Often, I will send them to the Psalms or to the Prophets, but I help them find words from Scripture to express their pain, their fear, their doubts, and sometimes even their anger at God. We see often in Scripture where the psalmist or the prophets call out to God, 'Where are you?' or 'Why don't you hear me?'"

—Diane Langberg, 2017



44

Recommendations

- Avoid the temptation to focus on victim's "sins"
- Assist the victim in accessing medical and mental health care
- Stay within your field of expertise
- Refrain from platitudes
- Don't require forgiveness
- Cautiously respond when victim wants to confront perpetrator



45

What Survivors Want

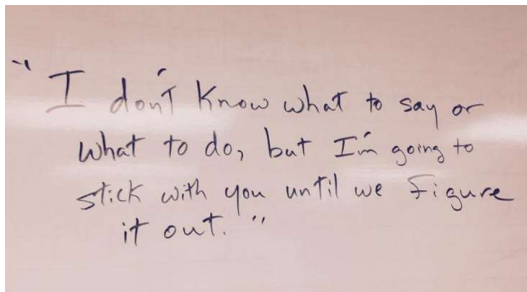
1. Offer an "unequivocal apology"
2. Symbolic gestures (i.e. a memorial or rock garden)
3. Changes in policies (two deep leadership, proper screening, immediate reporting to the authorities—no exceptions)
4. Archive the past (victims want the assurance there will never be a revisionist history)
5. The practical (church should help access mental health and medical services)
6. Listen and act (the hymn that hurt)

Clark 2009



46

Nate Frambach



47

Meeting the Needs of Offenders



48

Pastoral care for offenders

- Coordinate with sex offender treatment provider or develop "treatment network"¹
- Stay within your field of expertise
- Review original investigative records
- Confront cognitive distortions
 - "The child never said no"
- Don't allow offender to shift blame
 - "My wife withheld herself sexually"

¹ Mutter (2011)



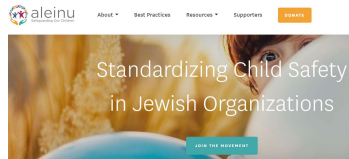
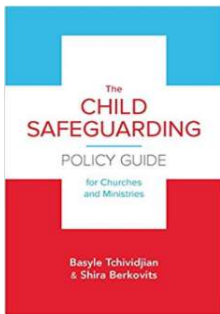
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Policies on managing sex offenders



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Policy resources



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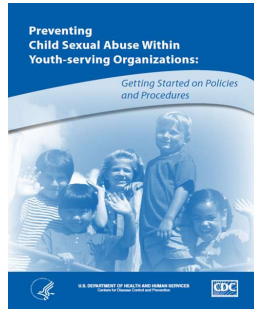
Prevention Planning



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Follow the CDC Standards

- Screening/selection of employees & volunteers
- Guidelines on interactions
- Monitoring behavior
- Ensuring safe environments
- Responding to inappropriate behavior
- Training of employees, caregivers, youth

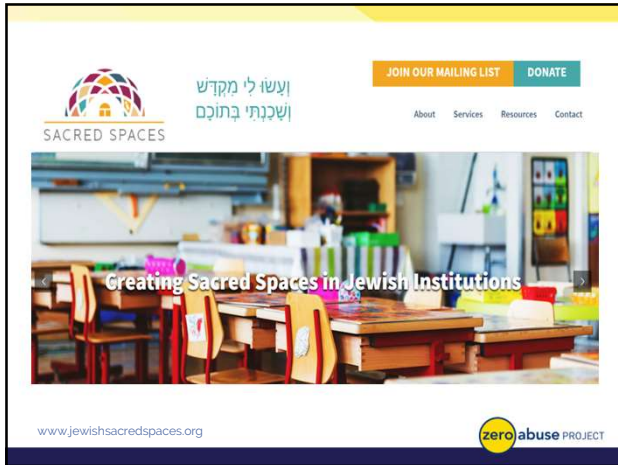


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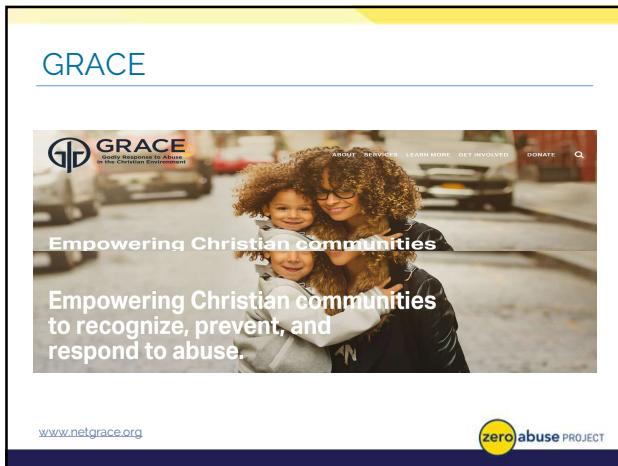
Faith & child protection collaborations



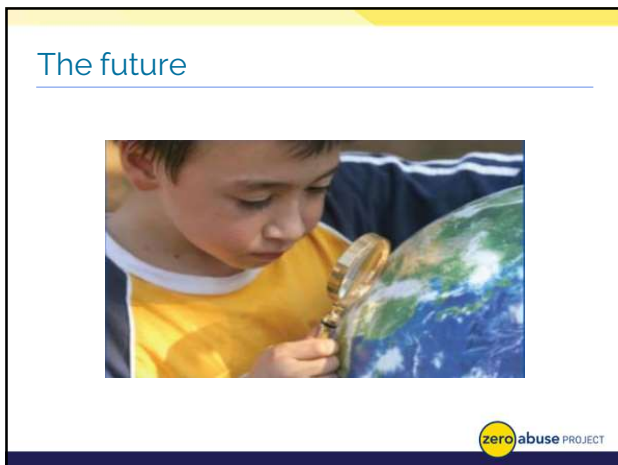
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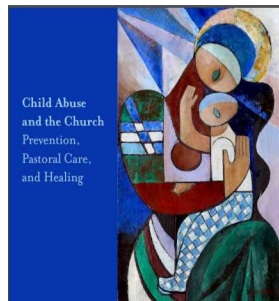
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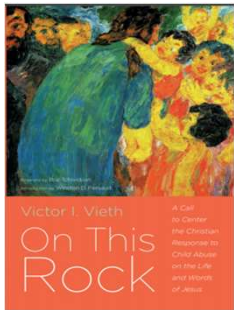
Currents in Mission & Theology

- Articles on:
 - Coordinating spiritual & mental health care
 - Coordinating spiritual and medical care
 - Responding to problematic sexual behaviors in youth
 - Prevention



70

Engaging theologically



"Taking the child in his arms, he said to them, 'Whoever receives one of these little children in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me.'"

Jesus (Mark 9:36-37)



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The importance of engaging theologically

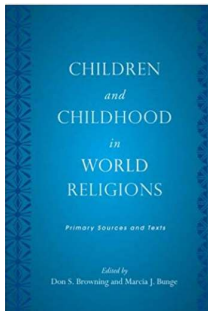


- "Victor Vieth has challenged the church to 'not do anything new but rather something very old...to return to the message of Jesus and center our response on the words and actions of Christ.'"
 - P. 22



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Another resource

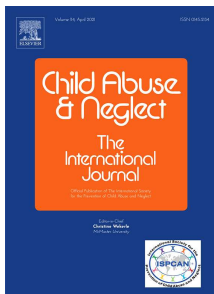


- Addresses sacred texts pertaining to children from six of the world's largest religious traditions.



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Child Abuse & Neglect



V. 38 (4) (2014)



Table of Contents

- The Positive Role of Religion and Religious Communities in Child Protection
- Jewish Processes for Protecting Children
- When Child Abuse is Non-Violent
- Christianity's Commitments to Nurturing and Protecting Children: Biblical Foundations
- Children are neighbors worthy of love and respect
- The Nurture and Protection of Children in Islam: Perspectives from Islamic Sources
- Islamic baby comfort, affection, care, and education
- Buddhism and Children
- Whose struggle with the story of the Buddha's son
- Engaging Religious Communities to Protect Children from Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation
- Interpretation: religious analysis of religious violence and harm
- The Church and Child Protection: The Safe Families Story
- Violence: the responsibility to provide in need



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Theological Article



Currents in Theology and Mission

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Currents in Theology and Mission

Augustine, Luther and Solomon: Providing Pastoral Guidance to Parents On the Corporal Punishment of Children

by Victor C. Yang

Of child abuse there is a warning given that is unmistakable.

Others come when it is too late and will come to help the child who has been hurt.

Although we rarely would call them our own doing, they find their way to help and to heal.

The current promises of abuse and neglect are a powerful pastoral promise to the child, the parent, and the church.

Through the church's long history, the child's abuse and neglect have been a pastoral promise to the church and the world.

Through the church's long history, the child's abuse and neglect have been a pastoral promise to the church and the world.

Although the church long ago abandoned the belief that adults could physically discipline the corporal punishment of children continues to be widely used in Protestant circles, with some prominent Christian parents insisting that physical discipline is required by the Bible.

In some instances, the use of the church's long history and tradition to justify the use of physical discipline is based on a selective reading of the Bible.

In order to make progress in addressing the world's long history of child abuse and neglect, the church must first address the Bible's support of physical discipline.

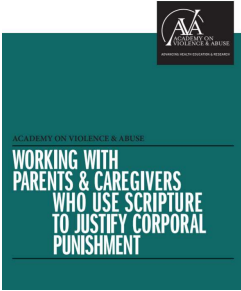
This article examines the Bible's support of physical discipline and offers a pastoral response to the church's long history of child abuse and neglect.

The church's long history of child abuse and neglect is a powerful pastoral promise to the child, the parent, and the church.



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AVA & APSAC publications




Special Section

Working With Molly: A Culturally Sensitive Approach to Parents Using Corporal Punishment Because of Their Religious Beliefs

Victor I. Vieth, JD, MA

"As for parents, don't provide your children to anger, but raise them with discipline and instruction about the Lord" —Apostle Paul (Ephesians 6:4)



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Early research is promising

Child Abuse & Neglect 71 (2017) 69-79

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect




Child Abuse & Neglect

Research article

Changing attitudes about spanking among conservative Christians using interventions that focus on empirical research evidence and progressive biblical interpretations

Cindy Miller-Perrin*, Robin Perrin

Pepperdine University, United States





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Closing Thoughts

The bottom-line dilemma:


"You can make sense of sexual abuse and no God, or God and no sexual abuse. But how do you tolerate the two realities together?"

- Diane Langberg, PhD




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"Till the night be passed"






"Silence in the face of evil is itself evil. Not to act is to act."
– Dietrich Bonhoeffer



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