

## Child Abuse Prevention Month April, 2015

- A report of child abuse is made every 10 seconds.
- 3,300,000 reports of child abuse and neglect are made every year. They involve an estimated 6 million children.
- The three most common forms of abuse are:
  - Neglect – 78%
  - Physical Abuse – 11%
  - Sexual Abuse – 8%
- Child abuse occurs at every socioeconomic level, across ethnic and cultural lines, within all religions, and at all levels of education.

Source: Childhelp (2012)

### Prayer

Merciful Lord, your heart must break when you see the suffering of little ones, yet you do not look away.

You call children to your side and do not intend that any should harm them.

Give us, we pray:

Eyes to see  
Hearts of compassion  
Courage to act.



Lord, make us your servants, working to protect your children. Amen.

David Orr, pastor, Lincoln, Nebraska  
Dove's Nest board member

## Child Abuse Prevention for Congregations

When we read headlines about child abuse or neglect, we may feel powerless to help. But research shows that churches that actively work to address this problem exert a highly protective influence upon children, in their congregations and in their communities.

Dove's Nest recommends three concrete steps for congregations:

### 1. Learn More

*Let the Children Come: Preparing Faith Communities to End Child Abuse and Neglect* by Jeanette Harder (Herald Press 2010) is a great introduction to the subject for Sunday School classes, small groups, and individuals.

### 2. Develop a Child Protection Policy

Identifying what it takes to protect children in your congregation, developing appropriate policies, and offering training to staff and volunteers are the most important things a congregation can do to protect children. Having a clearly defined plan for responding to any concern that arises enables people to act responsibly and appropriately during confusing and emotional situations.

### 3. Prepare Children for Positive Relationships

The *Circle of Grace* curriculum teaches children and youth how to identify and maintain appropriate physical, emotional, spiritual, and sexual boundaries; recognize when boundary violations are about to occur; and demonstrates how to take action when boundaries are threatened or violated. Through Dove's Nest, this multi-year resource, which can complement any Sunday School or youth program, is available free to Mennonite USA congregations and organizations.



For these and other resources, visit:  
[www.DovesNest.net](http://www.DovesNest.net).

*Empowering and equipping faith communities to keep children and youth safe in their homes, churches, and communities.*