

Materiales de distribución  
para la protección infantil de LMC  
Cursos de actualización







## Servicios de Protección Infantil, notificación de abuso de menores

### ¿Por qué las congregaciones necesitan un programa de gestión del riesgo de abuso de menores?

Desafortunadamente, el problema es real. Un número creciente de iglesias se enfrenta a demandas y tragedias que rodean a los menores que son acosados o abusados. Un solo incidente de abuso de menores puede devastar una iglesia. En muchos sentidos, la iglesia necesita estar en guardia más que en ningún otro lugar:

- La gente asume que conocen bien a todos en la iglesia, y por lo tanto es un lugar seguro.** Muchas personas creen ingenuamente que una situación de abuso "nunca pasaría en nuestra iglesia". Esto es imprudente y falso.
- Necesitamos trabajadores.** La iglesia está constantemente en busca de personas que se ofrecen voluntariamente para atender diferentes necesidades de la iglesia. Esto pone a muchas iglesias en una situación vulnerable. Las normas para los niños y jóvenes trabajadores deben establecerse y mantenerse firmes.
- Las iglesias podrían ser un hábitat perfecto para los depredadores sexuales.** Esto se aplica a los depredadores sexuales conocidos y a los abusadores insospechados. ¿Dónde más se puede encontrar tantos niños y un ambiente de confianza? Los niños confían en la iglesia. Madres y padres confían en la iglesia. Desafortunadamente, en las iglesias es más común ignorar la sensación de que una persona pueda representar un riesgo que cuestionar su carácter o motivos.
- El impacto es enorme.** Incluso un incidente de abuso de menores puede dividir o devastar a una congregación. Los padres y los miembros se ven obligados a hacer preguntas que nunca quisieron hacer. Los líderes enfrentan una gran culpa. Los niños y jóvenes se sienten victimizados y la cobertura de noticias negativas interfiere. Añada a todo esto el trauma emocional severo a la víctima y la familia de la víctima y el futuro del ministerio eficaz puede ser completamente socavado.

*Adaptado de Capital Christian Fellowship, Un plan de gestión de riesgos para Capital Christian Fellowship para protegerse contra el abuso sexual infantil, agosto de 2007.*

### ¿Es usted un informante bajo mandato en el estado de Pensilvania?

Si usted es un adulto (18 +) que interactúa rutinariamente o tiene contacto directo con niño/a(s) (menores de 18 años) en el transcurso de su función, remunerada o no, como parte integrante de un programa, actividad o servicio programado regularmente o que supervisa a aquellos que sí tienen contacto directo, entonces usted es un informante bajo mandato.

### ¿Cuándo un informante bajo mandato debe presentar una denuncia?

1. Cuando usted tenga una "causa razonable" para sospechar que un menor ha sido abusado. "Causa razonable" se define como una situación en la que cualquier otra persona "razonable" habría hecho el informe.
2. Cuando un niño/a le revela, o se entera por un tercero, que un menor identificable ha sido abusado/a por cualquier persona, en cualquier lugar.
3. Cuando una persona de 14 años o más le revela a usted que él o ella ha abusado de un menor .

Como informante bajo mandato, usted no debe investigar para verificar que se ha producido un abuso. Como informante bajo mandato, su obligación legal es solo denunciarlo.

### **¿Cómo hago una denuncia?**

1. **Denunciar:** Presente inmediatamente una denuncia en [www.compass.state.pa.us/CWIS/Public/Home](http://www.compass.state.pa.us/CWIS/Public/Home) el Portal de Bienestar Infantil del Departamento de Servicios Humanos de PA o llame a ChildLine al 1-800-932-0313.
2. **Informar:** Informe a la persona que su Política de Protección Infantil designe que usted ha hecho una denuncia.
3. Si optó por llamar a ChildLine en lugar de presentar una denuncia electrónicamente, pregunte a la persona a quien hizo la denuncia si también debe presentar el formulario de papel CY-47 con su agencia local de Servicios de Protección Infantil en un plazo de 48 horas.

**¿Qué pasa si no soy un informante bajo mandato, pero soy consciente de una situación de abuso?** Cualquiera puede presentar una denuncia de abuso de menores. Los informantes bajo mandato están legalmente obligados a hacerlo. Si usted no es un informante bajo mandato, no está obligado/a a presentar ningún papeleo o a informar a nadie que usted presentó una denuncia de abuso de menores.

**Nota especial para líderes acreditados con respecto a las comunicaciones confidenciales privilegiadas:** En situaciones que implican abuso de menores, no hay una norma general en Pennsylvania que las comunicaciones entre un informante bajo mandato y un paciente o cliente del mencionado informante sean privilegiadas. La ley de Servicios de Protección Infantil preserva un privilegio existente muy estrecho en relación con el clero "*quien en el desempeño de sus deberes haya adquirido información de cualquier persona secreta y confidencialmente*". Los tribunales de Pensilvania han interpretado que el privilegio comunicante del clero aplica solo a las comunicaciones confidenciales entre un comunicante y un miembro del clero en su papel de confesor o consejero espiritual. La Conferencia de Lancaster aconseja a los pastores a afirmar claramente que tienen la intención de denunciar situaciones de abuso de menores conocidas en cualquier entorno, incluyendo la asesoría pastoral, para eliminar cualquier expectativa de confidencialidad sobre el abuso. La Conferencia de Lancaster también aconseja fuertemente a cualquier pastor que conozca de algún caso de abuso de menores en su papel de confesor o consejero espiritual y que considere invocar el privilegio por parte del comunicante, que consulte inmediatamente a un asesor jurídico.

*Esta información no es un asesoramiento jurídico y no debe ser tratado como tal. Si tiene preguntas sobre cualquier asunto legal, debe consultar a su abogado u otro profesional legal.*

### **Recursos sugeridos por los autores**

- Department of Public Welfare, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, *The child protective services law: Title 23 Pa. C.S. A. Chapter 63*, Harrisburg, PA, 2014.
- Hammar, Richard R., *Reducing the Risk of Child Sexual Abuse in Your Church*, Matthews, NC: Christian Ministry Resources, 1993.
- Klipowicz, Steven W., *Reducing the Risk of Child Sexual Abuse training manual*, Matthews, NC: Christian Ministry Resources, 1993.
- Parker, Mary, ed., *Safe Place: Guidelines for Creating an Abuse-Free Environment*, Christian Publications, Inc., 2009.
- Zarra, Ernest J., *It Should Never Happen Here: A Guide for Minimizing the Risk of Child Abuse in Ministry*, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1997.
- SafeChurch, *Movement Building to End Child Sexual Abuse: Featuring Allies from Faith Communities Speaking Out to Protect Children*, DVD media, Samaritan Counseling Center, Lancaster, PA, 2015.

*Adapted from Growing Leaders, November 2007, page 3.*

**LMC** Lancaster Mennonite Conference

**Protección de Menores en la Iglesia /  
Child Protection in the Church**

Un punto de partida/A Starting Point



### Introducción/Introduction

- Sobre seguridad para los niños, no incomodidad para los adultos/*About safety for children not discomfort for adults.*
- Grave problema social en Estados Unidos/*Serious social problem in USA.*
- Lancaster County Statistics handout

### Estudio de Caso /Case Study

- Ephrata, PA, Falta de Informe/ *Failure to Report*
- **Pregunta:** Si esta situación hubiese sucedido en su congregación, ¿hubiera llamado a ChildLine?/ *If this situation would have occurred in your congregation, would you have called ChildLine?*
- ¿Por qué o por qué no?/ *Why or Why not?*

### La Cuestión/The Issue

- The reality of sexual abuse and other abuse of children is not new to humanity, although the awareness of this social problem has risen dramatically in recent decades in the United States.
- Nationally, 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 5 boys are sexually abused.
- According to the 2006 Church Membership Profile data for Mennonite Church USA, 1 in 6 females and 1 in 20 males reported having experienced child sexual abuse.

## Estudio de Caso /Case Study

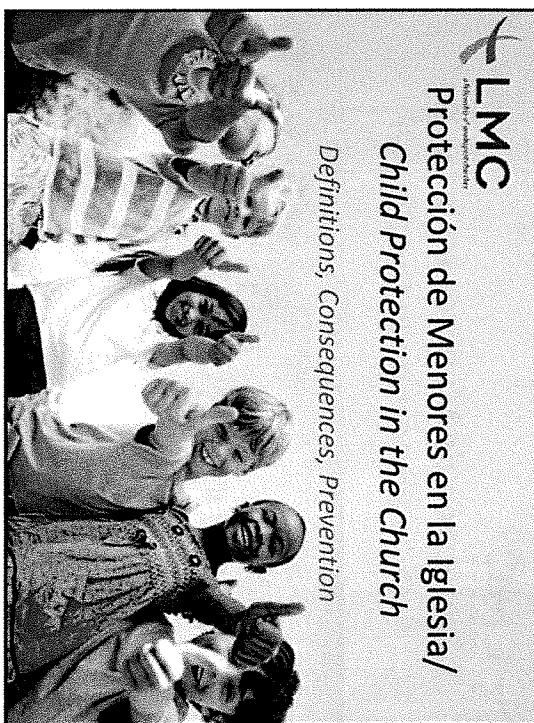
- Ephrata, PA, Sentencia en el caso de “Falta de Informe” /*Sentencing in “Failure to Report” case*
- **Pregunta:** Si esta situación hubiese sucedido en su congregación, ¿estaría de acuerdo con los resultados legales? / *If this situation occurred in your congregation, would agree with the legal result?*
- ¿Por qué o por qué no? /*Why or why not?*

## Abuso de menores */Child Abuse*

- Cualquier acto u omisión de acto reciente por parte de uno de los padres o un proveedor de cuidado que resulta en la muerte, un daño físico o emocional grave, el abuso sexual o la explotación; o un acto u omisión de acto que resulte en riesgo inminente de un daño grave.
- Any act or omission of a recent act by a parent or caregiver that results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation; or an act or omission of an act that results in imminent risk of serious harm.

## Las Definiciones /Definitions

- Abuso de menores, p.15-16/*Child Abuse*
  - El abuso físico /Physical
  - La negligencia-psicológico/Neglect-Psychological
  - Sexual
- Reporto por Mandato, p. 13-14/*Mandated Reporter*
  - Paid staff
  - Unpaid volunteer
- Política de protección de menores/*Child Protection Policy*



## Reasonable Cause to Suspect

Reasonable cause to suspect is more than a hunch. It is a determination you make, based on your knowledge of the circumstances, your observations, your familiarity with the individuals, and your feelings about the incident.

- Observations: Think about indicators of abuse or red flags, behavior and demeanor of the child, behavior and demeanor of the adults. Has there been a series of observations that begin to form a pattern that you notice?
- Familiarity: Consider the knowledge you have about the individuals, the family situation, or relevant history or similar prior incidents.
- Feelings: Think about your feelings and personal biases and consider how they influence your conclusions and actions.
- Identify the facts of the incident or pattern of events. What do you know? Consider your observations about Who, What, How, and When.

## Consecuencias/Consequences

| <i>Los Resultados Varían</i>      | <i>Outcomes Vary</i>               |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| • Desarrollo cerebral deteriorado | • Impaired brain development       |
| • Mala salud física               | • Poor physical health             |
| • Dificultad con el apego humano  | • Difficulty with human attachment |
| • Mala salud mental y emocional   | • Poor mental & emotional health   |
| • Dificultades de pensamiento     | • Thinking difficulties            |
| • Dificultades sociales           | • Social difficulties              |
| • Tomar riesgos sexuales          | • Sexual risk-taking               |
| • Riesgo de violación             | • Rape risk                        |
| • Delincuencia juvenil            | • Juvenile delinquency             |
| • Criminalidad adulta             | • Adult criminality                |
| • Abuso de alcohol y fármaco      | • Alcohol and drug abuse           |
| • Comportamiento abusivo          | • Abusive behavior                 |

## El abuso de menores in New Jersey

- Child abuse is charged as a serious crime in all states, including **New Jersey**. The crime includes acts of exploitation, neglect, abandonment, willful isolation from social contact, and sexual abuse, in addition to physical abuse.
- El abuso de menores se considera un delito grave en todos los estados, incluido Nueva Jersey. El delito incluye actos de explotación, abandono, abandono, aislamiento voluntario del contacto social y abuso sexual, además del abuso físico, ... Tribunales de Menores de Menores y Relaciones Domésticas 9 § 6-1, et seq.

## Prevención, p. 4-7/Prevention

- Formar un Equipo de Protección Menores
- Tener una política activa de protección menores.
- Mantener la revisión actual
- Aprende a reconocer el abuso y la negligencia.
- Reportar sospecha razonable de abuso
- Entrenarse mutuamente
- Ser activo en la congregación y en la comunidad.
- *Form a Child Protection Team*
- *Have a active child protection policy*
- *Keep checks current*
- *Learn to recognize abuse and neglect*
- *Report reasonable suspicion of abuse*
- *Train each other*
- *Be active in the congregation and community*

## El abuso de menores in New Jersey

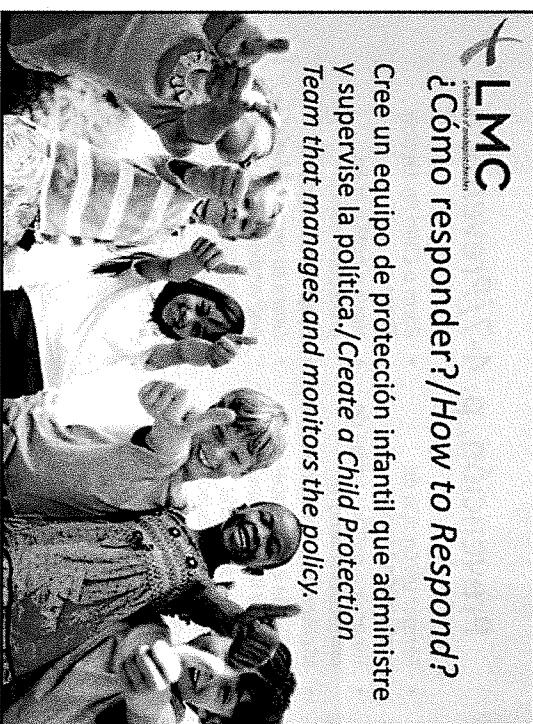
- En Nueva Jersey, cualquier persona que tenga una causa razonable para creer que un niño ha sido sometido a abuso o actos de abuso debe informar inmediatamente esta información al Registro Central del Estado (SCR). Si el niño está en peligro inmediato, llame al 911 y al 1-877 NJ ABUSE (1-877-652-2873).
- In New Jersey, any person having reasonable cause to believe that a child has been subjected to abuse or acts of abuse should immediately report this information to the State Central Registry (SCR). If the child is in immediate danger, call 911 as well as 1-877 NJ ABUSE (1-877-652-2873).

### New Jersey Resources

- State Central Registry 1-877 NJ ABUSE (1-877-652-2873).
- Department of Children and Families <https://www.nj.gov/dcf/reporting/how/>
- **New Jersey criminal record:** Complete New Jersey State Police application and schedule an appointment for fingerprints by Morpho Trust. [http://icpcstatepages.org/newjersey/criminalbackground/round/](http://icpcstatepages.org/newjersey/criminalbackground/)

## Falta De Hacer Informes, NJ/ Failure to Report, NJ

- | VIOLACIONES INCLUYENDO<br>FALTA DE HACER INFORMES   | VIOLATIONS INCLUDING<br>FAILURE TO MAKE REPORT  |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cualquier persona que infrinja a sabiendas las disposiciones de esta ley, incluida la falta de notificación de un acto de maltrato infantil que tenga una causa razonable para creer que se ha cometido un acto de maltrato infantil, es una persona con desorden</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any person knowingly violating the provisions of this act including the failure to report an act of child abuse having reasonable cause to believe that an act of child abuse has been committed, is a disorderly person.</li> </ul> |



**LMC**  
a National Partnership

**¿Cómo responder?/How to Respond?**

Cree un equipo de protección infantil que administre y supervise la política./Create a Child Protection Team that manages and monitors the policy.

## ¿Cómo responder?/How to Respond?

Cree una Política de protección menores que desarrolle las mejores prácticas para proteger a los niños y cumplir con la ley. /Create a Child Protection Policy that develops best practices to protect children and comply with the law.



## Las Prácticas MÁS Adecuadas p. 4-5/

### **Best Practices**

1. Form a small child protection team (3-6 members).
2. Create, implement, and execute a child protection policy.
3. Design a process to develop and maintain a list of adults approved to work with children and youth. They will all be mandated reporters.
4. Provide training for all staff, volunteers and the entire congregation.
5. Conduct all children's activities by staffing with two approved adults.
6. Provide children and youth ministry rooms with windows in the doors or require that the doors remain open at all times during activities.
7. Develop a bathroom visit supervision policy.
8. Maintain a functioning and up-to-date building access list for building keys and/or access codes.
9. Communicate visibly and repeatedly that there is a functioning child protection policy in the congregation.
10. Survey the building annually to identify reclusive areas and modify.
11. Determine if and how your congregation would work with offenders.

## Reporte por Mandato

**Who is a mandated reporter?** Under the *Child Protective Services Law* adults, paid or unpaid, who work with children; adult volunteers in a setting with children; or adults who come in direct contact with children in a program, activity or service is a mandated reporter and must immediately report suspicions of child abuse or neglect. Minors (under 18) are not mandated reporters.

## Background Checks

Background checks are required for all mandated reporters. Background checks must be renewed every five years.

1. PA State Police Criminal Record Check
  2. Child Abuse History Clearance Form
  3. *FBI Criminal Background Clearance*
- Not required with continuous residence in PA for 10 years or more and a legal statement to that effect.

## How Is a Report Made?

If you have reasonable cause to suspect child abuse of any kind, follow these two steps:

**1. REPORT OUT**

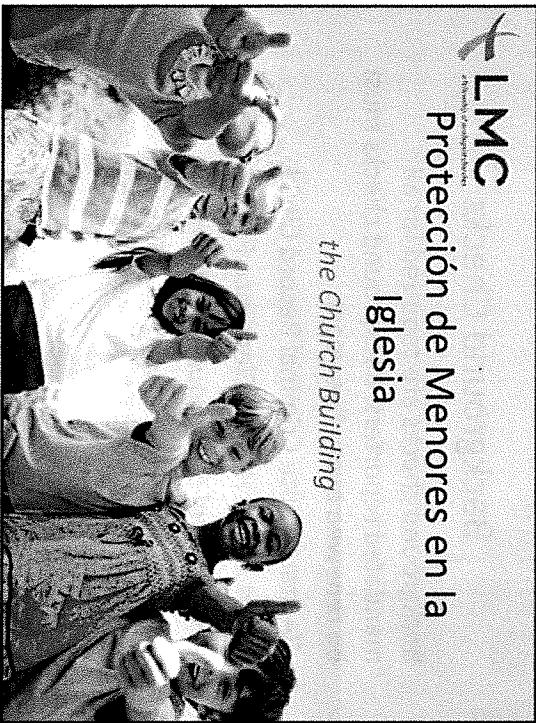
- Call Childline at **1-800-932-0313**. Then within 48 hours of the call, complete and submit a written CY-47 report to the county Children and Youth services in the county where the alleged abuse took place.

**OR**

- Make an online report at the Child Welfare Portal [www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis](http://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis). If the report was made at the Child Welfare Portal, then no CY-47 paper report is needed. Requires creating an account.

**2. REPORT UP**

- Notify the head of your institution immediately, unless the head of your institution is the perpetrator of the alleged abuse.



## Frequently Asked Questions

- What if a Mandated Reporter fails to follow the law?** The penalties range from a misdemeanor of second degree to a felony of the second degree.

- Can you report suspected abuse if you are not a Mandated Reporter?** Yes. Anyone who is concerned about the safety of a child is encouraged to make a report. Individuals are encouraged, although not required by law, to make a report of suspected child abuse to Childline (1-800-932-0313).

- Am I protected from civil and criminal liability if I make a report of suspected child abuse?** Yes, persons making a report of suspected child abuse are immune from civil and criminal liability as long the report was made in good faith.

- If I make a report is my identity protected?** The identity of the person making the report is kept confidential with the exception of being released to law enforcement officials or the district attorney's office.

## Las Llaves/Keys

- ¿Sabes dónde están tus llaves?/Do you know where your keys are?
- Gana el control de las llaves/Gain control of keys.
- Mantén el control de las llaves/Keep control of keys.

## Visibilidad del Espacio / Space Visibility

- Visibility:** All activities/meetings with children/youth must be conducted in a way that allows visibility, e.g., glass areas of doors should not be obstructed, curtains/blinds should be open, when possible, door should be open or a window should allow easy observation of the room. Where possible, conduct activities in a public place, with another person within sight and sound of the activities.
- Because abuse is sometimes perpetuated by an older, stronger child/youth, do not send two children/youth with a four or more year age difference to an isolated setting, e.g., bathroom, tent, empty classroom.

## Reuniones y Eventos Meetings and Events

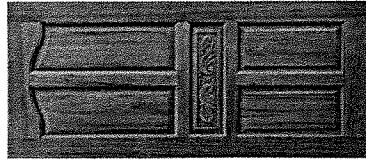
- Verifique que las salas y los espacios apartados estén desocupados al final de todas las reuniones y eventos./Verify that rooms and out of the way spaces are vacated at the conclusion of all meetings and events.
- Entrene a los acomodadores para que retiren los lugares durante y al final de las reuniones y eventos./Train ushers to check out of the way places during and at the conclusion of meetings and events.

## Annual Building Tour

- Los baños Espacios fuera de la vía Valor de los ujieres entrenados Bathrooms
- Out-of-the-way spaces
- Value of trained ushers

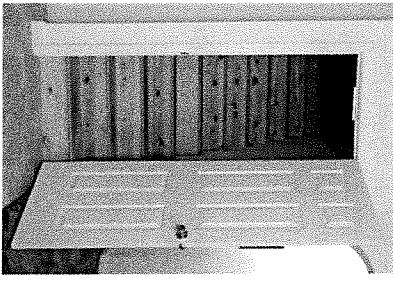
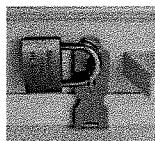
## Puertas /Doors

This...      or...This.      But not This.



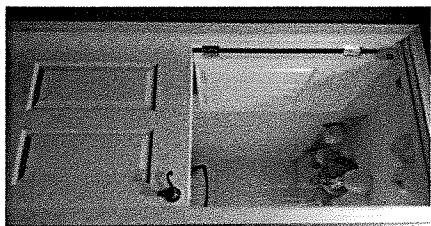
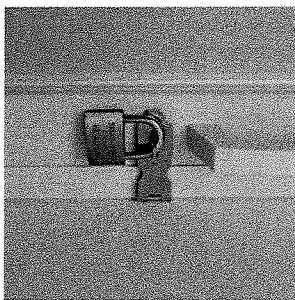


Debajo de las escaleras/*Under Stairs*

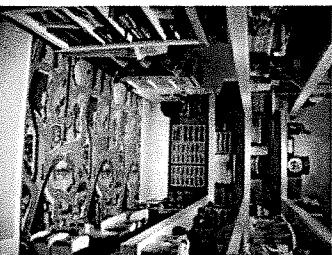
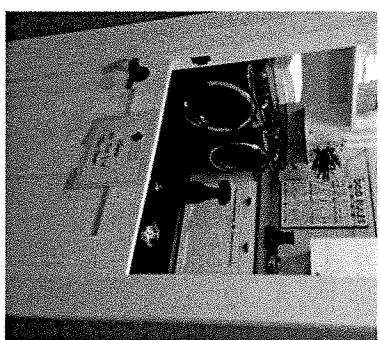


Not This...  
This. But, key control.

### Ático /*Attic*

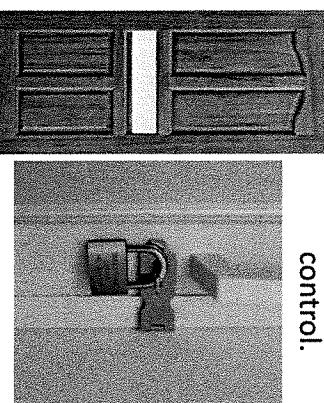


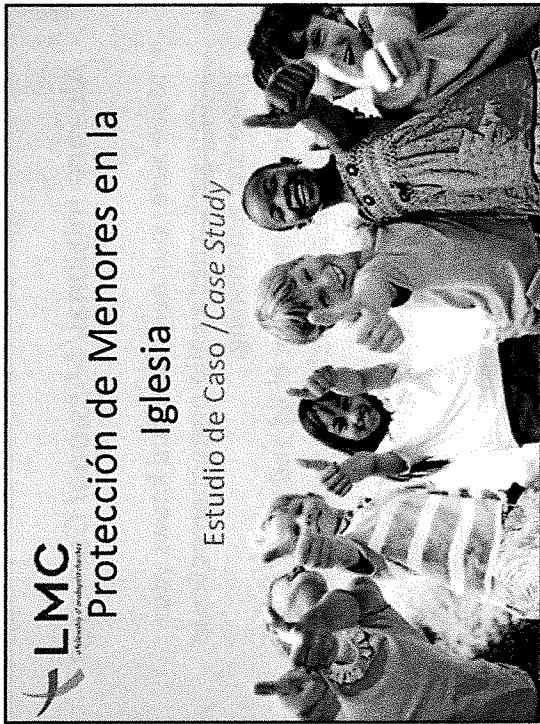
Opción de media puerta/*Half Door*  
*option*



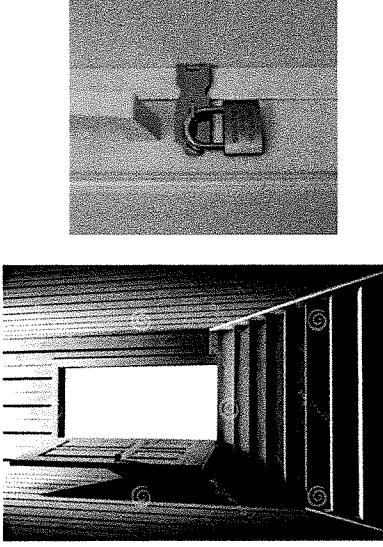
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### Armario /*Closets*





## Sótano/Basement



## Estudio de Caso /Case Study

- Leer/Read
- Discutir/Discuss
- Pregunta: ¿Llama a ChildLine y reporta el hecho? Explique./ Do you call ChildLine and make a report? Why or Why not?

## Alcance misional/Missional/ Outreach

- Report on your church website that you have a child protection policy in place and functioning.
- Post on your church bulletin board that you have a child protection policy in place and functioning.
- Place notices in the bulletin periodically.
- Announce from the pulpit periodically.

### Alcance misional/Missional Outreach

- Make sure your neighborhood knows your congregation has a child protection policy in place and functioning.
- All advertisements for child and youth events should note the church has a functioning child protection policy.
- Consider a news release in the local news paper.

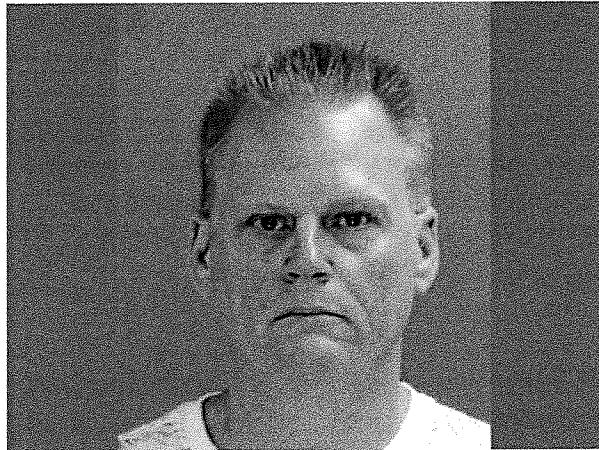
### Cuatro próximos pasos/Four Next

#### Steps

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Formar un equipo de protección infantil.                         | 1. Form a child protection team.                                  |
| 2. Obtenga cheques para todos los reporteros obligatorios.          | 2. Get checks for all mandated reporters.                         |
| 3. Desarrollar una plantilla de política de protección infantil.    | 3. Develop a Child Protection Policy template.                    |
| 4. Ayude a cada congregación a adaptar la plantilla a su situación. | 4. Help each congregation tailor the template to their situation. |
| 5. Implementar la política y mantenerla actualizada.                | 5. Implement the policy and keep it current.                      |

# Lancaster teacher groomed student, propositioned teen for sex: police

Posted Aug 05, 2019



Timothy Mark Sterner, 52, is accused of sexually propositioning a student at J.P. McCaskey High School over the course of several years, all while he was a teacher at the school.

By [Becky Metrick](#) |  
[bmetrick@pennlive.com](mailto:bmetrick@pennlive.com)

A Lancaster teacher was arrested Monday after allegations arose that he repeatedly asked a male student for sex.

Timothy Mark Sterner, 52, taught at J.P. McCaskey High School between 2011 and 2015, when investigators say he propositioned the student, police said in charging documents filed Monday. The student was between 14 and 17 years old at the time.

Police said they met with Sterner at the school Monday, but afterwards he went to their station and was charged. The School District of Lancaster did not return a call on Monday afternoon.

The accuser, a former student, told investigators that Sterner pursued a sexual relationship with him at the school. The two had contact during and after school hours, at Sterner's Lancaster home and other areas around the county, according to court documents.

Sterner instructed the then-teen to call him by a pet name, took the boy out to eat, took him shopping, bought him clothing including underwear and a cell phone, gave him money and took him on trips outside the state, according to court documents.

Investigators discuss Sterner paying for a portion of a trip involving international travel for the boy, but did not go into detail about the nature of the trip.

The accuser told police that Sterner repeatedly told him he loved him, and that he would leave his wife and children for him, according to court documents.

[Police said in a release](#) that these actions could be considered "grooming behaviors." When both were at the school together, the former student said Sterner would show him pornography either on his cell phone or on a school computer, according to court documents. This happened during school and after school hours, as well as at Sterner's home.

Sterner is accused of sexually propositioning the student repeatedly during these years, either over the phone or in person, according to court documents. The propositions also happened in other areas outside Pennsylvania.

Sterner also asked for nude photos and videos of the student to be sent through the phone, according to court documents. At the time, the student obliged and sent the images to Sterner, he told investigators.

The student claimed Sterner exposed himself multiple times to the student, while they were in Sterner's basement, according to court documents.

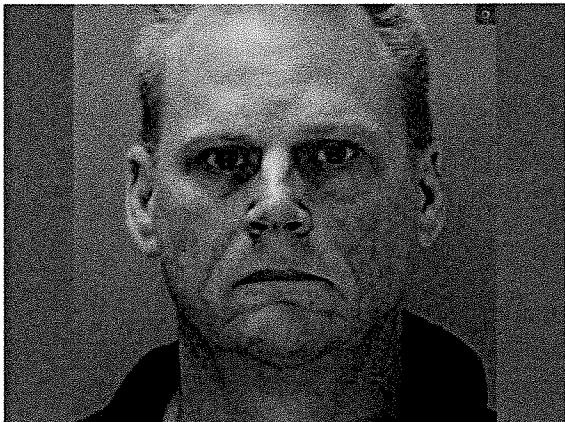
Sterner is charged with attempting to have sexual contact with a student, criminal solicitation of sexual contact with a student, showing a child pornography, corruption of minors, criminal use of a communication facility, unlawful contact with a minor - sexual offenses, unlawful contact with a minor - obscene or other sexual materials dissemination of explicit sexual materials, endangering the welfare of a child and unlawful contact with a minor - sexual exploitation.

Sterner is being held at Lancaster County Prison on \$2 million bail, according to online court documents. A preliminary hearing is scheduled for August 5.

1. [Pennsylvania Real-Time News](#)

## Lancaster teacher pleads guilty to child sex charges involving one of his students

Updated Dec 12, 2020; Posted Dec 11, 2020



Timothy Mark Sterner entered a guilty plea for sexually propositioning a student at J.P. McCaskey High School over the course of several years, all while he was a teacher at the school. Photo: Lancaster County DA

By [Jana Benscoter |](#)  
[jbenscoter@pennlive.com](mailto:jbenscoter@pennlive.com)

A former Lancaster County teacher accused of sexually assaulting one of his students pleaded guilty to several charges Friday and will have to register under Megan's Law for the rest of his life.

Timothy M. Sterner, 54, pleaded guilty to five felonies and two misdemeanors, according to the Lancaster County District Attorney's Office. He will be sentenced in a couple of months.

Sterner's teacher certificate is suspended and the former music teacher is no longer employed by the School District of Lancaster, according to lead prosecutor Assistant District Attorney Fritz Haverstick.

Using his position as the boy's teacher, authorities said that Sterner met with the boy when he was a freshman and got "close to him." Over a three year period, which ended in 2015, Sterner inappropriately groomed and sexually assaulted the boy, Haverstick said.

Sterner pleaded guilty to felony counts of unlawful contact with a minor, solicitation of institutional sexual assault, dissemination of child pornography, corruption of minors, and endangering the welfare of a child, as well as misdemeanor counts of indecent exposure and corruption of minors.

While several charges, considered to be duplicative, were withdrawn, Sterner did admit to asking the boy for sexual contact, exposing himself to the boy and performing lewd acts in his presence, sending lewd images and pornography to the boy, showing the boy pornography, and having lewd conversations with the boy via online, phone and in person.

Lancaster city police Detective Gareth Lowe filed the charges.



## **Pastor failed to report daycare teacher's abuse of toddler, authorities say**

by Myles Snyder

Posted: Mar 29, 2016 01:48 PM EDT

EPHRATA, Pa. (WHTM) - A former teacher at a Lancaster County church has been charged with abusing a toddler, and the church's former pastor is accused of failing to report the incident.

Cynthia Ebersole, 62, of Denver, is accused of slapping a crying 14-month-old boy three times in the face last November at Grace Point Learning Academy, a daycare at Grace Point Church of the Nazarene in Clay Township, according to the Lancaster County district attorney's office.

Authorities said Ebersole also held her hand over the boy's mouth as he threw a fit.

The abuse was reported to Pastor Robert D. Smith, who suspended Ebersole for two days and relocated her to a classroom with infants but did not report the incident to police as state law requires him to do.

According to church officials, Ebersole is no longer a teacher at the daycare and Smith is no longer with the church.

"The responsibility of two adults was not followed through," Lititz resident Janet Swartz said. "It's shocking to hear, particularly from a church, but also shocking to hear that adults would do something like that to a 14-month old child."

The current pastor refused an interview with ABC 27 News, but parents who use the daycare were given a statement from the church which said, "the safety of the children is the church's absolute concern."

ABC 27 News stopped at Ebersole and Smith's homes. Both were unavailable.

"The pastor, or whoever is in charge of any child, that does not report it is just as guilty as the person who did that as far as I'm concerned," Swartz said.

Northern Lancaster County Regional police charged Ebersole with a misdemeanor count of endangering the welfare of a child.

Smith, 44, of Ephrata, is charged with a misdemeanor count of failure to report.

Both were mailed a summons to appear in court for arraignment.

<https://www.abc27.com/news/pastor-failed-to-report-daycare-teachers-abuse-of-toddler-authorities-say/1108356019>

**Question:** If this situation would have occurred in your congregation, would you have called ChildLine? Why or Why not?

## **Lancaster County pastor and teacher sentenced for abuse and failure to report**

by Cale Ahearn

Posted 9:57 AM, Feb. 28, 2017

LANCASTER COUNTY, Pa.—A Lancaster County pastor and teacher were both recently sentenced in court for the treatment of a toddler at a church daycare.

Robert Smith, 45, a pastor, and Cynthia Ebersole, 63, a teacher, were sentenced to serve two years of probation and other conditions as part of the ARD program.

The incident occurred on November 16, 2015 at Grace Point Learning Academy. The daycare is at the Church of Nazarene in Clay Township.

A parent witnessed Ebersole abuse a 14-month-old boy while caring for a group of toddlers. She was seen holding her hand over the child's mouth as the child was fussing, according to police.

After the reported abuse reached Smith, who oversees all functions at the church, he relocated Ebersole's teaching assignment but never reported the abuse to authorities.

Smith, as a pastor and employee of the daycare, is required under state law to report all the incidents of suspected child abuse to Pennsylvania ChildLine or Police.

In court Monday, Smith said that he should've reported the incident. He was charged with a misdemeanor count of failure to report. He is now required to re-take mandatory-reporter training and perform 90 hours of community service.

Ebersole, in addition to her probation, must take anger-management classes and perform 60 hours of community service. She was also charged with misdemeanor endangering the welfare of a child.

<https://fox43.com/2017/02/28/lancaster-county-pastor-and-teacher-sentenced-for-abuse-and-failure-to-report/>

**Question:** If this situation occurred in your congregation, would agree with the legal result?  
Why or why not?