

Zero Abuse Project launches Center for Faith & Child Protection to address the spiritual impact of child maltreatment

ST. PAUL, MN, UNITED STATES, September 17, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Zero Abuse Project, a national non-profit organization committed to transforming institutions in order to effectively end child abuse, announced the opening of The Center for Faith and Child Protection (CFCP), a new program designed to transform and empower faith communities to respond to cases of child abuse in a trauma-informed manner.

The CFCP will be developed and operated by Zero Abuse Project in an effort to bring faith and child protection professionals together to prevent child maltreatment and, when abuse cannot be prevented, to address the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of maltreated children and adult survivors of abuse. The CFCP will offer education and training including a seminary course that can be adapted to any faith tradition; assistance to investigators and prosecutors in developing trauma-informed responses; case consultation that empowers clergy to coordinate spiritual care with medical and mental health care; and academic research to ensure the promotion of best practices around the spiritual impact of abuse.

Zero Abuse Project Chief Program Officer and Director of CFCP, Victor Vieth, believes this program marks a milestone in closing the gap between child protection professionals and faith communities where prevention and response to abuse within religious institutions can often be inadequate to meet the needs of children.

"Although faith and child protection communities have not always collaborated and are sometimes suspicious of each other, the reality is we cannot effectively meet the needs of children entrusted to our care unless we join our hands and hearts in this great cause," says Vieth.

Zero Abuse Project partner Shira Berkovitz, President & CEO of Sacred Spaces, highlights CFCP's focus on balancing respect for faith traditions with the urgent need to address spiritual harms. "When we teach about youth safeguarding, we must do so with deep respect for the practice, culture, text, values, and rituals that make our faith traditions so rich. Zero Abuse Project's new Center for Faith & Child Protection takes just this approach, understanding the moral imperative to engage theologically with faith communities who are on the front lines of protecting our youth from a place of cultural humility and deep respect for our faith traditions and practice."

"Faith-centered trauma-informed care is not only about healing pain. It also strives for advocacy to vindicate the unjustly victimized and oppressed," says Rev. Sanghoon Yoo, Founder of The Faithful City. "This creates a community of belonging where everyone experiences being connected before being corrected, sharing struggles in compassion, and raising hope and resilience for the future journey together."

The Center for Faith & Child Protection will also offer its flagship two-day training, Keeping Faith, at religious institutions across the country. This two-day workshop includes topics detailing the impact of child abuse on a victim's sense of spirituality, responding to allegations of abuse within a congregation, implementing personal safety training for children, online safety for communities of faith, and real-world case scenarios with problem-solving feedback.

Learn more about the resources CFCP will provide at www.zeroabuseproject.org/CFCP. For more information on trainings, events, and joining the fight against child abuse, please visit www.zeroabuseproject.org, or follow us on social media via Facebook/LinkedIn/X : @ZeroAbuseProj

Headquartered in St. Paul, Minnesota, Zero Abuse Project is a 501(c)(3) national non-profit organization committed to transforming institutions in order to effectively prevent, recognize, and respond to child sexual abuse.

Mike Valente, Director of Communications
ZERO ABUSE PROJECT
+1 571-312-9803
Mike@ZeroAbuseProject.org

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