



# Adventist Risk Management, Inc.



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## Child Protection: Understanding Risks and Creating Solutions

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According to the World Health Organization, 1 in 5 women and 1 in 13 men report having been sexually abused as children<sup>[1]</sup>. Unfortunately, Seventh-day Adventists are not immune. This painful reality brings immeasurable harm to individuals. In our church context, it devastates ministries and communities, impacting—and, in some cases, paralyzing—reputations, finances, and daily operations.

Christ says, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these” (Matthew 19:14, NIV). For decades, Adventist Risk Management<sup>®</sup>, Inc. (ARM) has put protecting the vulnerable at the center of our mission, providing ministries with resources, training, and strategies. This month, we want to highlight what we’ve learned as well as introduce you to some new video resources.

Effective child protection involves many crucial steps, including:

- identifying risks and red-flag behaviors
- creating a thorough child protection plan and adhering to it
- correct supervision and education of personal body autonomy

### Risks and Red-Flag Behaviors

According to Childhelp, a report of child abuse is made every 10 seconds in the United States<sup>[2]</sup>. Specifically, every year, more than four million referrals are made to protection agencies, with over 656,000 victims of child maltreatment. Although men are more likely to offend, a significant number of offenders are women. More importantly, the overwhelmingly majority of offenders are never apprehended. This makes monitoring for red-flag behaviors a critical line of defense and an indispensable aspect of protecting the vulnerable.

Ministry leaders are on the frontlines of monitoring red-flag behaviors. Understanding the big picture regarding child abuse can help congregations be prepared and stay ahead of the curve.

Check out this resource on red-flag behaviors: [How to Spot Red Flag Behaviors](#)

In this resource, you will learn about:

- Demographics
- Red-flag behaviors
- Grooming

## Creating a Child Protection Plan

ARM understands that effective risk management hinges on informed, intentional leadership. Leaders can stay on track by ensuring that they have a detailed plan locked in place. With a plan, they can hold themselves accountable, track their progress, and respond rather than react.

We've created helpful resources on the four core components of [Starting Your Child Protection Plan](#): 1) premises review, 2) personnel administration, 3) protecting children, and 4) program review. These four aspects ensure that the places and people, as well as the program itself, are regularly monitored. Holding your ministry accountable to this program is how you demonstrate care and embody Christlikeness in your communities.

## Safe Touch Practices

To protect children, leaders, and congregations, educate your ministry on personal body autonomy practices. We've provided a helpful resource here: [Personal and Body Safety](#). Safe communities are stronger communities, allowing you to focus on what matters: ministry.

## Conclusion

“Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 18:3, NIV). First and foremost, ministries must protect children because that is how we fulfill our mission and protect the future. However, sin is a part of the human experience. Creating a comprehensive plan and regularly evaluating it is how we best safeguard our future.

## Reference

1. Child maltreatment. World Health Organization. (n.d.-a.). <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/child-maltreatment>
2. Child abuse statistics. Childhelp. (2024, March 26). <https://www.childhelp.org/child-abuse-statistics>

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