



# Safe Church Ministry

**Healthy  
relationships  
Healthy boundaries**

## **Healthy churches are safe churches**

Relationships are open, honest and respectful

The infinite value of each person is honored

There is no fear of any kind of abuse

Abuse is responded to with justice and compassion

Support for those who have been hurt by someone

Accountability for those who have hurt someone

## **Resources are available for your church:**

- ❖ Your classis or regional Safe Church Team
- ❖ The Office of Safe Church Ministry

## **For more information Contact:**

Bonnie Nicholas, Interim Director

616-224-0735 or 616-485-4595

[safechurchministry@crcna.org](mailto:safechurchministry@crcna.org)

or visit: [www.crcna.org/safechurch](http://www.crcna.org/safechurch)

## **Building Safe Church Ministry Conference – April 29-30, 2011**

About 22 Safe Church Ministry Team leaders gathered in Grand Rapids. We asked the question, **what defines a truly safe church?** Below are the top 4.

- 1. Every church has a written safety policy in place which includes:**
  - a. Screening by all staff and volunteers - background check & references
  - b. All staff and volunteers aware of, committed to, and regularly trained in using the policy
  - c. Accountability procedures and consequences for those who do not follow the policy
  - d. A system for regular review of the policy
- 2. Every church has protocols in place for responding to misconduct by a church leader which are strictly followed**
- 3. Issues of abuse can be freely discussed; this includes:**
  - a. Acknowledgement that abuse happens and involves church members either in or outside of church
  - b. An understanding of the nature of offending, including the power & control dynamic, manipulation, minimization and entitlement
  - c. Disclosure of abuse to church leaders is met with compassion and support for those who have been hurt
- 4. Leadership at all levels is committed to the importance of Safe Church Ministry**

### **Is your church a truly safe church?**

#### **Helpful Web Resources: For Creating Safe Church Policy:**

[www.brotherhoodmutual.com/index.cfm/resources/ministry-safety/article/prevent-child-sexual-abuse-in-the-church/](http://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/index.cfm/resources/ministry-safety/article/prevent-child-sexual-abuse-in-the-church/)

This insurance agency focuses on churches and has good ideas, tips and checklists

<http://www.lifeway.com/>

Search this site for articles and ideas related to abuse and abuse prevention

[www.churchsafety.com](http://www.churchsafety.com)

Lots of good resources for building safe churches on this site (some free some for a fee)

#### **For General Abuse Awareness (Domestic and Sexual Violence):**

<http://www.theraveproject.com>

RAVE stands for Religion and Violence E-learning. It provides excellent online resources including survivor stories and online training for pastors

[www.faithtrustinstitute.org](http://www.faithtrustinstitute.org)

Faith Trust Institute is an organization that works at the intersection of faith and domestic and sexual violence – the office of Safe Church Ministry has some of their products

[www.futureswithoutviolence.org](http://www.futureswithoutviolence.org)

Formerly Family Violence Prevention Fund – The name is the mission