

RADIO SPOT # 11

Churches and Child Abuse Prevention

This is Attorney Timothy Denney for Christians and the Law. There is an implied sign at virtually every church door that says, "Sinners are Welcome." Churches invite sinners to come to learn about repentance and forgiveness . Unfortunately, this means that churches must also confront some of the same problems the world does, including the threat of child abuse. Here are some helpful child abuse prevention guidelines for churches:

First, it is best if no one is allowed to work in a children's ministry unless they are first screened and approved by the church.

Second, children's workers should avoid working alone. Even one extra worker significantly minimizes the risk of child abuse and false accusations.

Third, child abuse allegations should be investigated and resolved promptly.

Those with a demonstrated willingness to harm children should always be denied any opportunity to do so.

Fourth, under a new Michigan law that just took effect in December of 2002, members of the clergy have a legal duty in certain situations to report child abuse to the police when they have reasonable cause to suspect it.

If you have comments or questions or need a sample child policy, please call me, Timothy Denney, at 1-877-256-1758.