



August 10, 2021

Ministry leaders,

Sadly, we live in a broken world where not everyone has the best intentions for our children. We live in a world where, unless there is strategic intentionality, vulnerable populations can be overlooked and mistreated.

This is why we make every effort to equip our churches to keep kids safe. In 2021, it is no longer enough for children and youth ministry leaders to love Jesus and love kids. Anyone who works with children and youth needs to be screened, trained and background checked. Many of our churches already do a great job with this. If this is overwhelming to you, and you are looking for a place to start, let me offer some resources to you, all available on our webpage, available here:

northwestconference.org/children-youth-family/child-protection-and-safety/

A note about resources: Resources are constantly changing and being updated based on current research and best practices. We at the Northwest Conference are continually trying to get our hands on the best and most accessible material out there, in the name of protecting and advocating for our children. Nothing is perfect, but it is always better to do something, rather than nothing.

Participating in abuse prevention training is heavy, heartbreaking, and important. It may induce fear and worry for parents and volunteers, and can be a trigger for past issues. Be prepared to provide pastoral care for your volunteers as you enter into these conversations. The intention is not to create a culture of paranoia or to alarm people. Not all formats for training your ministry teams are going to be appropriate for all contexts. We trust your discernment for determining the best method for content delivery for your leaders. If you'd like to talk through particulars of these trainings and how they might best be used for your group, please contact me at kara@northwestconference.org.

Our intention is to empower kids, parents and ministry leaders, so that ministry can happen and kids can know Jesus. We must advocate for our children. We start by removing barriers so that the gospel can be heard.

Working alongside you to make the world a safe and loving place for our kids,

Kara Stromberg
Associate Superintendent
Northwest Conference