

Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect through Church and Social Service Collaboration

Erin Olson O'Neill, Jodi Gabel, Stephanie Huckins, and Jeanette Harder

Christian churches and social service providers are committed to the care of children and families; however, there has been a historic disconnect between the two institutions concerning child abuse prevention efforts. All too often, criticisms and mistrust tend to characterize the way in which the two interact. This qualitative investigation examines the perceptions of both Christian leaders and social service providers on the church's role in preventing and responding to child abuse and neglect. Researchers interviewed 36 church leaders and social service providers of varying Christian congregations and specialties. Interviews focused on both current and potential church programming and activities, as well as beliefs and values held by both parties concerning child protection and real or potential collaboration. Resulting themes are identified and examined, and recommendations for future collaborative child protection efforts proposed.

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