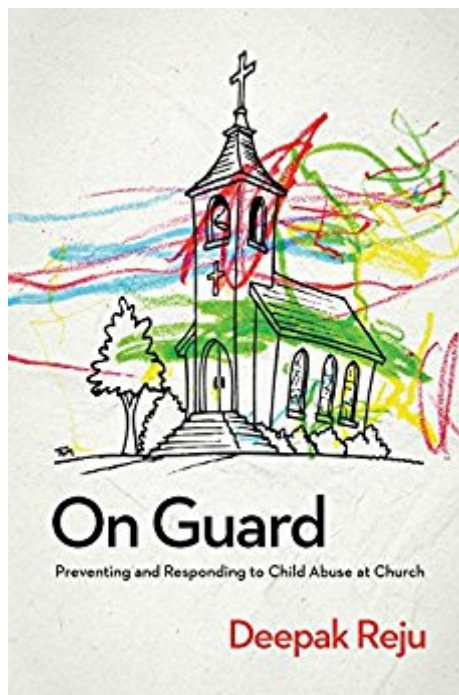




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# On Guard: Preventing And Responding To Child Abuse At Church



## Synopsis

"Jimmy" joined the church a year ago. Before long, he volunteered to teach a Sunday School class and got to know eight-year-old Peter. Things started innocently. A hug at the end of class. Gifts for Peter. Lots of extra attention. And then it happened. Jimmy took advantage of Peter. Since Sandusky and the scandals in the Catholic Church, the issue of sexual abuse has shifted to the forefront of our collective mind. Many churches are poised for action but unsure of what action to take. In *On Guard*, Deepak Reju examines why child predators target churches and offers eleven straightforward strategies to protect children from abuse and to help young victims recover if it does happen. While *On Guard* does provide practical help for building a child protection policy, it provides much more. Full of pastoral wisdom, *On Guard* recognizes that the church's response to abuse must be more comprehensive "in line with her calling" than a simple legal policy or clinical analysis. *On Guard* moves church staff and leaders beyond fearful awareness to prayerful preparedness with an actionable plan. Church, be on guard! Child abuse can happen anywhere, and we need a plan for how to prevent and respond to it. What's yours?

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Oak Grove Baptist, the church at which I presently serve, has a child protection policy and process. As I was reading *On Guard*, I began to find ways to improve both our policy and process. Chapter 11, entitled Building Design, helped me identify facility vulnerabilities. The information in Section 1 provided material to improve our worker training process. Chapters 14, 15, and 16 were especially valuable for developing a comprehensive and compassionate response to abuse situations. The appendices would be useful for a church that is developing a child protection plan. I would highly recommend this book to pastors that take their responsibility for child protection seriously. I would also suggest this book to the church staff that want to improve their process. Deepak Reju has written a comprehensive and worthwhile resource.

As a child abuse survivor, and the founder of a non profit dedicated to child abuse prevention, you would think I have read it all. I've not read anything like this important book! This book should be required reading for EVERY church, within every religion. Child Predators don't discriminate based on religious affiliation, but they do seek out churches and Deepak Reju gives concrete ways churches and church goers can protect their children! He includes example Screening Applications for church volunteers and staff, and great tools for churches to create their own Child Protection Policies. He also addresses child on child abuse-which so many people and churches overlook. Thank you Deepak Reju for writing this important work!

I first heard Deepak present on this material at the Children's Desiring God conference in 2009. I took detailed notes, and our team has used much of that material to help develop child protection and registered sex offender policies for our church. Church leaders should study Deepak's eleven strategies (8 for protecting against abuse and 3 for responding to abuse) and work to adopt them as quickly as possible. This is your guidebook for creating a child protection policies, procedures, and training materials. *On Guard* will also help you develop strategies to care for children who have been abused and even to care for registered sex offenders who want to attend your church. I'm truly grateful that this guidebook is now in print. My one small critique is that when our church, Sojourn Community, was mentioned as the source for Appendix E (p. 210), our location was incorrectly identified. We are located in Louisville (not Lexington), Kentucky.

**MUST READ** for all church leaders, children's directors, ministry leads, elders, and pastors and parents. Deepak incredibly brings much statistical information under one roof, but beyond the

statistics is the heart and biblical mandate for the roles and responsibilities of every member of any congregation. Clear and heart driven, Deepak has compiled a church's dream~scripture based material on a vital aspect of any church's ministry, the safety and biblical shepherding of the most vulnerable and the edifying of the family. Pass this book around, put this material into as many hands as possible.

A must-read for any person working as a church leader and for those working in any capacity with children or youth within the church. This book has been a wonderful discussion starter, affirmed many of our safety practices and has prompted us to make even more changes. The author has a clear sense of what to do to ensure the safety of children and youth within the church and a strong grasp of why child predators target churches.

Great book.

If you are in the ministry and have any responsibility over children or youth you need to stay in tune with what enemies are "out there". This is a well written book and an easy read with tons of useful information. Get this book and make any changes that the Lord leads you to do in your ministry for the protection of our kids.

Thank you for writing a book that is so very much needed in the church. I appreciate the writing, the topic, the practical steps we can take to protect children and youth in our church.

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