

# Abuse

## ***Abuse is not a modern phenomenon.***

Abuse is not a secular invention. Although the word *abuse* occurs infrequently in scripture, the reality of abuse is regularly addressed.

***Abuse is sin: it is a violation of God's design.*** It damages people, relationships, and hope. Sin can be summarized as a failure to trust God and love people. Abuse is a particular form of sin that can be understood in terms of several identifiable characteristics:

- *Abuse* involves a power imbalance and the willful misuse of power to control (or neglect) another person physically, sexually, mentally, emotionally, financially, and/or spiritually.
- *Abuse* is a pattern of sinful behavior that is especially intense and/or pervasive.
- *Victims of abuse* experience confusion, isolation, fear, and helplessness. There is nothing they can do to change the abuser or stop the abuse.

***Abuse affects Christian families as often as any other family.*** As many as 40% of all women will experience some form of spousal abuse in their lifetime, and one in three will be victims of sexual assault, most before the age of 18.

***Hope and healing are available.*** Truth, safety, intervention, and support can help survivors move toward life and God.

***SPM is here to help!***



**S**afe

**P**lace

**M**inistries

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***Promoting safe places,  
consistent with the  
character of Christ,  
for women and  
their families to  
heal and grow.***

# Purpose

Safe Place Ministries exists to provide training, resources, support, and services to individuals and churches throughout Idaho, whose lives and ministries have been touched by domestic violence, childhood sexual abuse, and sexual assault.

The body of Christ has a unique opportunity to respond to abuse survivors with understanding and compassion. By learning about the dynamics of abuse and thinking through a response that accurately reflects both the depth of damage that the betrayal of trust (abuse) causes and the extent of the healing available, the body can bring hope and healing to survivors and their families.

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*“Being a Christian for nearly 30 years didn’t take away the past or the hurts of the past until now—the tools you have provided have helped as none of my previous counseling was ever able to do.”*  
Sexual Abuse Survivor

*“I’ve experienced first-hand how the principles that SPM is based on have changed my life, my marriage and the lives and relationships of other women I’ve known through years of group participation.”*  
Group Member

# Background

SPM began in 1995 when a group of concerned believers in a local church embraced a vision to help the body of Christ respond as Jesus would to wounded people in general and women recovering from abuse in particular. Early on the SPM team identified two specific needs associated with victims of abuse and the body of Christ:

- 1) The church often needs help applying principles of faith and ministry to the unique needs of abuse victims; and
- 2) Christian women recovering from abuse often need support that is affordable, effective, and consistent with their faith.

*“We greatly appreciate the impact SPM has had on the pastor couples and churches we work with through IMM. We feel our partnership with SPM has filled a need that we couldn’t replace or duplicate with any other resource.”*

*David & Carolyn Roper  
Idaho Mountain Ministries*

Today a dedicated staff and a core of volunteers are working together to meet the **ministry needs** of churches and the **recovery needs** of individual women. SPM offers a full range of services to the greater Boise area and a modified set of services throughout the State of Idaho through our *Education Resource Network*.

SPM is an Idaho nonprofit tax-exempt corporation. All services are provided regardless of ability to pay. SPM is supported by gifts from individuals and churches, grants, and fees.

# Services

## Educational options for churches and victim service providers:

- SPM Orientation
- Victim Service Provider Workshop
- Church Network Training
- Personal Growth & Ministry Training Class
- Volunteer Advocate Training

## Resources and support:

- Books, literature, tapes, and videos
- Web site
- Toll-free telephone number
- Consultations and referrals
- Library catalog and mailing service
- Outreach cards

## Direct services for women recovering from childhood sexual abuse, sexual assault, and domestic violence:

- Assessments
- Advocacy
- Social services
- Professional counseling
- Education/Support Groups
- Spiritual care

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*“Because of the devastation of the afflicted, because of the groaning of the needy, now I will arise,” says the Lord, “I will set him in the safety for which he longs.”*  
Psalm 12:5