

## **Penn State Child Abuse Scandal Resource Page**

### *A guide to curbing post-Penn State Paranoia*

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As the trial of Jerry Sandusky gets underway, there is likely to be another round of hype, hysteria and scare stats about child sexual abuse. The problem of child sexual abuse is serious and real, but the solutions have been phony. Another round of post-Penn State paranoia will only encourage phony solutions and leave all children less safe. Here are some resources to provide context often left out of media accounts:

- **Hyped, phony statistics.** There's a statistic about child sexual abuse that is scary, ubiquitous – and wrong. Details are in [our column for the website of the trade journal Youth Today](#).
- **Mandatory reporting.** The Penn State scandal has prompted legislation across the country requiring even more people to report their slightest suspicions of child maltreatment. Mandatory reporting laws have been around for more than four decades, yet there is not a shred of evidence that they actually make children safer, and considerable evidence that they do harm. [Details here](#).
- **Investigations in Pennsylvania.** Various claims have been made about Pennsylvania supposedly investigating and substantiating fewer allegations of child abuse than other states. Again, not true. [Details here](#).
- **Instilling fear in our children.** There are likely to be more calls for families to instill fear in their children at every turn. A case in point, and a discussion of the harm, is in [this post to the NCCPR Child Welfare Blog](#). And this link goes to [all of our Blog posts about the Penn State scandal](#).

We can curb child sexual abuse in America – that's clear from the fact that the rate of child sexual abuse actually [has sharply declined](#) in recent decades. But real solutions require putting children's needs ahead of phony, feel-good remedies that pander to adult self-indulgence.