



4607 East 106th Street
Carmel, Indiana 46033
317.759.8008 // 317.844.5277 fax
www.chauciesplace.org

The Case of Anthony S. Johnson

On August 12, 2017 three girls were molested at a Carmel pool party. The girls were ages 8, 9 and 10. Our first reaction is one of shock and disgust at this heinous crime. Our second reaction is to ask, what can we do to protect our children?

This case as many have before, brings to the surface the dark reality of child sexual abuse. According to the Department of Justice 1 in 10 children will be sexually abused before their 18th birthday.

Unfortunately, these three girls are now a part of that statistic. The fact is, children of our community and our state deserve to be more than just a statistic. They deserve to be protected.

At Chaucie's Place our Smart Steps™ Body Safety Program teaches children how to respond just like the courageous girls in this case did. We teach children that their body belongs to them, that nobody has the right to touch them inappropriately, that they should say "Stop!" or "No!" to any unsafe touches, as well as to tell a trusted adult if an unsafe touch has occurred, and finally that any abuse could never be the child's fault.

Anthony S. Johnson, the 50-year-old man accused of molesting the three girls, is currently behind bars. He faces seven counts of child molestation and two counts of criminal confinement. When examining the case further what stands out is the courage and knowledge of the girls in this case. At such a young age, the girls remembered their body safety rules. One girl specifically told Johnson "Stop it!" Another girl ran away from Johnson before he could do further harm. Each girl knew what Johnson was doing was an inappropriate and how to respond. Each girl knew their body safety rules.

That is why programs like Smart Steps™ are so important in our schools. We teach children important lessons on body safety and help empower children to say no to unwanted touches. What can you do to help solve this problem? First, talk to your children about body safety, make sure you keep the conversation casual and on-going. The more you talk to your children about body safety the more comfortable they feel about talking to you if something occurs. Second, make sure your children's school has a program like Smart Steps™ so they can learn the body safety rules. The more knowledgeable your children are on body safety, the less likely they will be one of the 1 in 10.

Let's work together as a community to help eliminate cases such as this one. Because children deserve to be more than just a statistic. They deserve to live without fear. They deserve to experience a life without sexual abuse. They deserve a chance to just be children.