



*During this holiday season,
when the bright days
are shorter
and the
dark nights longer,
many people are struggling
in the darkness,
even when the sun shines
throughout the day.
The story below is a
dramatic example.*

"We are so appreciative of the program for kids and parents in this tangled mess of sexual abuse."

Imagine you are two years old, playing with your five year-old brother and 16 year-old babysitter, when the 16 year-old begins touching you and your brother "down there" as part of a game. You tell no one but eventually your parents find out and take you to church to speak with a counselor. It's supposed to help but all you're feeling is, guilty, ashamed and unsure.

Five years later you answer the door to see another 16 year-old, whom you know as a friend of your big brother. Once inside, he gets you alone and he too, begins making sexual advances toward you. This time however, you're older, this time, you fight back but, so does he. In the end, he stabs you nearly 20 times. While recovering from your injuries, your older brother reveals the same young man molested him as well. Your Mom and Dad call the police, but the molester and his Mom have moved away. It turns out he'd also been a victim of molestation. Your family goes to "counseling" again but still you are left feeling guilty, ashamed and unsure.

Just a year later at eight years old, with a four year-old sister and baby brother, your 11 year-old brother continues the painful cycle and begins touching you, and your little sister, "down there" and "up there," under your pajamas, whenever you were alone. When your social worker finds out, your brother is sent to live somewhere else and again you are left feeling guilty, ashamed and unsure.

The eldest daughter reflects, *"I was in a group for about 10 years, and my sister for about 14 years. My parents say it was like an emotional roller coaster, and now I understand what that means. I'm married to an amazing Airman and life is definitely a series of ups and downs. At 24, I still have a number of medical issues from the stabbing and recently experienced a nervous breakdown."*

"It hasn't been easy but I'm so glad that I had the help and support from the group therapy program though LSS. Despite everything I still go through, I'm open to sharing my story anytime. My younger sister wants to be an EMT so she can help others like she was helped. My older brother is now on his own. He's doing better with holding down a job and renting a room, but he struggles as well."

"Our family is not ever going to be perfect. My sister and I both have PTSD and struggle with panic attacks but we are so appreciative of the program for kids and parents in this tangled mess of sexual abuse." (over)

This may not be your traditional Christmas story but, for this and so many families, it is all too real. Before they moved to the High Desert and found the LSS Our Children Project, this family felt isolated, broken, and defeated. It didn't take long for them to realize however, nothing could be further from the truth. Based on an integrated program of group and individual therapy, the LSS Our Children Project helped these sisters understand they weren't alone and more importantly they weren't at fault. In the caregiver sessions, the parents learned they are not horrible, terrible people but unfortunately this can happen in any family.

Of all the realities the parents learned through this experience, the most enlightening was that a young child, who has been molested, could eventually become a molester himself. No family is immune to this kind of intense pain.

We offer the LSS Our Children Project because our youngest are the most vulnerable, and among those to whom we are most committed. Your support of this essential therapy helps to ensure that children who have been violated by the unimaginable, can still be made whole by the inconceivable Grace of God. Your gift helps embrace the least of these, equipping them with the tools and resources necessary to empower their lives and restore their future.



*Your financial support of our ministry allows us to extend a Love that will never leave, and a Peace that nothing on this earth can ever take away.
We pray that God will bless you, and use you as a blessing to others.*



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