

## Sandusky to spend 30-60 years behind bars

The National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC) was in the courtroom today as Judge Cleland sentenced Jerry Sandusky to 30-60 years behind bars. Sandusky, clad in a red Centre County jumpsuit, listened to impact statements from victims and their families. In June, Sandusky was found guilty on 45 of 48 counts related to child sexual abuse. NSVRC supports these young men and their loved ones who endured years of pain, waiting for justice to be served. Judge Cleland reassured victims by saying, "It is for your courage, not your assault that you will be remembered." The NSVRC echoes this sentiment and applauds the victims' strength and courage and hopes today brings them an opportunity to further their own paths to healing.

Since this case broke in the fall of 2011, child sexual abuse has been reported on heavily in the news. Because Sandusky is well-known, this case garnered national attention, but let's not forget sexual abuse is a widespread issue that impacts thousands of men, women and children every day. Oftentimes, abuse occurs at an early age. In 2011, *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey*, conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, found that 79.6% of female victims are raped by age 25, and 27.8% of male victims are raped by age 10 (<http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/nisvs>). These crimes impact communities, workplaces and schools across the country.

That's why shedding light on this subject is so vital. We are thankful for the media's continued coverage of this topic and have seen positive strides being made in spreading awareness about prevention. As a result, we have encountered more people who want to talk about sexual abuse, understand the warning signs and learn how to prevent it. We encourage these ongoing discussions to continue – further breaking the silence surrounding these crimes. We invite you to join online conversations such as those happening on NSVRC's blogs ([www.nsvrc.org/blogs](http://www.nsvrc.org/blogs)) and social networking sites ([www.twitter.com/nsvrc](https://www.twitter.com/nsvrc)) and ([www.facebook.com/nsvrc](https://www.facebook.com/nsvrc)).

From these conversations, adults become better equipped to identify grooming techniques and notice red flags that indicate someone might be sexually abusing a child. Like in the Sandusky case, oftentimes people sense that something isn't right, but never report their suspicions. This case illustrates the many missed opportunities to protect children and interrupt abusive behaviors. We hope this case will serve as a catalyst for changing our behaviors and priorities so that adults will step forward, value all children and support their healthy development.

Today's sentencing sends a strong message to communities and survivors of sexual abuse everywhere: You are not alone. You will be believed and supported. And everyone's voice matters. It's time to get involved. Together, we can all prevent sexual abuse.