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CHILD SEX ABUSE

Long Prairie native shares story of abuse



Billy Dinkel talks about his experiences as a child Oct. 26, 2019. DAVE SCHWARZ/ST. CLOUD TIMES

William Dinkel continues to battle childhood trauma now at age 51

Nora G. Hertel
St. Cloud Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

LONG PRAIRIE — Wind rustled through prairie grass, corn stalks and rust-colored oaks on William Dinkel's hunting land on a sunny morning in October.

He woke at 5:30 a.m. to wait for

deer in a cold tree.

The time that Dinkel — known as Billy — spends outside is sacred. It's what he lives for.

And yet, around the corner from Billy's 80 acres of paradise sit two farmsteads where he says he experienced such severe trauma as a child that he must reckon with it every day.

He's 51 now. And the sexual abuse he says he endured in the late 1970s, between the ages of 8 and 13, still haunts him.

Billy bought his land in Long Prairie with guidance from his father, because he loves to hunt. It was also a way to be close to family.

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Resources

Darkness to Light:
1-866-FOR-LIGHT and d2l.org

24-hour National Sexual Assault Hotline: 1-800-656-HOPE

Jacob Wetterling Resource Center:
1-800-325-HOPE

Toward a world without child sexual abuse

Two local groups try to solve the problem

Nora G. Hertel
St. Cloud Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

Child sexual abuse has been around for thousands of years, said Patrick Wall.

"To our knowledge this is a multimillennial crime that seems to exist in the human condition," said the advocate for sexual abuse lawyers Jeff Anderson & Associates and a co-author of the book "Sex, Priests and Secret Codes."

Child sexual abuse happens in every type of community, but especially within closed and hierarchical systems, said Jeffrey Dion, CEO of the Zero Abuse Project.

So, how do we stop it?

First we must talk about it.

"We either become comfortable talking about childhood sexual abuse, or it's going to continue," said Billy Dinkel, who shared his story of child sexual abuse with the St. Cloud Times. "Even if we get comfortable with it, it's still going to happen. The hope is it happens at a much lower rate."

Groups across Minnesota and the U.S. are working to prevent and

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Jeffrey Dion CEO of the Zero Abuse Project



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to better respond to the sexual abuse of children. That means targeted therapy for sex offenders as well as therapy and sensitive investigations for the children who report abuse and training sessions to help children, parents and faith leaders brace for potential abuse.

Here's a snapshot of two local efforts to solve the problem of childhood sexual abuse.

Central Minnesota Child Advocacy Center

The center investigates allegations of maltreatment in a child-centered manner, interviewing

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USA TODAY

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