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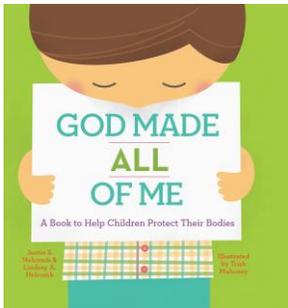
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**July 29, 2015**

# PRESS RELEASE

## Protecting your child from sexual abuse

*New book helps parents teach young children about appropriate and inappropriate touch*



**Seattle:** It's perhaps a parent's greatest fear — that at some point his or her child will become a victim of sexual abuse. The statistics are alarming: Approximately one in five children will become victims by his or her 18th birthday. Authors Justin and Lindsey Holcomb have responded to parents' concerns by writing **God Made All of Me** (New Growth Press/September 8, 2015/ISBN: 978-1942572305/\$14.99), a resource for moms and dads who want to protect and educate their children.

*God Made All of Me* is a simply told, beautifully illustrated storybook for children between the ages of two and eight that helps parents gently start the conversation about appropriate and inappropriate touch. This topic can cause a lot of questions and curiosity in small children, and if answers are given too hastily or abruptly, children can easily hear the message that they should be ashamed of their bodies. This can fuel confusion, embarrassment and secrecy, often preventing children from recognizing or reporting abuse.

Children need to be able to identify and name their private parts, while understanding God made them special and they are worth protecting. *God Made All of Me* does this in an age-appropriate way, joining with parents as they seek to build a first line of defense against sexual abuse. With colorful, age-appropriate illustrations by Trish Mahoney, the book beautifully conveys the clear message that God made every part of the human body and every part is, therefore, good.

Parents of young children themselves, the Holcombs regularly counsel victims of sexual abuse and are profoundly aware of the dangers kids face. They know a child is more likely to be abused by someone he or she knows than a stranger; 34% of assailants are family members, and 58% are acquaintances. "It is important to teach kids how to say 'stop,' 'all done,' and 'no more,'" the Holcombs stress. "You can reiterate this by stopping immediately when your children express they are all done with the hugging or tickling. Your reaction demonstrates they have control over their bodies. If there are family members who have a hard time understanding, explain you're helping your children understand their ability to say no to unwanted touch. For example, if your children do not want to kiss Grandpa, let them give a high five or handshake instead."

Allowing moms and dads to approach this topic gently, *God Made All of Me* will help facilitate open conversations within the family. It will be a critical tool in every parent's hand as they seek to fulfill their important role of shielding their children from harm. "We want to remind parents some people are looking to prey on our children. We have a duty to protect and prepare them for the world and to fight for them," the Holcombs explain. "By talking with our kids candidly (and in developmentally appropriate ways) about their bodies, we are setting up safeguards around them."

**For more information about Justin and Lindsey Holcomb or *God Made All of Me*, visit [www.godmadeallofme.com](http://www.godmadeallofme.com). You can also follow Justin on [Facebook \(justinholcomb\)](#) or follow the Holcombs on Twitter ([@justinholcomb](#) and [@lindseyholcomb](#)).**

## Advance Praise

"Talking with our children about their bodies, touches and secrets is an important step in keeping them as safe as possible. *God Made All of Me* helps parents start this conversation in a way that is not frightening and that affirms the faith traditions of many families."

~ Victor Vieth, Senior Director & Founder, Gundersen National Child Protection Training Center

"*God Made All of Me* establishes the dynamics for an ongoing, open exchange for discussing the body and healthy boundaries, imparting invaluable skills for your children to establish a spiritual compass, trust their feelings and express their thoughts as they develop."

~ John T. Chirban, Harvard Medical School Professor and author of *How to Talk with Your Kids about Sex*



### About the Authors

**Justin Holcomb** is a minister and a professor at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. He has a PhD in theology from Emory University and serves on the boards of [REST](#) (Real Escape from the Sex Trade) and [GRACE](#) (Godly Response to Abuse in Christian Environments). He has authored, co-authored or edited more than 10 books.

**Lindsey Holcomb** is a former case manager at a sexual assault crisis center and a domestic violence shelter. She earned a Master of Public Health from Touro University.



Together, they helped cofound [REST](#), and they conduct a variety of training seminars on how to prevent, recognize and respond to child, sexual and domestic abuse. They have also written a number of books together, including *Is It My Fault?* (2014) and *Rid of My Disgrace* (2011).

The Holcombs live in Orlando and are parents of two young children, for whom they wrote this book.

### Suggested interview questions

- What prompted you to write *God Made All of Me*? What age range was it written for?
- What do the statistics about childhood sexual abuse tell parents about the importance of tackling this topic with their kids?
- You were intentional about using the terms "appropriate" and "inappropriate" when referring to kinds of touch, instead of the words "good" or "bad." Why?
- Why do you encourage moms and dads to use the proper names when referring to private body parts, even for young children?
- How did you approach talking about this issue with your own children?
- Is there a way to educate your children about this without instilling fear?
- What do parents need to know about child offenders?
- Is it a bad idea to force our kids to sit on an uncle's lap or to return Grandma's kiss? What are some ways parents help their extended family understand the physical boundaries they allow their kids to have?
- What are some practical things parents can do to protect their children?
- What advice do you have for parents who want to create an open environment in their home, so children always feel comfortable talking to them about issues related to their sexuality or body?
- What is personal safety education?
- It's every parent's worst nightmare, but what should a mom or dad do if he or she suspects his or her child might have been the victim of sexual abuse?
- Tell us about GRACE. What does it offer to the church and families?

**Justin and Lindsey Holcomb are available for interviews to promote the release of *God Made All of Me*. To request a review copy or schedule an interview, please contact Audra Jennings, [audra@liffusegroup.com](mailto:audra@liffusegroup.com).**