

Local teacher discusses childhood trauma

Subheadline: Kirk's book moves from molestation to healing process

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Authors: hjones@thelancasternews.com

Byline: By Haley Jones
hjones@thelancasternews.com

Content

C.T. Kirk is a three-time published author and social studies teacher at South Middle School. His most recent book, “Why Me: Boys Are Molested Too,” draws on his personal experience with childhood molestation.

Kirk and his wife, Monique, used to live off of S.C. 9 Bypass, but have since moved to Rock Hill. He has been a teacher in the county for eight years.

“I wrote this book during COVID, when I was just sitting and thinking about the importance of telling a situation that happened to me at 6 years old,” Kirk said. “I realized a lot of people are still battling stuff that happened to them when they were young, but really haven't poured out and told anyone about it.”

Kirk said he held on to his experience of being molested for 27 years before he finally decided to share his story.

His book was published last August.

He said that since creating the platform for men to speak about their own experiences, it has formed a sort of ministry, for men to talk about negative childhood experiences instead of keeping them bottled up.

“One in six men actually go through childhood molestation or some kind of sexual abuse, which was really an eye-opener for me, and really let me know it was time that this subject and topic be talked about,” Kirk said.

Kirk said that he discovered during his writing process that the more he wrote about his experience with childhood molestation, the more it began to heal him.

The book's first chapter, "The Taboo Topic," discusses the lack of resources for men struggling with the repercussions of childhood molestation and the stigmatization of the issue.

Chapter 2 discusses his personal experience and chapter 3 focuses on the downward spiral this experience had on his life.

Chapter 4 discusses how church played into the secrecy of his experience, and chapters five, six and seven describe the healing process he embarked on.

"A lot of men have said that they finally confided in their wives, they finally went to therapy... One boy even cried and said that story resonates with him because he went through that with a family member," he said.

Kirk said he did a lot of research on the topic, which involved looking at different scenarios and manuscripts. He also looked at different websites that deal with sexual abuse, especially "oneinsix.com," which discusses the topic in great detail.

"A lot of people tell me, oh well, you should've just come forward," Kirk said. "You don't know what trauma a person has been through, that sometimes it takes another person to say something, and then you're like, OK, now I can share my story."

Kirk described the response to his book as a "domino effect," with several men coming to him and finally sharing their own stories.

"I was like, wow, you're strong man, but (with) an outer coating – he was chasing that success, to deviate from that which you had dealt with," Kirk said.

He said his inspiration to write came from Dr. Kimberly Johnson, a famous author who attends his church – Sanctuary of Life Outreach Center in Rock Hill.

Kirk's other two books are called, "Learn to Take Back Your Mind," published in 2016, and "How the West was White-Washed," published in 2020.

Kirk's book is available for purchase from Amazon, Barnes and Noble and Harper House Publishing. The Kindle version retails for \$2.99 and the paperback for \$12.99.

Child images

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