



**Youth
Parent
Handbook
2011-2012**

*“Youth Ministry is the response of the
Christian community to the needs of the
young people and the sharing of the
unique gifts of youth with the larger
community”*

 US Bishops
“Renewing the Vision”

ACTIVITIES, CELEBRATIONS AND EVENTS

Connecting our Youth to the parish, their families and their community

Jr High Youth Group	Wednesday, 7:00-8:30 pm
Sr High Youth Group	Sunday, 7:00-8:30 pm
Youth Bible Study	Tuesday, 6:00-7:00 pm
Youth Mass	4 Times a Year
Halloween Carnival	October
Tree of Sharing/Summit View Service Project	November/December
Souper Bowl of Caring	February
Jr. High Overnight Retreat	Fall and Spring
Sr. High Retreat	February @ IHRC
Catholic Youth Conference (CYC)	March
Parish Easter Egg Hunt	Easter
Graduation Mass and Breakfast Celebration	June
Steubenville Northwest Conference	Summer
Hosting Portland Youth for Steubenville Conference	Summer
Guatemala Mission Trip	Summer
Worship/Liturgy music and training	Varies
New Hope Resource Center Service Projects	Varies
Interfaith Hospitality Service Projects	Varies
Leadership opportunities	Year Round
Religious Education Committee Representative	Year Round
Parish Council Representative	Year Round
Deacon Representative	Year Round
Hospitality Core Team	Year Round
Community Development Core Team	Year Round

INSTRUMENTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Remember that in this work we are only instruments of the Holy Spirit. Consider the exhortation from Pope John Paul II:

“ . . . when carrying out her mission of giving catechesis, the Church-and also every individual Christian devoting himself to that mission within the Church and in her name- must be very much aware of acting as a living, pliant instrument of the Holy Spirit. To invoke this Spirit constantly, to be in communion with Him, to endeavor to know His authentic inspirations must be the attitude of the teaching Church and of every catechist. ”

 Catechesi Tradendae, no 72

Understanding Youth Today: Younger Adolescents

The Changes in Younger Adolescents (Ages 10 to 15, Grades 7 to 9)

Physical Development

- developing secondary sex characteristics and the capacity to reproduce
- being sensitive about physical changes and confused about their emerging sexuality
- incorporating their bodily changes into their own self-image as a male or a female

Intellectual Development

- beginning to move from concrete thinking (what is) to abstract thinking (what might be true if . . .)
- questioning and testing adults' statements and evaluating adults' values
- being painfully self-conscious and critical, idealistic, argumentative, self-centered
- expanding interests; intense, short-term enthusiasm

Identity Development

- requiring time to reflect upon the new reactions they receive from others and to build a consistent self-image from the different mirrors in which they see themselves
- discovering who they are as unique persons with abilities, interests, and goals
- seeking limited independence and autonomy from parents and adults

Moral Development

- engaging in more complex decision-making processes
- resolving moral dilemmas in terms of the expectations of someone or something other than themselves, which can be (a) family, friends, or other significant persons, or (b) what the law or the system of good order calls for in a given situation

Interpersonal Development

- relying on parents and families in setting values and giving affection
- identifying more strongly with the peer group for belonging and friendships

- entering a broader social world of middle school, peer groups, and activity groups
- developing the ability to consider the feelings and needs of others in relationships
- learning how to relate to the opposite sex (what to say and how to behave)

Faith Development

- deriving their faith from parents and family
- developing their faith and identity, establishing a set of religious beliefs, attitudes, and values, through the experiences of participation and belonging in a caring faith community where they are valued

Implications for Ministry, or Developmental Needs of Younger Adolescents

Self-Definition

- opportunities to better understand, define, and accept who they are as individuals
- opportunities to explore their widening social world and to reflect upon the meaning of new experiences in order to consider themselves participants in society
- opportunities for young adolescents of ethnic cultures to achieve a positive orientation toward their own culture and to affirm their ethnicity through observation of ceremonies, retention of native languages, and reinforcement of specific attitudes, beliefs, and practices

Competence and Achievement

- opportunities to find out what they are good at doing and to know that what they do is valued by others whom they respect
- opportunities that encourage the practice of new skills, public performance and recognition, and reflection on personal and group accomplishments

Positive Social Interaction with Adults and Peers

- opportunities to develop interpersonal skills
- opportunities to learn how to develop a relationship with their parents that is reflective of their growing autonomy and utilizes new patterns of communicating
- opportunities to form positive peer relationships and support, especially through structured programs
- opportunities for caring relationships with adults who like and respect them; who share their own experiences, views, values, and feelings; and who serve as role models and advisors

Physical Activity

- opportunities to utilize their energy and growing bodies through activities that require physical movement or expression

Meaningful Participation in Families, Schools, Churches, and Community Organizations

- opportunities to participate in making decisions about activities that shape their lives and as active leaders or participants who can make a viable contribution to the success of those activities
- opportunities to participate as valued members of the faith community and as leaders in church ministries and programs
- opportunities for exposure to situations in which they can use their skills to solve real-life problems and affect the world around them, such as community service programs

Creative Expression

- opportunities to express to the external world who they are on the inside (feelings, interests, abilities, thoughts) through a variety of activities, such as music, writing, sports, art, drama, cooking, and so on.
- activities that enable them to experience and test out new and different forms of self-expression

Personal Religious Experience

- opportunities to explore the big questions in life, questions whose answers can be comprehended only within the context of faith and religion
- opportunities for a deeper and more personal relationship with God

Structure and Clear Limits

- provision of structure and guidance that assists young adolescents in making decisions about their behavior and that involves them in the decision-making process itself
- provision of structure that helps young people stay focused on a task, persevere in their various efforts and succeed—leading to an increase in self-esteem
- provision of structure and clear limits that help young adolescents feel safe in their activities—empowering them to live with joy and confidence

Understanding Youth Today: Older Adolescents

The Changes in Older Adolescents (Ages 15 to 19, Grades 10 to 12)

Intellectual Development

- developing the ability to engage in reflecting thinking ("What do I think?" "Why do I think that?") that makes it possible to develop a personal identity, personal value system, and personal faith
- thinking about and planning for the future

Identity Development

- beginning the process of establishing a personal identity, which includes an acceptance of one's sexuality, decision-making regarding the future, and a commitment to a personally-held system of values and religious beliefs
- shifting from the authority of family to self-chosen authority (oneself), often by establishing an identity that is shaped by significant others (peers and adults)
- experiencing a period of questioning, re-evaluation, and experimentation
- developing greater autonomy in making personal decisions, assuming responsibility for oneself, and regulating one's own behavior

Moral Development

- exercising moral judgments in matters of much greater complexity as they seek to establish a more personal form of moral reasoning
- re-evaluating the moral values received from family, church, and significant others
- searching for a moral code that preserves their personal integrity and provides the basis for developing an internalized moral value system that can guide their behavior

Interpersonal Development

- moving toward greater personal intimacy and adult sexuality
- developing the capability for more mutual, trusting, deep, and enduring personal friendships with members of the same sex and the opposite sex who provide acceptance, love, affirmation, and the opportunity to honestly share their deepest selves
- expanding their social perspective to encompass the larger world

Faith Development

- exploring and questioning the faith handed down by family and church as they search for a style of faith and belief that is more personal to oneself
- beginning the process of taking responsibility for one's own faith life, commitments, lifestyle, beliefs, and attitudes
- exploring a personal relationship with God who knows, accepts, and affirms them, and with Jesus Christ through his teaching, example, and presence in one's life

Implications for Ministry, or Developmental Needs of Older Adolescents

Exploration and Experimentation

- opportunities to experiment with a wide array of behaviors, roles, attitudes, relationships, ideas, and activities as they develop their personal identity and their faith identity
- opportunities to explore who they are and who they can become by reflecting on self in relation to others
- opportunities for youth of ethnic cultures to achieve a positive orientation toward their own culture and white American culture; to affirm their ethnicity through observation of ceremonies, retention of native language, and reinforcement of specific attitudes, beliefs, and practices

Adult Sexuality

- opportunities to understand their sexual growth and integrate their sexuality into their own personality in a holistic way
- opportunities to develop healthy values and attitudes regarding their own sexuality

Interpersonal Relationships

- opportunities to form positive relationships and experiences with peers in a comfortable and secure environment and to develop friendship-making and friendship-maintaining skills
- opportunities to learn how to develop a relationship with parents that is reflective of their growing autonomy and that utilizes new patterns of communicating

Adult Mentors

- opportunities to develop relationships with adult Christians who affirm their journey and struggles, explore sensitive issues with them, listen to their stories and questions, share their own faith journey, and ask questions to encourage critical thinking and reflection

Meaningful Roles in the Community and Society

- opportunities to participate with other older adolescents as full members and leaders in the community, the society, and the Church
- opportunities to explore, discuss, and act on local and global justice issues and to develop an active responsibility for what happens in their community and world, and to be involved in meaningful community service
- opportunities to be involved in the decision-making, planning, and implementation of programs that serve them

Preparing for the Future

- opportunities to acquire the competencies necessary for adult roles, such as goal setting, problem solving, time management, and decision-making
- opportunities to explore life options and plan their futures (education, career) and to help them acquire the skills, knowledge, and experience for their chosen fields; to more closely link the worlds of school and work

Personal Value System and Decision-Making Skills

- opportunities to discuss conflicting values and to formulate their own value system
- opportunities to gain knowledge and experience in making decisions and applying Christian moral values when making moral judgments

Personal Faith

- opportunities to explore and question the faith they have been given by their family and the faith community, and to develop their own faith identity
- opportunities to explore what it means to be and live as a person of faith today
- opportunities to develop a more personal relationship with Jesus Christ

(The material on this handout is from *YouthWorks* [Naugatuck, CT: Center for Ministry Development, 1994], section 2, pages 22–23 and 10–11. Copyright © 1994 by the Center for Ministry Development.)

Understanding Youth Today: Generational Insights

Insights on the Millennial Generation

They are the young navigators. They doubt that traditional institutions can provide them with the good life, and take personal responsibility for their lives. They do value material goods, but they are not self-absorbed. They are more knowledgeable than any previous generation, and they care deeply about social issues. They believe strongly in individual rights such as privacy and rights to information. But they have no ethos of individualism, thriving, rather, from close interpersonal networks and displaying a strong sense of social responsibility. (Don Tapscott, *Growing Up Digital: The Rise of the Net Generation* [New York: McGraw-Hill, 1998], page 9. Copyright © 1998 by McGraw-Hill. All rights reserved. Used with permission.)

Millennial Generation

Seekers v.
Work the system v.
Authority is relational v.
Information is networked *web* v.

Previous Generations

Receivers
Figure out the system
Authority as position
Information is *linear*

Implications

- Relationships are key.
- They want to influence their involvement.
- Living as adventure—they are interested in the *why* and the *who*, not just the *what*.
- They want to be taken seriously.

What's a Millennial?

- The generation emerging at the end of one millennium and the beginning of another is called the *millennial generation*.
- A *millennial* is generally defined as a young person who was born during 1982 or after. The first millennials graduated in the high school class of 2000.
- Millennials tend to be optimistic, self-reliant, ambitious, and discriminating about the deluge of messages that engulf them.

- Millennials are called *neotraditionalists*. They may look extreme with their haircuts, fashions, and penchant for the fringe, but deep inside is a longing for ideals to believe in, a purpose to pursue, and a family or group of friends to accompany them.
- Millennials are more likely to be bored (57 percent) than angry (37 percent), depressed (24 percent), or lonely (23 percent).
- *Extreme* is a concept that seems to work when trying to describe this generation. A millennial may look like a wild nonconformist, but underneath the bleached hair and the body piercing is a heart that is likely to be passionate about God, country, and family.
- Millennials and Gen Xers share many common traits:
 - They are comfortable with contradictions.
 - They are highly relational.
 - They harbor feelings of abandonment.
 - They have a great interest in spirituality.
 - They endure massive exposure to media.
 - They seek comfort without having to sell out their values.
 - They highly value family.
 - They are confused regarding the purpose of life.
 - They accept change as a constant in life.
 - Technology is a natural part of their existence.

Comparing Boomers, Gen Xers, and Millennials

Boomers	Gen Xers	Millennials
Prefer black-and-white moral values	Value a gray world—no absolutes	Comfortable with paradox—prefer black and white
Are idealistic	Are cynical	Are optimistic
Value people's words	Value people's actions	Value people (community)
Value what's right	Value what's real	Value teamwork
Make choices based on passion	Make choices based on what is real and practical	Make choices based on changing criteria
Focus on philosophies	Focus on results	Focus on social change
See conformity as unity	See diversity as unity	Consider conformity outdated
Value causes	Value relationships	Value productive relationships
Focus on the group	Focus on the individual	Focus on survival and success of self
Find meaning in abstract thought	Find meaning in what they can experience with their senses	Find meaning in controlling useful information
Live to work	Work to live	Live to know
Returned to faith when they became parents	Are "Spiritual Sensors"	Are "Spiritual Questers"

(This handout is excerpted from "Introduction: What's a Millennial?" in *The Seven Cries of Today's Teens: Hear Their Hearts, Make the Connection*, by Timothy Smith [Brentwood, TN: Integrity Publishers, 2003], pages 17–18. Copyright © 2003 by Timothy Smith. All rights reserved. Used with permission.)

Sharing Faith with Youth

Jesus spent hours with a small group of people most of his life, nurturing them, disciplining them, being a faith companion. As we reach out to the young as friends, as companions on the journey, we are in a unique position to share our faith and our doubts, and to help our young people reflect upon these for themselves. Here are several helpful hints for creating faith conversations:

- Make an effort to find out what has gone on at the school or in the community that might have an impact on those youth with whom you have some contact.
- Remember names! Write them down if it helps.
- Seek out and focus on a few young people that you will attempt to get to know better.
- Once you have begun to develop a greater degree of trust, don't be afraid to ask young people some challenging, thought-provoking questions that require a response from both the mind and the heart. A few examples:
 - What do you value? What is most important to you?
 - Describe your ideal vacation, job, date, school, family, friend, and so on.
 - Who is the most important person to you? Why?
 - From where does your primary source of strength and support come?
 - What does it mean to be a Christian? a Catholic?
 - What is or what are your image(s) of God? Jesus? Why? Who is Jesus to you?
 - What is faith? love? happiness?
 - What does "community" mean to you?
 - How do we know there is a God or that Jesus was who he said he was?
 - What does attending Mass mean to you?
 - If you had one sentence in which to state the message of Jesus, what would you say?
 - What is prayer? What helps you to focus upon God?
 - How do you slow down, handle stress, "go into the garden"?

(The material on this handout is from *Youth Evangelization: A Youth Ministry Resource Manual*, by Mary Merkle-Scotland and Reynolds R. Ekstrom [New Rochelle, NY: Don Bosco Multimedia, 1994], page 17. Copyright © 1994 by Don Bosco Multimedia.

Leading a Small Group

- Familiarize yourself with the session so that you will be better prepared to give directions and process activities.
- Prepare and organize your supplies.
- Participate with the young people in all games, prayers, and discussions.
- Lead, encourage, affirm, support, and befriend the participants.
- Help the participants feel welcome and comfortable.
- Help each person in the group get to know the others better.
- Be aware of the shy persons (who need more encouragement) and the rowdy ones (who need some calming down). Learn about the young peoples' lives outside your meeting or class so that you can better understand what they are dealing with in school and at home.
- Help the participants keep to a given topic, and guide the discussion.
- Never tell the participants what they have learned. Instead, draw the answers from their sharing.
- Contribute to, but do not dominate, the discussion. Do not feel as though you have to fill in any quiet gaps.
- If you have trouble getting a discussion started, vary how you decide who will begin the sharing. For example, start with the person who has the most letters on his or her shirt, has the next birthday, has the longest name, has the highest house number in his or her street address, and so on.
- Ask open-ended questions:
 - How do you feel?
 - What is your reaction?
 - What do you think?
 - What would you do in this situation?
 - What would Jesus do?
- Make sure everyone is included, that everyone participates and has a chance to voice their opinion. Stress that each person's contribution is valuable.
- Do a lot of listening.
- Thank each person for participating.
- Share your own story of faith with the young people.
- Remember to pray and to have fun!

(The material on this handout is from *ScriptureWalk Junior High: Bible Themes*, by Maryann Hakowski [Winona, MN: Saint Mary's Press, 1999], pages 102–103. Copyright © 1999 by Saint Mary's Press. All rights reserved.)

Serving as a Chaperone

Chaperoning young people is a sacred trust.

- The best chaperones are those adults who enjoy spending time with young people while maintaining their role as adults.
- When you are serving as a chaperone, drinking alcoholic beverages is inappropriate and may impair your ability to be alert.
- Rules and guidelines for behavior are for the good of all participants. Do not change the rules (curfew, check-in, leaving the grounds, and so on) without speaking to the youth ministry coordinator or adult in charge.

Model the behavior that is expected of young people.

- Be respectful and courteous to each person you meet. Using put-downs or making fun of another person is disrespectful and hurtful.
- Refrain from drinking alcoholic beverages when in the presence of young people. Youth need to know that having a good time is possible without alcohol.
- Refrain from smoking when you are with young people. If you do smoke, do it away from the young people, to avoid encouraging an unhealthy habit.
- Treat all young people the same. Playing favorites or exempting certain youth from the rules causes division in the community.
- Refrain from using profanity, and discourage everyone from using it.

Mingle with young people, and get to know them.

- Learn the names of the young people, and then call them by name.
- Mix among the young people—at meals, on the bus, in the auditorium, wherever there is an opportunity. Resist the temptation to hang out with other chaperones.
- Enjoy spending time with youth, and have fun. Young people need to experience adults as friendly, approachable, and caring.

(The material on this handout is adapted from *YouthWorks* [Naugatuck, CT: Center for Ministry Development, 1994], section 4, page 25. Copyright © 1994 by the Center for Ministry Development.)

Serving as a Driver

Your Vehicle

- Check tire air pressure as well as oil and other fluid levels.
- Check all seat belts and make sure they are in working order.
- Test turn signals and headlights (low and high beam).
- Test windshield wipers; fill windshield water reservoir.
- Start each trip with a full tank of gas.
- Keep an automobile emergency kit in the car, including flares, first-aid kit, and flashlight.
- Maintain automobile insurance coverage in compliance with diocesan policy.

Your Role as Driver

- Maintain good driving habits at all times, whether transporting young people or not. This includes, but is not limited to, wearing a seat belt, obeying traffic signs, refraining from talking on a cell phone—or at least using an earpiece when doing so—and from eating meals or engaging in other distracting behavior (shaving, putting on make-up, reading a newspaper) while driving.
- Start the trip well-rested and prepared.
- Provide guidelines for acceptable behavior, for example, keeping arms and legs inside the car, keeping the radio or CD player at a reasonable sound level, remaining seated during the trip with seat belts fastened.
- Use the trip for conversations with young people.
- Be sure to have all pertinent trip information and supplies: directions and map; trip schedule, including location of planned stops or breaks for meals or rest; emergency phone numbers, including cell phone of the leader; money for bridge tolls; signed consent-to-treat forms for young people in the car (check with diocesan policy); and so on.

Relating to Youth

I think something about our youth minister that really helps is that he is almost like a friend to us. He'll talk to you, and he makes you feel comfortable, and he's nice to everyone, and he'll act like he has known them forever. He always remembers your name. He is sort of like a friend, and you really feel like you can laugh and talk with him. He makes you feel comfortable. (From a teenager at the National Symposium on Effective Youth Ministry Practices in Catholic Parishes, 2003)

When you are in a relationship with youth, put your best foot forward—remember to be . . .

- **Respectful** of who they are already, and who they are in the process of becoming. Be open to sharing in their journey, and be patient and respectful of their questions, concerns, and "not there yet-ness." Be sensitive to their cultural customs and needs, recognizing that they live in a different world than the one in which you grew up. Know and call them by name!
- **Appreciative.** Honor the gift that adolescents are to our Church, and recognize how our Church needs the gift of adolescents. Acknowledge and celebrate each young person's uniqueness, without playing favorites! Affirm the gifts you see, accept the young people as they are, and help them recognize their giftedness.
- **Compassionate.** Strive to understand what is going on in the life of a young person—the issues, interests, concerns, and challenges that are in that young person's life. Extend an open, welcoming stance toward the young person and show empathy.
- **Aware.** Seek to know what is happening in their life and what their needs are. The rate of growth and change during adolescence is only greater during the first two years of life. Adolescents will develop at very different rates, so we must be aware of the physical, social, spiritual, emotional, and intellectual dimensions within each youth. No two young people will develop at the same rate.
- **Authentic.** Be who you are, be honest, be real. Young people can spot a fake a mile away. Know your own biases, prejudices, and agendas. If you think that pierced noses are a sign of stupidity, do not be surprised that the young person with the pierced nose doesn't trust you.

- **Patient.** Young people are "not done yet," but then again, neither are you! Acknowledge your limitations and imperfections, and learn to be comfortable saying "I don't know," "I was wrong," and "I am sorry." Encourage young people to do the same. Recognize that conversion is a lifelong process and that learning is a lifelong endeavor.
- **Present.** The best way to know and be known by young people is to spend time with them. An investment of our time and attention is essential. Appreciate that any time we have with young people is a gift. Learn and use good listening skills. Go to their games and plays, and say hi to them when you see them at work.
- **An Adult.** There is a distinction between being an adult friend and being a peer friend. Be an adult friend! Act your own age, whatever it is. Set boundaries and have clear expectations. Be respectful of young people's culture and costumes, but be respectful of your own as well. You do not need to dress, talk, or act like adolescents to be important to them. Be consistent in the area of discipline. Most young people respond best to adults who have clear expectations for behavior. When disciplining, disapprove of actions, not the person. Establish reasonable expectations based on the reality of the current situation and individuality of the young person involved.
- **A Representative of the Faith Community.** You are the Church to the young people of your parish! They look to you to find out what it means to be a responsible, faith-filled adult—you are their model. Remember that who you are and how you interact with young people has far greater impact than what you say.

Resource Suggestion

Kimball-Baker, Kathleen. *Tag, You're It! 50 Easy Ways to Connect with Young People*. Minneapolis: Search Institute, 2003.

POLICIES FOR YOUTH PROGRAM

Communication

Youth information can be found weekly in the church bulletin. Additionally, the Youth Minister will send communications home with the youth regarding upcoming events, holidays, and other important announcements. You may call the church office or Youth Minister at 466-4991.

Confidentiality

All information shared by a youth during Youth Group and activities will be considered confidential by youth ministers. However, if any type of abuse is suspected as a result of information shared, it is legally mandatory to report it. (Refer to "Safe Environment" found on pages 23-32.)

Discipline

Disrespectful and disruptive behavior is unacceptable. A youth may be temporarily removed from the classroom at our discretion. If the behavior continues, the parent may be called to pick up the youth. Parents may be requested to attend classes with a disruptive youth. Parents will be expected to work with the youth minister and their youth to resolve any behavioral problems.

Dress Code

Youth shall be fully clothed in neat, clean and modest attire. Clothing worn by youth should be of the type not to reveal an excess of skin or to take away from the dignity of the youth or parish. Therefore, tube tops, halter tops, spaghetti straps or "muscle shirts" will not meet the intent of the dress code policy. Pants and shorts are to be worn at the waist and not sagging. Undergarments are to be worn, but not visible.

Electronic Devices

In order to maintain a quality sacramental youth program, and to protect students from loss and damage to their property, youth are strongly discouraged from bringing cell phones and other personal electronic devices to youth program.

Youth cell phone use is strictly limited to before and after youth group. They must be turned off and kept out of sight at all times. Other handheld electronic devices (ex: MP3, DVD, CD, PDA) are to be turned off and kept out of sight UNLESS a catechist authorizes their use for a specific period of time in their youth group. If these devices become a distraction, they will also be taken by the catechist.

Health Concerns

Health information and concerns should be reported on the medical portion of the registration form and/or be discussed with the Youth Minister at the time of registration. Parents and guardians should know that:

- Pertinent health information will be shared with the catechists of your youth.
- The Youth Minister and catechist will respect all health information about a child with confidentiality.
- If a child is diagnosed with a medical condition after registration, please inform the Youth Minister and catechist as soon as possible.
- Medications will not be administered by catechists, except on an emergency basis.
- The parent is responsible to keep sick youth at home.

PHOTOGRAPH USAGE POLICY

Photographs and/or videotapes of youth participants in the St Joseph Youth Program may be used in publications, websites or other published materials. Youth will not be identified by name, without prior written consent. If you DO NOT wish to have your Youth to be photographed or filmed please send a written notice addressed to Shannon Sicilia or Davida Condron.

PARENT EXPECTATIONS

1. Be active members in the life of the parish, including celebrating Mass each weekend with your children and participate when possible in other social and service events.
2. Support and affirm your child's catechist.
3. Get to know your child's catechist so you can work together to best serve your child's formation.
4. Ensure that your children attend classes regularly and on time.
5. Communicate any special needs or circumstances that may affect your child within the classroom.
6. Be an active part of your child's learning and be involved in the classroom at the catechist's request (e.g., help with special projects.)
7. Respond to and work cooperatively with the catechist on any discipline problems that arise with your child.
8. Participate in the children's fund raising events and community service projects.
9. Attend Safe Environment Training offered for parents and volunteers at the parish.

NOTE: Those who regularly volunteer in the classroom, or work with the children on a special project will be required to have a Washington State Criminal Background Check and training on our Diocesan Code of Conduct. These are mandatory for everyone who works with the children in our diocese. Refer to the Safety and Health section (pp. 19-27) for more information.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

- Behave in a Christian manner at all times, showing respect and being cooperative with adults and other students.
- Attend class regularly and actively participate in classroom sessions.
- Make positive contributions toward building community within the classroom.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT

“Entrusted to Our Care” – Child Sexual Abuse Prevention and Diocesan Code of Conduct Training

The Catholic Diocese of Spokane is committed to providing a safe environment for all children in our care. In order to effectively facilitate this safe environment, all personnel and volunteers are required to undergo Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Training and to become familiar with our Diocesan Code of Conduct.

“Entrusted to Our Care” is a onetime training required for all volunteers/catechists working with children. Group trainings will be offered in the Fall and Spring. Documentation is kept of all trained volunteers. The Diocesan Code of Conduct can be found on pages 26-27.

Training Outcomes: Participants will:

- Identify signs and symptoms of abuse.
- Describe sexual predator characteristics
- Describe how to properly respond to disclosure.
- Describe the reporting process.
- Have a basic understanding of the Diocesan Administrative Policy for Responding to Allegations of Sexual Abuse and Inappropriate Behavior by Church Personnel.
- Have a basic understanding of the Diocesan Code of Conduct.

Personal Safety Education for Parents and Children

All parishes are required to provide annual Personal Safety Education for the students in all grades (K-12). The Safe Environment Student Curriculum we will use is from Virtus Online, entitled *Protecting God’s Children*. This program is a three year cycle and offers lessons for four specific age groups; Grades K-2, Grades 3-5, Grades 6-8 and Grades 9-12. The program is presented in a three year cycle. Each year two basic lessons focusing on a common theme for each grade grouping will be presented.

Parents will be notified in advance of the scheduled class and have a parent education/training prior to the children’s class. At the time of the parent training, the children’s video and materials will be reviewed with the parents.

Protecting Our Children

A Safe Environment for Children and Youth

Catholic Diocese of Spokane, Washington

July 12, 2011

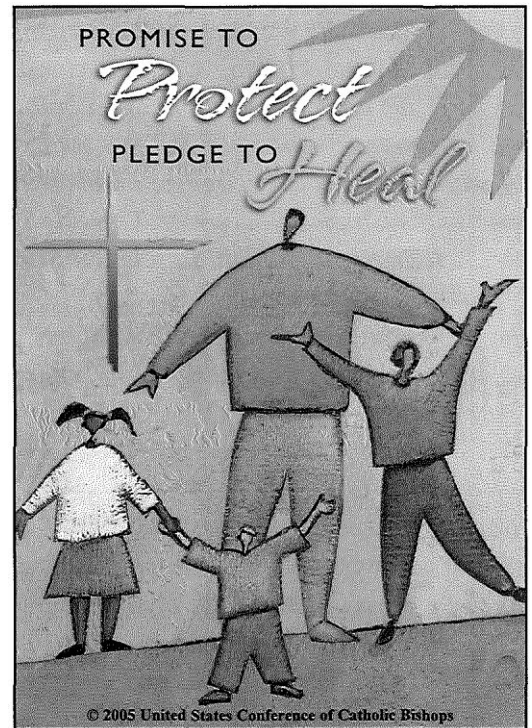
My Dear People of God,

Our diocesan safe environment program is about adults joining together and taking responsibility for the safety and protection of children entrusted to our care. Protection works when barriers around children are strong. That is why we perform background checks on anyone working with our youth, have in place codes of conduct and conduct training programs for both young people and adults on how to recognize and report abuse and suspicious behavior.

Our approach and commitment to this important work should never become casual or routine. We have to be both focused and vigilant. No child should ever be put in a situation where they feel victimized by an elder. No child should ever lack the tools to confront and challenge inappropriate behavior. We owe it to our children to provide an environment in which they learn how to form healthy and life giving relationships with others. We owe it to our children to see that no one harms them by taking advantage of their vulnerability and innocence.

Sincerely,

+ Bishop Blase Cupich



Five Promises to Our Children

1. Caring adults
2. Safe places and constructive activities
3. A healthy start and future
4. Effective education for marketable skills
5. Opportunities to serve

DIOCESAN POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- Zero tolerance for sexual abuse and harassment.
- For comprehensive policies and resources, refer to:
www.dioceseofspokane.org/safe_children.htm
Click on “Protecting Our Children”

THE MOST COMMON SYMPTOMS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

The following is a list of common signs and symptoms that a child may be suffering from sexual abuse. The list is not inclusive. These are common indicators. Interest and curiosity about sexual matters are normal; excessive or compulsive interest in sexual matters may indicate a need for professional help.

- Acting out sexual behavior
- Excessive touching of genitals
- Sexually transmitted diseases or urinary infections
- Chronic stomach aches, vomiting
- An abrupt change in personality or behavior
- Drastic change in appetite – self-mutilation
- Withdrawal/depression
- Regressive behavior – thumb sucking
- Consistently anxious, fearful, irritable
- Over-compliance
- Running away, stealing, lying
- Early arrival at school, or reluctance to go home
- Asks people to take their clothes off
- Sexual behavior with peers or adults

POTENTIAL PERPETRATOR

Red Flags

- Is secretive and promotes secrets
- Wants to spend more time with your child than you do, and usually comes “bearing gifts”
- Limits contact with other children, especially those of the opposite sex

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION TIPS

- Participate in your child’s activities and get to know your child’s friends.
- Never leave your child unattended, especially in the car.
- Teach your child the difference between “good touches,” “bad touches,” and “confusing touches.”
- Ask question. For example, when your child tells you he/she doesn’t want to be with someone, this could be a red flag.
- Teach your child the correct names of his/her body parts.
- Be alert to any talk that reveals premature sexual understanding.
- Pay attention when someone shows greater than normal interest in your child.
- Make certain that your child’s day care will release him/her only to you or someone whom you officially designate.

Above All

*If a child tells you something “bad, awful, terrible” has happened ~ **Believe your child.***

Listen and get help.

REPORTING ABUSE BY CHURCH PERSONNEL OR VOLUNTEERS:

Call:

- Victim Assistance Coordinator, Roberta Smith:
(509) 353-0442 (confidential, direct line)

- Vicar General, Father Steve Dublinski:
(509) 358- 7303 (confidential, direct line)

Write to the Diocese at:

Catholic Diocese of Spokane
PO Box 1453, Spokane, WA 99210

Address your letter to any of these individuals:

Bishop Blase Cupich
Father Dublinski
Roberta Smith

“Mark your letter “Personal and Confidential”

Another option:

You may request your counselor or attorney to contact us. If you are unsure of how best to do this, *please do not hesitate* to contact Mary Butler at the above address, phone number, or via e-mail:
rvsmith@dioceseofspokane.org.

To report abuse by any church personnel or volunteer, in addition to reporting to the agencies below, please report to the Catholic Diocese of Spokane.

REPORTING OBSERVED OR SUSPICIONS OF CHILD ABUSE

Reports should be made to Child Protective Services and local law enforcement agencies.

Child Abuse/Neglect Referrals:

Child Protective Services, Spokane County

(509) 363-3333 (Monday – Friday, 8 am - 4:30 pm)

800-557-9671 (Monday – Friday, 8 am - 4:30 pm)

800-562-5624 (Weekends and after 4:30 pm)

Department of Social and Health Services

866-363-4276 (State-wide)

Law Enforcement

Adams County: (509) 659-1122

Asotin County: (509) 243-4171

Columbia County: (509) 382-2518

Ferry County: (509) 775-3132

Franklin County: (509) 545-3500

Lincoln County: (509) 725-3501

Garfield County: (509) 843-3493

Pend Oreille County: 1-800-669-3407

Spokane Crime Reporting: (509) 456-2233

Stevens County: 1-800-572-0947

Walla Walla County: (509) 527-3265

Whitman County: (509) 397-6266 after 5 pm: 397-4341

Resources in Spokane

Catholic Charities: (509) 358-4250

Lutheran Victim Rights Response team

Crises Line: (509) 624-7273

For appointments, ask for "Advocacy": (509) 747-8224

Vanessa Behan Respite Services (509) 535-3155

End harm: 1-866-562-5624

Children's Home Society of Washington: (509) 747-4174

Crime Victim Crises Line: (509) 624-7273

Fairchild Air Force Base Family Advocacy: (509) 247-2687

Partners with Families and Children:

Stewards of Children: (509) 473-4810

Colville Tribal Police: (509) 634-4711 Or 1-800-551-5800

Spokane Tribal Police: (509) 258-4400

Helpful Links

<http://www.usccb.org/comm/restretrust.htm>

<http://www.dioceseofspokane.org/Safe children/Index.htm>

<http://www.childhelp.org>

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DIOCESE OF SPOKANE CODE OF CONDUCT

The following Code of Conduct applies to: Clergy, Seminarians, all employees of the Catholic Bishop of Spokane, Parishes, Schools, Catholic Charities, Institutions, CPC, Catholic Cemeteries of Spokane and Volunteers in church ministry, hereinafter referred to as church personnel.

Those who act in the name of the church have special influence in the lives of the people to whom they minister. Because of the respect and even reverence with which many people seek help from the church's ministers, there is an imbalance of power and hence a vulnerability inherent in the ministerial relationship. In these circumstances there is likely an absence of meaningful consent to any sexual activity, even if the person is an adult. This imbalance of power makes any sexual activity always inappropriate. It is the responsibility of the church minister or staff member to maintain appropriate emotional and sexual boundaries with those whom they work and serve.

As in other helping professions such as physicians and therapists, the special nature of the relationship between church personnel and the people they serve calls for a higher ethical standard of behavior. In such relationships the appropriateness or inappropriateness of behavior is judged not by the intent of the church person, but its impact upon the recipient. It is the policy of this diocese to expect the behavior of all church personnel to comply with professional ethics and Catholic moral standards. Not only must the actual behavior meet appropriate standards, but all church personnel are expected to act in ways which do not give the appearance of impropriety.

TOUCHING

Touching must be age-appropriate and based on the need of the young person and not on the need of the adult. An adult must avoid physical contact when alone with a young person. Touches and embraces that are experienced or perceived as uncomfortable to the individual, adult or child, are forbidden. Adults should avoid any physical touching of minors that may reasonably be perceived as sexual in nature.

Examples of behaviors with minors that can be misconstrued as sexual in nature, and thus are to be avoided, include but are not limited to:

- inappropriate or lengthy embraces
- kissing
- touching bottoms, chests, legs or genital areas
- spanking or slapping
- showing affection while in an isolated location
- wrestling or tickling
- piggy-back rides
- massages

It is important to remember that, when dealing with a child who inadvertently misplaces hands on a church person, the suggested way of dealing with this is to gently take the hands and remove from the inappropriate spot, kneel down to the child's level and continue the discussion at eye level. If a minor initiates physical contact, such as a hug, an appropriate, limited response is proper.

VERBAL AND NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Examples of speech or actions which are inappropriate include but are not limited to:

- Compliments that relate to physique or body development
- Humiliation, ridicule, bullying, or degradation of another person
- Topics of discussion, vocabulary, recordings, films, games, computer software, internet sites or any other form of personal interaction or entertainment that could not be used comfortably in the presence of parents
- Sexually explicit or pornographic material
- The singling out of persons, especially children, for special personal attention or personal gifts.

TRANSPORTATION AND OUTINGS

When taking young people on field trips, conferences or tours, the following rules apply:

- One staff member or adult volunteer may never transport only one child unless the child is his/her own child.
- One person may transport a group of children. However, upon arrival two staff members or adult volunteers must accompany all children during all activities, events, and/or outings off parish, school or agency grounds. This policy assumes that the staff, children and volunteers participating in transportation or outings have fulfilled the Sexual Abuse Education Requirements as stated in Part VI of this policy.
- An adult shall always be accompanied by another adult, when sleeping in a hotel room or tent with children.
- Adults and children shall each sleep in their own bed.
- Use of one's own home as the center for carrying out youth work is prohibited.
- Priests must not provide overnight accommodation for individual minors including but not limited to, accommodations in any church-owned facility, private residence, hotel room or any place where there is no other adult supervision present. Immediate family is an exception to this mandate.
- Persons under 21 may never be taken on personal trips or vacations without other adults or appropriate chaperons.

RELATIONSHIPS

It is the church person's responsibility to be cognizant of appropriate behaviors in relationships and to maintain integrity in all ministerial actions.

Dual relationships are those in which the professional or ministerial purpose is intermingled with personal friendship. Please refer to the introductory paragraphs of this Code of Conduct for reminders about the impact of "power" a church person has on individuals with whom he/she relates. Key points to be adhered to and/or aware of, in relationships are:

- Sexual relationships with parishioners, counseling clients, students or collaborators in ministry, are forbidden
- Church personnel assume the full burden for setting and maintaining clear, appropriate physical and emotional boundaries in all ministerial relationships.
- In situations where an inappropriate personal or physical attraction develops between a church person and an adult, client or young person, the church person is responsible to maintain clear, professional boundaries.
- It is unprofessional to suggest that the relationship between care givers and those who seek their help is a two way relationship in which the care giver also receives help from the

interaction. It is the responsibility of church personnel to retain a ministerial/professional relationship, not the client.

- The appearance or reality of concealing or asking individuals to conceal the fact and nature of a personal relationship is a violation of such boundaries.
- Church employees and volunteers while not involved in ministerial activity must be accompanied by at least one other adult when hosting activities for children with whom they have become acquainted through their ministry.
- Employees and volunteers acting in their parental role should be aware of the critical importance of applying these guidelines in situations involving children other than their own.

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

At youth events, the following are unacceptable:

- use, possession or distribution of illegal drugs (reason for immediate termination of employment)
- smoking
- alcoholic beverages
- smokeless tobacco
-

ENVIRONMENT

Church personnel cannot always avoid situations where they are alone with a minor, but if a one-on-one meeting with a minor is necessary, the following are recommended:

- avoid meeting in isolated environments
- schedule meetings at times when others are around
- use locations that create accountability
- limit the time of the session
- make appropriate referral(s)
- have another person present when at all feasible
- meet in as public a place as possible
- leave door ajar
- choose a room with a window in the door when available
- avoid all physical contact with the minor
-

Employees are prohibited to use work place computers or other means of communications inappropriately as is presented in the diocesan policy on the use of technology.

No person may serve with minors or young adults if he or she has ever been convicted of any of the below listed criminal offenses, has ever received deferred adjudication for any such criminal offenses, or there is presently pending any criminal charges for such offenses until a determination of guilt or innocence is made. Criminal offenses include:

- A felony classified as an offense against a person or family. Offenses against a person include but are not limited to:
 - murder,
 - assault,
 - sexual assault, and
 - abandoning or endangering a child. Offenses against a family include but are not limited to: bigamy or incest.
- A felony classified as an offense against public order or indecency. Offenses against public order or indecency include but are not limited to:
 - prostitution
 - the possession or promotion of child pornography.
- A felony violation within the last five years of any law intended to control the possession or distribution of any substance included as a controlled substance in the Washington State Uniform Controlled Substances Act.

I have fully read this code of conduct and sign voluntarily with knowledge of its terms and conditions.

Printed Name:

Signature:

Date:

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