



■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

ADMINISTRATION

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR COMMUNICATIONS IN YOUTH MINISTRY

Background and Introduction

“The new communication media, if adequately understood and exploited, can offer priests and all pastoral care workers a wealth of data which was difficult to access before, and facilitates forms of collaboration and increased communion that were previously unthinkable. If wisely used, with the help of experts in technology and the communications culture, the new media can become – for priests and for pastoral care workers – a valid and effective instrument for authentic and profound evangelization and communion.”

Pope Benedict XVI
The Priest and Pastoral Ministry in a Digital World
New Media at the Service of the World
Message for the 2010 World Communications Day

While inculturation of the Gospel is essential, and we must always seek new and relevant methods of evangelization and catechesis, it is important that we make every effort to ensure the safety of both producers and consumers of communications, especially when minors are involved. The encountering and accompaniment of God’s people and the safety and protection of His flock requires responsible, focused, and intentional use of new and yet-to-be-developed technologies.

General Guidelines

Local policy must always be in alignment with the diocesan policies. Materials used to communicate local and diocesan policies will be reviewed and revised as needed. Such materials will be published and distributed.

Each youth ministry program shall have a plan for communicating the program’s philosophy, mission, policies, and activities to the parish community.

When sending out any form of communication, verbal or written, and when posting, commenting, or replying to internet sites, it is prohibited to use obscene, harassing, derogatory, defamatory, or otherwise potentially scandalous comments, links, and/or images which reflect, discredit, or cause embarrassment to the Catholic Church, Diocese of Columbus, or any person or group of individuals.



400.10 (Cont'd)

■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

ADMINISTRATION

Posts, comments, and/or replies must never contradict the teachings of the Catholic Church.

It is prohibited to divulge, without verifiable consent of a parent or guardian, any information that would jeopardize the safety or well being of any person or group of individuals. This includes but is not limited to pictures of any person younger than the age of 18. Personal identifiable and contact information may not be shared with: vendors, organizations, other parishes, schools, or individuals outside the youth ministry program. Personal identifiable and contact information may be shared within the parish with parish administrators who require the information for administrative purposes only. Also prohibited is the posting of full names, home address, email address, telephone numbers or any information that would allow someone to identify or contact a person younger than the age of 18. Verifiable consent may take the form of a personally identifiable information release form (See 400.15) or permission from the parent or guardian (See 400.33).

It is prohibited to disclose in, post, comment, or reply to information that is understood to be held in confidence by the Diocese of Columbus.

Recognition and respect of intellectual property should be maintained at all times. Care must be taken so as not to infringe upon the exclusive rights of others, musical, literary and or artistic works. It is the responsibility of the individual to abide by all copyright laws of the United States of America.

Enforcement

Failure to comply with any of the guidelines and provisions outlined here will be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination. The Department for Education reserves the right to change this policy at any time and at its discretion. The interpretation and administration of this policy will be made by diocesan officials in light of changing circumstances and events.