Mission Statement

Everyone, especially our children, have the right to be safe, secure, and protected from harm, whether sexually, physically, spiritually and/or emotionally, in any and all environments – home, school, neighborhood, community, and most particularly, in our religious institutions.

The Diocese of Amarillo makes this pamphlet available to parents, teachers, volunteers, religious, clergy and parishioners as part of our effort to ensure the full and moral integrity of all parish and school ministries.
Know the Warning Signs

Knowing the warning signs means that we can recognize the early signs of an inappropriate relationship with a child. If we know the warning signs, then we can identify potential abuse before it happens. If we know the warning signs, we do not have to rely on a child to report an incident. Be cautious of an individual who:

• Discourages other adults from participating or monitoring Children activities
• Seeks way to be with a child alone.
• More excited to be with children than with adults.
• Gives excessive gifts to select children, often without permission.
• Always wants to touch wrestle or tickle.
• Thinks the rules do not apply to them.
• Allows children to engage in activities their parents would not allow.
• Uses bad language or tells dirty jokes.
• Uses force and bullying to intimidate.
• Shows children pornography.
• Takes excessive photographs of children.
• Private Electronic Communications with children

Monitor all Programs

Child molesters look for ways to spend time alone with children. If they know someone is watching they have more trouble finding opportunities to abuse without getting caught.

• Identify secluded area, lock empty rooms.
• Staff should check bathrooms before sending children in alone.
• Do not permit children to enter staff-only areas.
• Only meet with children where other adults can pass by you.
• Supervisors should look in on activities.
• Always have two cleared adults present.
• Allow parents to drop in on programs.

Parents Be Aware

Being aware means that parents should know what is going on in the lives of their own children and pay attention to subtle signs of a problem. Parents should talk to their children, listen to them, and observe them. When we observe and communicate with our children, we are more likely to detect the signs if they are in danger. We can notice a sudden change in behavior, if they get moody or aggressive, lose interest in school, or stop taking care of their personal hygiene

• Talk to your children.
• Listen to your children.
• Observe your children.
• Let your children know they can tell you anything.
• Teach your children where their private parts are.
• Talk to your children often about protecting themselves.
• Teach your children how to protect themselves.
• Teach your children what to do if someone tries to touch them.
• Teach your children what to do if someone makes them feel uncomfortable.

For Further information please go to the Amarillo Catholic Diocese’s Safe Environment Website at:
www.amarillodiocese.org