



Diocese of Grand Island

Child Protection Policy / Procedures pertaining to:

Child / Youth Education

The Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People

In 2002, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops set forth the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People in response to the crisis of sexual abuse of children and young people by some deacons, priests and bishops in the Roman Catholic Church of the United States. The Charter, which was revised in 2005, outlines the Church's commitment both to the healing of those victimized by abuse and the prevention of abuse through ensuring a safe environment for children and youth. Article 12 pertains to the education of Children, Youth, and their Parents.

Article 12

Dioceses/eparchies are to maintain "safe environment" programs which the diocesan/eparchial bishop deems to be in accord with Catholic moral principles. They are to be conducted cooperatively with parents, civil authorities, educators, and community organizations to provide education and training for children, youth, parents, ministers, educators, volunteers, and others about ways to make and maintain a safe environment for children and young people. Dioceses/eparchies are to make clear to clergy and all members of the community the standards of conduct for clergy and other persons in positions of trust with regard to children.

“Children need to hear from us, as Church, that we want them to report abuse even if the perpetrator is one of our own. They need to hear that we, as Church, want them to be respected and protected, and that we will take actions to keep them safe.”

Child Protection Policy: Preventative Education

4.3 Preventative Education

- 4.3.1 Education will be provided for children in grades Kindergarten through 12th grade. Information will be prepared in age appropriate and sequential format and presented in Catholic schools, religious education, youth ministry, and other programs organized under the responsibility of the Diocese. Standard educational components will be embedded and included in the curricula and in the environment of all child services offered in the name of the Church.
- 4.3.2 Educational opportunities and resources will be provided to parents and families of minors participating in services offered in the name of the Church.
- 4.3.3 Educational opportunities and resources will be provided to youth volunteers assisting in Church activities and programs for minors.

Child Protection Policy: Program Evaluation

The Child Protection Office will monitor and evaluate the implementation of Safe Environment Programming through:

- 9.2 Periodic review of individual Parish and Program Records including, but not limited to:
 - 9.2.1 Volunteer files (See Safe Environment Program File Review Checklist and Safe Environment Program File Review Summary)
 - 9.2.2 Training and education opportunities provided.
- 9.3 Cooperation with regular audits and research authorized by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Secretariat for Child and Youth Protection.
- 9.4 Analysis of data regarding the effectiveness of program implementation.

“As Church we have the opportunity to be the face of God in a relationship that models the Gospel message of Christ. “

Procedures for Implementation and Evaluation of: Child / Youth Education

Parish Safe Environment Procedures:

Educating Children and Youth / Informing Parents

Child / Youth Education

The diocesan developed “Know the Rules for Adult / Child Interactions” single session curriculum will be utilized during the first session of each religious education, sacrament preparation, and parish sponsored youth program.

Curriculum component resources will be integrated into existing curriculum to reinforce right relationships and personal safety concepts.

Number of children / youth in attendance at “Know the Rules” sessions will be reported to the Diocesan Child Protection Office annually.

Parents have the option to refuse this education for their children.

Refusal forms (**opt-out forms**), completed by the parents or by the person to whom the refusal was given orally, will be maintained at the parish. Those parents who refuse such education for their children will be given educational material with which to educate their own children.

Parent Information

Information for parents will be provided in the form of posters and bulletin inserts.

Parents will be encouraged to participate in Initial Safe Environment Training and annual Continuing Education for volunteers and employees.

Sign-in sheets will be maintained for parent educational programs and the number of parents in attendance for any offered programs will be reported to the Diocesan Office of Child Protection on an annual basis.

Parish Safe Environment Procedures:

Evaluation

The parish will report annually to the Diocesan Child Protection Office. The report will include information necessary to document the implementation of the education and screening components of the prevention plan.

Additional information may be requested by the relevant diocesan offices, as necessary to meet the expectations of the audits sponsored by the USCCB.

The parish will maintain records as outlined in the Parish Safe Environment Procedures: Record System. These records will be available to persons delegated to audit on-site the performance of the parish with respect to the Safe Environment Program.

The parish will participate in efforts to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of Safe Environment Programming through completing evaluation surveys, administering pre and post training measures, etc.

