



Diocese of Grand Island

Safe Environment Strategies

For Adults Working with Children and Youth

USCCB Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People

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

Diocese of Grand Island Child Protection Policy

5.2 Each parish, school, and program working with minors shall have and publicize a basic procedure for the Individualized implementation of Safe Environment programming and communication regarding concerns, issues, or incidents related to the protection of children.

Child Sexual Abuse Four Preconditions: A Model

David Finkelhor, PhD (1984)

Pre-Condition I: Individual with a Motivation to Abuse	Pre-condition II: Diminished Internal Inhibitions	Pre-condition III: Absence of External Inhibitions	Pre-condition IV: Breakdown in Resistance of Child
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Precondition I: Addressing Motivation to Abuse SE Strategy:

Be Aware of:

1. Restrict Access

- Require References and Background Checks
- Limit number of entrances and monitor use
- Account for all staff / volunteers / visitors

- Individuals with a documented abuse history
- Individuals unwilling to provide background/references.
- Inability to confirm identity (with SSN, photo ID, etc.)

2. Support Vocations

- Support clergy •Support new vocations
- Challenge misperceptions

- Signs of stress in clergy.
- Inaccurate perceptions: •in media •in our communities

3. Challenge Cultural Norms

- Model Right Relationships •Deliberately Different Messages

- Signs that a relationship isn't right.
- Messages communicated by our actions.

Precondition II: Maintaining Internal Inhibitions

1. Preserve Good Judgment

- Avoid Substance Use

- Personal vulnerability re: substance use.
- Signs of substance use in others.

2. Practice Self-Care

- Know limitations/vulnerabilities •Healthy Lifestyle
- Seek help when needed

- Signs of impairment in self / others.
- Vulnerabilities: •Stressors •Unmet Needs

3. Seek Consultation / Supervision

- Sounding board •Accountability •“Third Eye” Perspective
- When in doubt consult.

- Situations where it is difficult to follow the code of conduct.
- Uncomfortable interactions.

Precondition III: Creating External Inhibitions SE Strategy:

Be Aware of:

1. “Safety in Numbers”

Adequate Supervision

- Male & Female Chaperones •High Staff:Youth Ratio
- Active Observation

Team Decision-Making

Peer Support

- Buddy System •Bystander Education

Use Caution in 1:1 Contacts

- Avoid Isolation •Keep Others Informed •Don't Drive

- “Hot Spots” for bullying, peer to peer abuse
- Signs of concern
- Individuals who disregard team input /consult
- Peer Interactions
- Isolated areas •Closed doors •vehicles •obstructed windows
- Absence / presence of other adults or youth.

Precondition III: Creating External Inhibitions
SE Strategy:

Be Aware of:

<p>2. <u>Attend to Power Differential</u> Be Aware of Power Differentials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Adult : Child Relationships •Peer : Peer Relationships •Recognize role as representative of God and the Church <p>Avoid Coercion <u>Don't Use:</u> •Threats •Punishment •Excessive Flattery <u>Do Use:</u> •Descriptive Praise •Unconditional Positive Regard •Logical consequences</p> <p>Establish Clear and Consistent Expectations Avoid Dual Relationships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power differential between children / youth • Created by age, size, social status, resources... • Notice if individuals are exerting control over others. • Adults who use coercion. • Adults who are inconsistent in enforcing rules (singling out some children, favoring others). <p>Expectations that aren't developmentally appropriate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple roles with children.
<p>3. <u>Maintain Clear Boundaries</u> Be Mindful of Physical and Verbal Interactions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid: •overt/covert sexual behaviors •offensive jokes •ridicule •topics •intrusive questions <p>Clarify Boundaries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect boundaries set by youth. • Respond appropriately to inappropriate boundaries • Encourage youth to respect boundaries of peers. <p>Maintain Focus on Purpose of Interaction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Witness Faith •Foster Growth •Serve <u>their</u> Needs. •Meet personal needs for affection, intimacy, attraction, and affirmation in adult relationships. <p>Be aware of sexual vulnerabilities •Self •Others</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interactions that “look questionable” • Interactions, media, jokes, or discussion with a “PG” or higher content or that target a group or individual. • Signs of discomfort in youth: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •with you •with other adults •with peers • Unclear boundaries. • Motivation for interactions • Needs of children / youth • Vulnerabilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unmet needs •stressors •developmental level
<p>4. <u>Promote Open Communication</u> Encourage youth to communicate concerns and respond actively.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Active Listening •Empathy •Apology •Problem-Solving •Intervene in negative peer : peer interactions. <p>Maintain confidentiality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Limits of confidentiality: •Abuse •Harm to self or others •Confidentiality is a “one -way street” <p>Involve parents in discussion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Difficult topics •Boundaries •Behaviors •Signs of Distress <p>Differentiate human failings & Church teachings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Empathy •Apology •Clarification •Reparation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child / Youth concerns • Signs of abuse / harm • Violations of privacy • Secrecy • Situations where it is difficult to follow Code of Conduct • Signs of discomfort <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Verbal •Non-verbal • Media or discussion including “PG, PG-13, or R” content. • Concerns about children: •Signs of Distress <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Boundaries •Behavior Toward Others • Self-Reflection: “Am I modeling Christ?”
<p>5. <u>Establish Accountability / High Reliability</u> Adhere to Code of Conduct</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Contract with employees & staff •Report Violations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Educate Children & Parents <p>Report Concerns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •All responsible to recognize and report •Prompt & Direct <p>Maintain Transparency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •“whistle blower” protection •Cooperation with authorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Outreach Provided 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situations where it is difficult to follow Code of Conduct • Violations of Code of Conduct • Lack of awareness/support for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Policy •Procedures •Code of Conduct • Signs of Distress • Red Flags in Adult / Child Relationships • Code of Conduct Violations • Signs of Abuse

Precondition IV: Building Resistance
SE Strategy:

Be Aware of:

<p>1. <u>Educate Children and Parents</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Right Relationships •Signs of Abuse •How to Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signs of Discomfort • Signs of Abuse • Poor Boundaries
<p>2. <u>Provide Positive and Protective Adults</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Model Right Relationships •Be Deliberately Different <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Report Abuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right Relationship Qualities • Response to disclosures of abuse. • Self-Reflection: “Am I deliberately different from hurtful adults?” “Am I modeling Christ?”
<p>3. <u>Create a Trauma-Sensitive Environments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Safety •Empowerment •Collaboration •Choice •Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential Triggers • Effectiveness of Interventions