

Diocese of Kalamazoo

Secretariat of Catholic  
Education and New  
Evangelization

# [ PARISH CATECHETICAL AND YOUTH MINISTRY POLICIES ]

These policies and regulations are to be followed by all parishes in the Diocese of Kalamazoo that are engaged in catechetical ministry with minor children.

Adopted: May 2013

## Guidelines for Catechetical and Youth Ministry:

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## **Principles of Parish Catechetical And Youth Guidelines**

At the foundation of Catechesis and Evangelization is relational ministry. As we each look to our own faith journey we can pinpoint individuals who assisted us with the journey of faith. In order to do the work of Christ, we must ensure that we are always keeping a high standard of ethical and legal behavior in these relationships. All relationships must be valued and utilized to build up faith within the individual; these relationships must never be used to harm the individual or their faith. The guidelines and policies included in this document will assist all church personnel in their ministries and relationships to protect the vulnerable while building up the faith of all they encounter.

Though not exclusive, these guidelines in union with the Code of Ethical Standards for Ministry to Minors, are meant to enhance faith, develop fruitful programs, help protect both parts of the relationship including those ministering to, and those being ministered to. The Diocese of Kalamazoo takes very seriously its charge to renew faith, build communion and inspire hope, and so all those who will be working with youth in the parish catechetical setting must read and agree to these catechetical guidelines for ministry before they begin to serve the people for catechetical and youth ministry in the diocese.

### **Guiding Principles:**

- Church personnel will exhibit the highest Christian ethical standards and personal integrity.
- Church personnel will conduct themselves at all times in a manner that is consistent with the teachings and precepts of the Roman Catholic Church.
- Church personnel will provide a professional work environment that is free from physical, psychological, written, or verbal intimidation, deception, manipulation or harassment.
- Church personnel will avoid using counseling relationships for their personal benefit.
- Church personnel will not physically, emotionally or sexually abuse any minor or adult, and they will report any suspected abuse.
- Church personnel will be good stewards of diocesan and parish resources, human and financial, observing both canon and civil law.
- Church personnel will evaluate each child's progress and regularly communicate this information to the parents/guardians of each child.

## Definitions as used in this document

**Church personnel are all those who fall into one of the following categories:**

**Clergy:** All diocesan priests, permanent deacons, and transitional deacons of the diocese and all priests and deacons belonging to religious orders, all clerics of other jurisdictions working in the diocese.

**Lay Staff:** All women and men religious and lay women and men who are hired by the parishes (either paid or hired volunteers) including both pastoral staff and support staff.

**Adult Volunteers:** All volunteers who assist with any parish or diocesan ministry who may be in contact with youth or vulnerable adults.

**Parent helpers:** All parents (or other adults) who will sit in or assist in any religious education, youth ministry event or other diocesan or parish event on a limited basis.

**Student Volunteers:** Students between the ages of 14 (or entered in 8<sup>th</sup> grade) and 18 may only have a limited role in assisting these programs. They must never be alone with children and may have no supervisory role.

**Church personnel will be working in one of the following areas as defined below:**

**Catechist:** Catechists are defined as any church personnel overseeing teaching or directly teaching in a parish or diocesan setting.

**Aides:** Aides are defined as any church personnel who do not teach, but assist with classroom discipline, maintenance, logistics, hallway monitoring or other areas of assistance and have contact with minor children.

**Chaperones:** Chaperones are defined as anyone who assists at an event in supervising or overseeing the event and the minor children who are at the event.

**Minor children:** Minor children include any one under the age of 18 or anyone still in high school involved in a church program who is 18 or older.

## SUBJECT: VOLUNTEERS

It must be remembered that volunteering is a privilege and the services the volunteer offers must be a match between the needs of the program and the capacity in which the volunteer wishes to serve. Volunteers must work within the policies, regulations, and practices of the parish/diocese and in areas which fulfill the parish/diocese mission or this privilege may be withdrawn. Volunteers serve at the discretion of parish/diocesan officials, and may be denied the ability to volunteer for any reason or no reason.

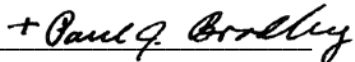
Volunteers should expect to receive all necessary training, both in requirements to the duties/tasks they are volunteering to perform and the policies they will be expected to uphold during the performance of said tasks.

All volunteers are expected to abide by the regulations set forth in the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People and participate in diocesan sponsored VIRTUS training.

All volunteers are to uphold the teachings of the Catholic Church in action and words.

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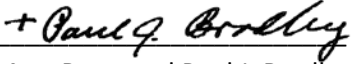
Approved by   
Most Reverend Paul J. Bradley  
Bishop of Kalamazoo

Subject: Personnel/Minor interaction

Appropriate affection between church personnel and minor children is important for a child's development, and is a positive part of the church life and ministry. However, touching must be appropriate, based on the need of the minor child and not the adult, completely non-sexual, and never in private.

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SUBJECT: Personnel/minor interaction

Though not all-inclusive the following examples are regarded as appropriate forms of affection:

- Side hugs
- Shoulder to shoulder or temple hugs
- Pats on the shoulder or back
- Handshakes
- High fives or hand slapping
- Arms around the shoulders
- Holding hands while walking small children
- Kneeling or bending down for hugs with small children

Though not all-inclusive, the following examples are forms of affection that are not to be used:

- Lengthy or inappropriate hugs or embraces.
- Kisses on the mouth
- Holding children over the age of two on the lap
- Touching the chests, knees, legs, bottoms or genital areas of minor children
- Showing affection while in isolated areas or private rooms
- Sleeping in a bed with a minor child
- Tickling
- Compliments that relate to physique or body development
- Grooming of children through extreme gift giving or being a replacement parent
- Any form of affection which is unwanted by minor

Always maintain a professional attitude when dealing with minors, avoiding emotional attachment and being aware of the powerful attraction that adults in positions of authority and trust have for minors. If a personal or physical attraction begins, the minor child should be referred to working with other church personnel.

There should not be any one-on-one contact between church personnel and a minor. If there is a need to counsel a minor in private, another adult should be notified and it should be done in a place where the adult and minor are visible at all times. If there is a need for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, it should be administered in the proper location, or if that is not available, in a discreet location following all proper guidelines.

## SUBJECT: CATECHIST REQUIREMENTS

Catechists must be practicing Catholics. All adult catechists must have a background check and be VIRTUS trained. Catechists must know that children are not to be left unsupervised in the classroom.

Catechists are expected to be living a life of prayer and continual conversion; they are expected to be practicing in the sacramental life of the Church. All Catechists must participate in a policy training sessions each year. This course may be taught by the DRE or other parish designate that has been trained on the Policies and Guidelines of the Diocese of Kalamazoo. All adult catechists must be enrolled in the Diocesan Catechist's Certification program and if certified must keep up on required catechetical hours each year. Substitute catechists are expected to follow the same requirements.

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Kalamazoo, Michigan

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Bishop of Kalamazoo



REGULATION: CATECHIST REQUIRMENTS

In all classrooms, there must be a one-to-fifteen ration of adult catechists to minor children. It is recommended to have two catechists (or one catechist and one aide) in each classroom. If this is not possible it is expected that there is always a hallway aide (monitor)

If a catechist is unable to be at their scheduled class they must notify the DRE at least 24 hours before the class, unless there is an emergency.

Catechists are expected to have a lesson plan for every class; this lesson plan should be accessible and available to the DRE in case a substitute is needed.

Catechists are to be observed at least once a year using a diocesan provided observation form.

Catechists are expected to attend the annual New Evangelization Conference.

SUBJECT: AIDE REQUIREMENTS

Aides must be at least 12 years of age. All adult aides must have a background check and VIRTUS trained. All aides must attend a policy training session each year. Aides may not teach in any session. Adult aides should take care to avoid the risk of a minor's developing a dependency on them in the place of the minor's parent or guardian, i.e., becoming a father and/or mother figure to a minor.

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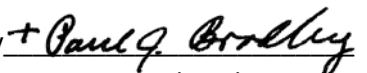
## SUBJECT: CHAPERONE REQUIREMENTS

Chaperones must be 21 years of age. All adult chaperones must have a background check and be VIRTUS trained. Chaperones should take care to avoid the risk of a minor's developing a dependency on them in place of the minor's parent or guardian, i.e., becoming a father and/or mother figure to a minor.

Chaperones must be informed that they are responsible for the minor children at the event and must supervise the minor children. While serving as a chaperone, adults shall not engage in any activity that interferes with their obligation to supervise. Chaperones must attend a policy training session each year.

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Kalamazoo, Michigan

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SUBJECT: CHAPERONE REQUIREMENTS

For all on campus, non-class, events there must be two adult chaperones (cannot be husband and wife) for the first ten minors in attendance, and one adult chaperone for every ten minors thereafter. Care should be given to having both male and female adult chaperones if there are both male and female minors.

For all off campus events, there must be two adult chaperones (cannot be husband and wife) for the first eight minors and one adult chaperone for every eight minors thereafter. There must be at least one adult chaperone of each gender if both genders are at the event.

Church personnel will not knowingly, nor encourage minor children to participate in dangerous activities outside the scope of the event.

At least one of the chaperones or parish personnel for each event should be trained in first aid and CPR.

Chaperones may not take on teaching duties in small groups during the event unless they meet the criteria found in the catechist section.

Due to duties of a spiritual nature, priests are not allowed to be included in the chaperone roster.

SUBJECT: STUDENT CUSTODY AND GUARDIANSHIP

At the time of a minor child's entry into a parish religious Education program or Youth Ministry event, church personnel shall obtain a signed form from the registering parent/guardian for any child for which there is a legal custody agreement, establishing the respective custodial/legal rights of the parents and/or guardians.

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POLICY

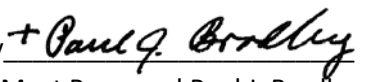
#7.0-P

SUBJECT: CURRICULUM

Diocesan guidelines must be followed on choice of curriculum used for any catechetical material throughout the diocese. Any textbooks or programs used must have been reviewed and approved by the U.S. Catholic Bishops. Supplemental information must have a valid imprimatur, or diocesan approval.

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## SUBJECT: COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL

Be aware of the *guidelines for classroom copying in not-for-profit educational institutions*. In this the following guidelines are listed (these do not have the force of law but are used often in deciding court cases.)

Brevity: examples; Poetry: A complete poem if less than 250 words and if printed on not more than two pages or (b) from a longer poem, an excerpt of not more than 250 words. Prose: (a) Either a complete article, story or essay of less than 2,500 words, or (b) an excerpt from any prose work of not more than 1,000 words or 10% of the work, whichever is less, but in any event a minimum of 500 words.

Spontaneous: the timing of the decision to use this work must preclude the due opportunity to seek the required permission of use.

No cumulative effect: making multiple copies of one author might prevent the purchase of a collection of the authors work and is to be avoided.

Each copy must contain a notice of copyright.

If there are to be copies made of copyrighted material it must meet the following fair use criteria:

- the purpose and character of the use (commercial or educational, transformative or reproductive);
- the nature of the copyrighted work;
- the amount and substantiality of the portion of the original work used; and
- the effect of the use upon the market (or potential market) for the original work

## SUBJECT: CLASSROOM GUIDELINES

There is to be at least one church personnel per fifteen minors in a classroom setting. The preference is either two catechists, or a catechist and an aide in each classroom. It is recommended that there is a church personnel available in the hallways to assist with bathroom breaks and other issues as they arise.

Church personnel will not knowingly allow minor children, nor encourage minor children to participate in dangerous activities outside the scope of the class.

Minors should be walked to the bathroom down public hallways. Church personnel are not to share showering, bathing, changing or dressing facilities with minor children. Adults should wait outside the restroom stall for the minor. When the good of the minor requires that they be accompanied by an adult in any of these locations, the time should be minimal and another adult should be made aware of the circumstances.

A First aid kit with gauze, ice packs, bandages, tape, burn cream, antiseptic, and other minor first aid materials must be available, and all church personnel must know of its location.

There must be evacuation plans for all forms of disaster and all church personnel must be trained in these plans.

At the end of a class, church personnel are to release the minors only to parents, legal guardians or those designated in writing by the parents or legal guardians. Children may be dismissed early only if a request is made in writing or in person by the child's parent/guardian. The request must state the reason, date, and time involved, and written requests will be kept on file. This includes releasing the child to obtain assignments or for disciplinary reasons.



REGULATION

#8.1-R

SUBJECT: CLASSROOM GUIDELINES

Any parent who wishes to visit a religious education class is welcome to do so. (If they are not VIRTUS trained they can only attend if there are two VIRTUS trained adults in the classroom, and they may not interact with the children, but may sit in the back of the class and observe. If they wish to observe more than once they must have a background check done and be VIRTUS trained.)

## SUBJECT: Discipline

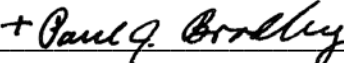
Each parish shall have a set of rules and regulations concerning discipline which are consistent with the following diocesan policy and guidelines. The child's right to fair treatment shall be a fundamental consideration in all disciplinary matters. Parental involvement shall occur early in the disciplinary process. Disciplinary action is to be corrective, rather than punitive, with emphasis on the child taking responsibility for his or her behavior.

There is to be no use of physical discipline in any way for the behavior management of minor children. This includes spanking, hitting, pinching, or any other physical force as correction or retaliation for inappropriate behavior.

Subjecting children to personal indignities and/or public humiliation is prohibited. Children shall not be sent unsupervised out of the classroom as a form of discipline.

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SUBJECT: DISCIPLINE

If there is a discipline issue that a catechist cannot handle the minor child is to be escorted by the second adult or hall monitor to the DRE (or their designate) who will immediately contact the parents or guardians of the child.

Church personnel are to report immediately any unusual or uncontrollable behavior of minor children to their parents or guardians.

Records of disciplinary actions taken by Church personnel must be kept and maintained for 3 years.

## SUBJECT: Suspension/Dismissal

When circumstances dictate, a child may be temporarily or permanently removed from a particular setting. This process will be initiated by the pastor and/or director/coordinator of the program. At all times the child's right to fair treatment will be preserved. In cases where a child is continually disruptive of others or in the case of a serious disciplinary infraction, a course of action consistent with the outline below is to be followed:

1. Conference with the pupil;
2. Conference with the parents/guardians;
3. Probation (a time set aside where any further discipline will lead to dismissal);
4. Dismissal.

If the pastor and/or director/coordinator of the program believe it necessary to dismiss a child from the program, church personnel shall meet with the child and the child's parents/guardians about the child's action and shall provide written notice to the parents/guardians of the determination to dismiss the child. Copies of such written notice shall be kept and maintained for 3 years.

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POLICY

#11.0-P

SUBJECT: Drugs and Alcohol

Church personnel are not to use tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, or any substance prohibited by law, nor are they to be under the influence of any alcoholic beverage, illegal drugs, or any substance that impairs cognitive function when working with minor children.

Church personnel who witness the use of any substance prohibited by this policy by another adult or minor must report it to their supervisor.

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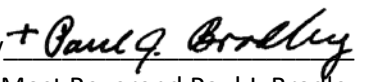
#12.0-P

SUBJECT: Medication Policy

Medications may only be administered by designated church personnel, in the presence of at least one other church personnel during Parish Catechetical and Youth Events.

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## SUBJECT: MEDICATION

It is not the practice to administer medication during regular religious education classes unless there are extenuating circumstances or an emergency occurs.

The following regulations are to be followed for extenuating circumstances and for youth events that occur over a length of time in which medicine is required (i.e. a rally, or retreat)

Medications for the purpose of this regulation are defined as substances used for medical treatment and include such items as: Tylenol, Aspirin, Vitamins, cough drops and all prescribed drugs; it does not include sunscreen lotion (unless prescribed by a doctor), lip balm, etc.

Only the designated church personnel may administer medication and must have gone through all required diocesan trainings related to this task. If there is not a trained church personnel a parent may be required to attend in order to administer the medication.

- The church personnel must attend an in-service with “hands-on” practice in identifying and dispensing medications.
- Parents must make arrangements for any medication that is to be given by nebulizer, or administered rectally, vaginally, or into the bladder. These medications must be administered by a parent or a health care professional.
- Documentation that the church personnel have completed such in-service training shall be maintained by the parish and made available, upon request, to a minor child’s parent/guardian, physician, licensed professional nurse, or by diocesan officials.
- If there is not a trained church personnel then participation by minor children who require medication may be prohibited, unless arrangements can be made by parent/guardian for proper distribution of medication (e.g. the parent is a chaperone at the event).

Parents/guardians must provide written permission to parish personnel before any medications will be administered.

All medications are to be kept in a labeled container which has been prepared by a pharmacy, physician or pharmaceutical company with the minor child’s name, the name of the medication, dosage, and frequency of administration on the label. All medications are to be stored in a locked secure location. Emergency medications may be stored in an area readily accessible to the individual designated to administer them. All control-substance medications will be counted and recorded upon receipt from the parent/guardian. The medication shall be recounted upon return to the parent/guardian. All medication must be in exact dosages, so the designated church personnel do not have to split or dispense a different dosage.

No minor child may have their own medicine or administer the medicine themselves, unless they have written permission from their parent/guardian **and** from their physician. Church personnel have the right to deny this privilege if there is concern about the age, maturity or type of medication. The medication the minor child possesses must be labeled and prepared by a pharmacy or pharmaceutical company and contain the dosage and frequency of administration. The right to carry and self medicate will be removed if there is misuse by the minor child.

A log must be kept with the minor child's name, dates of administering medication, and times of administration. These logs are to be kept until one year after the minor child has graduated high school.

Any minor child that is found with medicine or drugs outside the parameters of these guidelines will have the medicine/drugs confiscated, have their parents or guardians contacted immediately, and will be sent home from the class or event.



SUBJECT: INCIDENTS: BLOOD BORN PATHOGENS

All church personnel who work with youth must have training on blood borne pathogens. First aid kits are to be available during all church activities and church personnel must be aware of where they are located. Disposable gloves must be a part of the first aid kits. The practice of universal precaution (treat everyone as if they are infected) must be followed. Proper clean-up and disposal practices must be established and followed at every parish and diocesan event.

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SUBJECT: INCIDENTS: RECORD OF INCIDENTS

Church personnel will keep a written record of the circumstances of all accidents, including date, time, injured party, immediate cause, involved parties, supervisory volunteer or staff, and treatment or action taken.

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SUBJECT: FOOD AND DRINKS

Food and drinks may be given at Parish religious education and youth events.

In order to determine if a child enrolled in a class or event has food allergies, this information must be requested on all registration forms for classes and events. These registration forms must have signature of a parent or guardian.

If a child in a class or attending an event has food allergies, alternative snacks should be provided. Parents can be asked to provide alternative snacks.

No child can be denied access to parish religious education or youth events due to food or other allergies. Accommodations, unless prohibited by cost or appropriate personnel, must be made.

## SUBJECT: SEARCH AND SEIZURE

In a parent/student handbook it should be stated that “the parish is co-tenant of any locker and desk provided by parish and reserves the right to search them at any time.” Church personnel have the right to protect the health, welfare, and safety of parishioners against drugs, weapons, unauthorized material, and other contraband. The search of a child or a child’s property while on parish grounds may be conducted when consistent with these purposes.

If there is a need for a search, ask yourself if the object you are searching for is worth more than a general question to the entire group, such as: “has anyone seen Johnny’s eraser”

If there is a need for a search of a desk or locker, it should be done by the coordinator of the program. Ask the minor child to empty the desk/locker themselves, do not remove anything from it yourself. Have any items the minor child should not have in his/her possession placed in a separate container. The parent should be contacted, the situation discussed and appropriate action taken. If there are any illegal substances the police should be notified.

If a person is to be searched, ask them to remove items from their pockets, purse, bags etc., if they refuse, contact the parents/guardians to assist.

If the police come and want to search a minor child, ask for valid identification, call their parent/guardian immediately, and ask for a search warrant. If there is a search warrant, then allow the search to continue, if not then politely tell the police officer that you will produce the individual when they have a warrant.

If there is immediate risk to health or safety then allow the police to initiate the search.

## SUBJECT: OFF CAMPUS EVENTS

For all off campus events there must be two adult chaperones for the first eight minor children and one adult chaperone for every eight minor children thereafter. There must be at least one adult chaperone of each gender if minors of both genders are present at the event.

If a bus is to be taken for the trip, the bus driver does not count as a chaperone. If chaperones are driving, all regulations for driving must be followed.

Church personnel are not to share showering, bathing, changing or dressing facilities with minor children. They should wait outside the restroom for the minor. When the good of the minor requires that they be accompanied by an adult in any of these locations, the time should be minimal and another adult should be made aware of the circumstances.

A First Aid kit with gauze, ice packs, bandages, tape, burn cream, antiseptic, and other minor first aid materials must be taken on the trip.

Chaperones must be supervising minor children at all times, and are to refrain from any activity that would interfere with this obligation. Minor children are not allowed to walk around unsupervised. Chaperones are responsible for the actions of minor children at all times. Ultimately the leader of the trip is responsible.

Church personnel will not knowingly allow minor children, nor encourage minor children to participate in dangerous activities outside the scope of the event.

Church personnel are not to sleep in the same bed, hotel or motel room, sleeping bag, tent, cabin or classroom with minor children. If a gym or large classroom which has windows in the doorway is used and if the sleeping area of the church personnel and the minor children are separated, then Church personnel and Minors may sleep in the same room. There may never be only one adult church personnel in the room with the minor children. A parent or guardian is allowed to share a room with their child and only their child.

Church personnel are not allowed to be in the sleeping quarters of a minor child by themselves. If there is an emergency then two adult church personnel may enter the room of a minor child. If another adult church personnel is not available then the time alone in the room should be minimal and another adult church personnel must be notified as soon as possible.

Chaperones must be notified that they are responsible for the youth, even during sleeping times. All guidelines are to be followed even during the night time hours.

All medicine guidelines must be followed on overnight trips.

No adult church personnel should ever be alone with a minor child during the trip. If there is need for one-on-one counseling, it must be done in an open area with another adult notified.

At the end of the trip, church personnel are to release the minors only to parents, legal guardians or those designated in writing by the parents and legal guardians.

## SUBJECT: TRANSPORTATION FOR OFF CAMPUS EVENTS

Chartered bus (either charter company or licensed, insured school bus with professional driver) is the preferred method of transportation.

Church personnel who are providing transportation to parish sponsored events are to be validly licensed, have no speeding ticket or major accidents on their records for the past three years, and be 21 years of age or older. Drivers must certify that their records are free of these.

Personal vehicles must be insured for minimum limit of \$500,000 CSL (combined single limit), and such documentation must be kept on all vehicles used to transport youth. Proper MCCL paperwork must be filled out with copies of insurance card and driver's license.

Vehicles must have valid registration.

Proper child restraints and booster seats must be used as required by law.

Rental cars are not covered under Parish liability coverage and must have liability and property damage coverage purchased from the rental company.

All minor children being transported in a personal vehicle must have written permission from parents or legal guardians.

No vehicles that carry more than 8 passengers may be used for transportation of youth, unless it is an authorized bus.

All drivers must be given a trip guide with time and route of transportation. No driver is allowed to deviate from the route. No side trips or excursions outside the route chosen for the trip may be used.

There must be more than one youth per adult driver, and no youth may sit in the front passenger seat next to the driver.

POLICY

#17.0-P

SUBJECT: MEDICAL WAIVERS & PERMISSION SLIPS

Valid permission slips and medical waivers must be kept on file for all minor children on all parish events and trips. Medical waivers must be kept for all adult chaperones on parish events. These forms must be kept with designated church personnel for the duration of the trip and then filed as necessary.

Diocese of Kalamazoo  
Kalamazoo, Michigan

Policy adopted May 17, 2013

Approved by *+ Paul J. Bradley*  
Most Reverend Paul J. Bradley  
Bishop of Kalamazoo



## SUBJECT: TECHNOLOGY USE

Technology is the common form of communication for minor children. This can present many great opportunities to reach minor children, but also can present some potentially scandalous situations. Remember when using technology that the same rules apply as with any other type of contact with minor children.

Remember, also, that no e-mail, text, or instant messaging of any sort is ever really private. Either party can easily share what is written with the click of a button. It is even more important, in absence of body language, to be attuned to the nature of the relationship. If the communication through technology appears to be moving beyond a minor child to adult relationship, or if the minor child is appearing to have an unnatural attraction through this communication, then they must be referred to someone else, and this communication must cease. Parents should be made aware that communication between church personnel and a minor child through technology exists.

Diocese of Kalamazoo  
Kalamazoo, Michigan

Policy adopted May 17, 2013

Approved by *+ Paul J. Bradley*  
Most Reverend Paul J. Bradley  
Bishop of Kalamazoo

## SUBJECT: TECHNOLOGY USE

Except during registration, (for advertisement purposes) it is never appropriate for church personnel to solicit individual e-mails, facebook, twitter account, or personal social media or cell phone information.

Church personnel should not give out their personal cell phone or home phone information to minor children.

It is not appropriate for church personnel to initiate individual contact with minors through electronic means, except for purposes necessary for specific ministry purposes and through a church/work account and never through a private account.

Church personnel should not invite minor children as friends on their private facebook page (or other private social media page), they may however have a public figure facebook page that may be set up for the purposes of ministry.

Church personnel should not communicate with minor children in electronic chat rooms.

Unless the electronic conversation is of a confidential counseling nature, it is best to have another adult copied on the conversation.

Conversations via social media accounts must be treated like e-mail conversations.

Twitter accounts can be used by programs at Churches for promotional and informational purposes. Church personnel should not use twitter accounts for private communication with minor children. Church personnel should not solicit minor children to follow their personal twitter account, nor should Church personnel use their personal twitter account to follow minor children.

Any pictures taken by church personnel during events can only be used for promotional purposes via bulletins, facebook fan/organization pages, websites, flyers etc. Any youth in pictures must have a photo release form signed by parents and on file in parish office.

Church personnel may not take pictures of youth and post them on their own social media pages, websites or any other public forum.

Care should be taken to value face-to-face communication, while accepting and promoting valid and safe use of technology.

SUBJECT: TECHNOLOGY USE (E-MAIL)

Copies of E-mail conversations between any minor children and Church personnel must be kept for 3 years after the minor reaches age 18. These must be stored either in a physical print or on a secure storage outside the computer. (Though they may be stored on a computer, they must be stored as a backup somewhere in case of a computer crash.)

Diocese of Kalamazoo  
Kalamazoo, Michigan

Policy adopted May 17, 2013

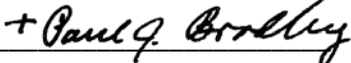
Approved by *+ Paul J. Bradley*  
Most Reverend Paul J. Bradley  
Bishop of Kalamazoo

## SUBJECT: TECHNOLOGY USE (TEXTING)

Texting (communications using phone technology to send messages from a computer or phone to another phone) has become the normal conversation means for many minor children. Texting creates many difficulties because of the inability to print and secure the texts. Texting can also prove difficult because of the short amount of text, and therefore possible lack of clarity. Texting between adults and minors should be kept to a minimum and if possible, a secondary person should be copied on texts sent to minor children. If the conversation is geared more toward confidential counseling, another form of communication is to be used. It is desirable for programs to have a work phone used specifically for texting purposes, with knowledge that this phone is Church property and is shared among church personnel.

Diocese of Kalamazoo  
Kalamazoo, Michigan

Policy adopted May 17, 2013

Approved by   
Most Reverend Paul J. Bradley  
Bishop of Kalamazoo

POLICY

#19.0-P

SUBJECT: PERSONNEL BOUNDARIES

Church personnel must establish clear, appropriate boundaries with anyone with whom they have a business, professional or social relationship. Church personnel are not to take advantage of any one in ministry or any relationship in order to further their own personal, political, business or economic interests.

SUBJECT: ATTENDANCE AT EVENTS AND GAMES OF MINOR CHILDREN

It is praiseworthy for church personnel to attend and support minor children's school games and events. However any image of impropriety must be avoided.

It is better for church personnel to attend these events as a group unless they are there to support their own children.

Common sense must be used in going to events that may cause unintended scandal (i.e. a single man going by himself to a high school girls' swim meet, or other events where girls might be scantily clad).

POLICY

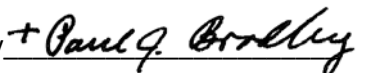
#21.0-P

SUBJECT: COUNSELING

Counseling should only be done by those who are competent in this field, and only to the extent that they are competent. If the extent of counseling exceeds a church personnel's competency, they are to refer the minor child to a qualified adult or licensed professional.

Diocese of Kalamazoo  
Kalamazoo, Michigan

Policy adopted May 17, 2013

Approved by   
Most Reverend Paul J. Bradley  
Bishop of Kalamazoo

SUBJECT: COUNSELING

Counseling of a minor child must take place only in professional locations, never in living quarters.

Offices or classrooms used for counseling should have windows or doors left open during counseling sessions.

If possible, another adult should be in close proximity during any counseling session.

Unless subject matter precludes their presence or knowledge, parents or guardians should be made aware of the counseling sessions.

While counseling a minor child, if church personnel discover that there is a serious threat to the welfare of the minor, and that communication of confidential information to a parent/legal guardian or other authority is essential to the minor child's health and well-being, the church personnel must disclose only the information necessary to protect the health and well-being of the minor child.

Church personnel must discuss the nature of confidentiality and its limitations with each person being counseled. Information that is disclosed during counseling or advising is to be confidential, except for compelling professional reasons or as required by law.

The relationship between an adult and a minor child must always remain professional during the counseling session.

Church personnel should try to recognize any personal/physical attraction to-or-from a minor. In such a situation, the minor should be immediately referred to another qualified adult or licensed professional.

If counseling is expected to extend beyond two (2) sessions, evaluation of the situation should be made with parents or guardians, an advisor, or licensed professional.

Careful and appropriate boundaries concerning physical contact with a minor must be observed at all times.



## SUBJECT: PERMISSION SLIPS, MEDICAL WAIVERS, OTHER FORMS

Permission slips for parish religious education classes and events and youth ministry programs and events to be used are on the following pages. All permission slips must be kept on file in the parish grounds until the minor child is 21.

Medical Waivers must be filled out yearly and are to be kept only for the valid year. During a given year, if a minor child was in need of medical attention, the form from that year must be kept for 5 years or until the minor child is 21, whichever is later.

Volunteer/Employment driver information sheet must be filled out and a copy of the person's drivers license and insurance card attached.

Student accident/injury reports are to be kept if any first aid is used on a minor child. These should be kept until the minor child is 21, and the information must be reported to agencies listed on the form.

Medication Log is to be used whenever medicine is administered. This should be kept in a file for 5 years or until the child at issue reaches age 21, whichever is later.

Parent Permission/Indemnification form for non-scholastic sports participation is to be filled out whenever the minor children will be participating in a sport sponsored by the church that is not school-related.

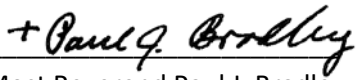
Photo releases should be filled out and signed if it is anticipated any pictures may be taken or used of the minor child for any publicity purposes.

General and medical release form must be filled out by any adult church personnel so that medical attention may be given to them in case of emergency.

An incident/Injury form is to be filled out whenever a non-employee non-minor child is injured during a church/diocesan sponsored event. It must be reported to agencies listed on the form.

Diocese of Kalamazoo  
Kalamazoo, Michigan

Policy adopted May 17, 2013

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## **FIELD TRIP POLICY**

Class visits to places of cultural or educational significance give enrichment to the lessons of the classroom. To ensure the desired outcomes of such trips, teachers should prepare the pupils for the place that is to be visited and the things that are to be seen. A discussion should be held regarding the purpose(s) and goal(s) of the trip. An advance trip by the teacher is suggested.

The written consent of parents must be obtained for every child participating in a field trip. Permission slips must inform parents of the following (Sample form is attached):

1. Name, location, and date(s) of the event
2. Cost to the student
3. Mode of transportation to be used
4. Name of supervisor overseeing the activity
5. Parent's responsibility

No student may participate unless a signed parent permission slip for the specific event is on file with the principal.

Medical information, contact persons and authorization for emergency medical treatment must be with the chaperones.

Whenever possible, bus transportation should be provided. The use of private vehicles is discouraged. If a private passenger vehicle must be used, the following must be verified by the driver (See form attached).

1. The driver must be 19 years of age or older.
2. The driver must have a valid, non-probationary driver's license and no physical disability that may impair the ability to drive safely.
3. The vehicle must have a registration.
4. The vehicle must have a valid state inspection sticker (if this is applicable to your area).
5. The vehicle must be insured for minimum limit of \$500,000 CSL (Combined Single Limit). Due to some insurers limitations, limits of \$250,000 per person/\$500,000 per occurrence are acceptable.

A signed Volunteer Driver Information Sheet must be submitted to the principal for each vehicle used.

Each driver and/or chaperone should be given a copy of the approved itinerary including the route(s) to be followed and a summary of their responsibilities. For trips other than interschool athletics, supervision of one (1) adult per ten (10) students is required.



**PARENT PERMISSION FORM FOR FIELD TRIP PARTICIPATION**

Dear Parent or Legal Guardian:

Your son/daughter is eligible to participate in a school/parish-sponsored activity requiring transportation to a location away from the school premises. This activity will take place under the guidance and supervision of employees from \_\_\_\_\_ School and/or Parish.

Name of Event: \_\_\_\_\_

Destination: \_\_\_\_\_

Designated Supervisor of Activity: \_\_\_\_\_

Date and Time of Departure: \_\_\_\_\_

Method of Transportation: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Cost: \_\_\_\_\_

If you would like your child to participate in this event, please complete, sign, and return the following statement of consent and release of liability. As parent or legal guardian, you remain fully responsible for the actions and conduct of your child.

\*\*\*\*\*STATEMENT OF CONSENT\*\*\*\*\*

I hereby consent to participation by my child, \_\_\_\_\_, in the event described above. I understand that this event will take place away from the school/parish grounds and that my child will be under the supervision of the designated school/parish employee on the stated dates. I further consent to the conditions stated above on participation in this event, including the method of transportation.

In consideration of my child being allowed to participate in this field trip, I hereby agree on behalf of myself and my child, to release \_\_\_\_\_ School and/or Parish, the Roman Catholic (Arch)diocese of \_\_\_\_\_, and any and all affiliated organizations, their employees, agents and representatives, including volunteer drivers (collectively "Releasees"), from any and all claims, including negligence, which may be asserted by me or my child, or on behalf on my child, arising from or relating to my child's participation in the field trip. In the event this release on behalf of myself and/or my child is held to be invalid or unenforceable, I hereby agree to indemnify and hold harmless Releasees from any and all claims, including negligence, which may be asserted by me or my child, or on behalf of my child, arising from or relating to my child's participation in the field trip. This release or indemnification does not apply to claims for intentional misconduct or gross negligence; nor does this release or indemnification apply to the extent of commercial insurance coverage for any claim, but this Release or Indemnification shall apply to the extent of any self-insurance or deductible applicable to any claim.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Print Parent's Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent's Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

Please return this entire form by: \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_  
(Date) (Person)



**MEDICAL TREATMENT AUTHORIZATION**

To Whom it May Concern:

As a parent/guardian, I do hereby authorize the treatment by a qualified and licensed physician of any condition which, in the opinion of the physician, is deemed necessary and appropriate. This authority is granted only after a reasonable effort has been made to reach me.

Name of Minor: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to you: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for which release is intended: \_\_\_\_\_

Address of Minor: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Phone(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Family Physician: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Physician Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

List allergies, medication, contacts, or other pertinent comments:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Health Insurance Data:

Company: \_\_\_\_\_ Policy: \_\_\_\_\_

Group: \_\_\_\_\_ Contract: \_\_\_\_\_

I further authorize the person who presents the minor to sign the Acknowledgment of Receipt of Notice Privacy Rights that may be presented by the physician or health care facility.

This authorization is completed and signed of my own free will with the sole purpose of authorizing medical treatment deemed necessary and appropriate by the treating physician.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

(Parent or Guardian)



**VOLUNTEER/EMPLOYEE DRIVER INFORMATION SHEET**

I. Driver:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

II. Vehicle that will be used:

Name of Owner: \_\_\_\_\_ Year and Make: \_\_\_\_\_

Address of Owner: \_\_\_\_\_ Model: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ License Plate: \_\_\_\_\_

Registration Expires: \_\_\_\_\_ Inspection Expires: \_\_\_\_\_

If more than one vehicle is to be used, requested information must be provided for each vehicle.

III. Insurance Information: The insurance coverage for a privately owned vehicle is the limit of the insurance policy covering that specific vehicle.

Insurance Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Policy Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Liability Limits of Policy\*: \_\_\_\_\_

**\*Please note:** The minimal, acceptable liability limit for privately owned vehicles is \$500,000 CSL (Combined Single Limit). Due to some insurers limitations, limits of \$250,000 per person/\$500,000 per occurrence are acceptable.

IV. Certification:

I certify that the information given on this form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that as a volunteer/employee driver, I hold a valid driver's license and have the required insurance coverage in effect on any vehicle used to transport students, co-employees, service recipients and/or act on behalf of the church or related entities.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

V. Recommendation:

Only experienced drivers, i.e. 19 or over, should transport students.

REGULATION  
SUBJECT: TRAINING

#23-R

Paid Staff directing Catechetics or Youth Ministry must have or attend:

VIRTUS training including monthly bulletins

Catechetical or Youth Ministry Conferences (yearly)

Certification in Staff Catechetic or Youth Ministry (or be working toward)

How to teach the "Parish Catechetical and Youth Ministry Programs Guidelines and Policies" course

How to teach the "Catechists or Small group training"

Catechists must have or attend:

VIRTUS training including monthly bulletins

Catechetical Conferences

Certification in Volunteer Catechetics (or be working toward)

Parish Training on Parish Catechetical and Youth Guidelines

Parish course on catechetical methodology

Youth Ministry Teaching/small group Volunteers must have:

VIRTUS training including monthly bulletins

Youth Ministry Conferences

Certification for Youth Ministry leaders

Parish training on Parish Catechetical and Youth Guidelines

Parish training on small group leading

Non-teaching volunteers who have contact with minors (i.e. Aides, parents that come with frequency) must have:

VIRTUS training

Parish Training on Parish Catechetical and Youth Guidelines

Medical Dispensers must have:

VIRTUS training

Parish training on Parish Catechetical and Youth Guidelines

Medical dispensing in-service through school or diocese

First Aid personnel must have:

VIRTUS training

Parish training on Parish Catechetical and Youth Guidelines

Fist aid certification

Parent observers must have:

If interacting, with child minors, must complete VIRTUS training

POLICY

#24.0-P

SUBJECT: CRISIS PLANS

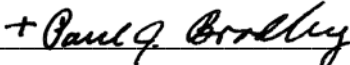
Appropriate Crisis plans must be developed for emergency situations including but not limited to: fire, tornado, bomb threats, medical emergencies, intruders and lockdowns.

If there are any crisis situations that occur, the Secretariat of Catholic Education and New Evangelization must be notified as soon as the imminent threat is over, not to exceed 24 hours after the event.

All press inquiries must be directed to the Diocesan Secretariat of Communications and Public Affairs (see contact info in addendum).

Diocese of Kalamazoo  
Kalamazoo, Michigan

Policy adopted May 17, 2013

Approved by   
Most Reverend Paul J. Bradley  
Bishop of Kalamazoo



SUBJECT: FIRE SAFETY

Appropriate telephone numbers for the police and fire departments will be posted in an accessible location, and all church personnel and staff notified of this location.

Fire drills will be conducted at least 2 times a year. Catechists and children will be familiar with fire alarm signals as well as exit routes.

In case of a drill or actual emergency, church personnel shall take attendance lists with them, and once outside, call roll to account for each child.

During a fire drill, everyone will vacate the building. All windows and doors will be closed.

Fire extinguishers will be serviced yearly, and all staff and personnel shall be instructed as to the location and correct use of extinguishers.

## SUBJECT: DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES FOR VIOLATIONS TO THESE POLICIES/REGULATIONS

Violation of the policies herein is grounds for appropriate discipline, including removal from the catechetical program and/or termination. The disciplinary actions referenced below are to be used subject to the sole discretion of the parish administrators.

If anyone violates any of the policies or guidelines documented here, they may be given adequate time (as determined by the DRE, pastor or diocesan official, in their sole discretion) to correct the situation.

If the violation inflicts immediate danger, potential danger, or harm to a minor the violator will be removed immediately from the ministry while an adequate investigation is done. The office of New Evangelization is to be notified of this investigation and its findings. If danger, potential danger, or harm is found to have been done, the violator is to be permanently removed from the ministry. Names of individuals may be shared through the office of New Evangelization with other parishes, so the volunteer is not allowed to minister with minors at other diocesan parishes if the incident warrants.

If the violation is against the law then the pertinent information will be passed on to pertinent law enforcement agencies.

If anyone has violated and been removed from ministry, information of such violations must be disclosed and explored before the individual may participate in another ministry involving minors within the Diocese of Kalamazoo.

**Appeal**

An appeal may be made to the Diocesan Secretariat of Catholic Education and New Evangelization in writing if the violator believes a mistake has been made. The Secretariat of Catholic Education and New Evangelization will determine whether to hear the appeal and, if so, will investigate the matter and issue a final, binding determination.

Contacts:

Executive Director: Secretariat of Catholic Education and New Evangelization: Margaret Erich,  
[merich@dioceseofkalamazoo.org](mailto:merich@dioceseofkalamazoo.org), (269)-349-8714

PRIMARY CONTACT FOR DRE's, CONFIRMATION COORDINATORS, and YOUTH MINISTERS: Associate Director of  
Catechetics and Youth Ministry: George Dragan, [gdragan@diokzoo.org](mailto:gdragan@diokzoo.org), (269)349-8714

Associate Director, Office of Safe Environment: Marina Hentz-Shoup, [mhentz@diokzoo.org](mailto:mhentz@diokzoo.org) (269)903-0171

Executive Director: Secretariat of Public Affairs and Communication: Vickie Cessna, [vcessna.org](http://vcessna.org), (269)903-0163

Sexual misconduct Questions and Reporting line:

877-802-0115

Michigan Department of Human Services: Child and adult protective services intake number:

855-444-3911