

Archdiocese of Cincinnati

Decree on Child Protection

Summary Brochure

EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2018

Introduction

Although the abuse of children and adolescents is a reality in our society, such abuse, whether physical, sexual, verbal or emotional, whether inflicted by lay or ordained, professionals or volunteers, cannot be tolerated in the Church.

Purpose

The purpose of the *Decree on Child Protection* is two-fold: to prevent the abuse of children and adolescents and to provide a system for handling incidents of abuse after they occur.

This is only a summary of the Decree on Child Protection. The complete document is available by calling the Chancellor's Office at (513) 421-3131, or online at www.CatholicCincinnati.org.



NOTES

GLOSSARY OF TERMS **As Used In This *Decree***

Adult - an individual who is eighteen years of age or older.

Archdiocesan Organization(s) – any subdivision of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Cincinnati, or any Archdiocesan or Religious order, parish, school, office, agency, or other institution, along with any of their sponsored activities, which operate under the administrative authority of the Archbishop.

Child - a person under eighteen years of age; for purposes of this *Decree*, “Child” also includes “Vulnerable Adults,” as defined below.

Child Abuse - any of the following:

- Engaging in any activity prohibited by Ohio Revised Code Chapter 2907 relating to a child;
- Endangering a child as defined by the *Ohio Revised Code*;
- Denying to a child, as a means of punishment, proper or necessary subsistence, education, medical care, or other care necessary to a child for the child’s health;
- Using restraint that causes a child pain or injury;
- Administering prescription drugs or psychotropic medication to a child without written parental approval and the written approval and ongoing supervision of a licensed physician;
- Providing alcoholic beverages or controlled substances to a child. For the purpose of this *Decree on Child Protection*, this does not include the offering of the Precious Blood to someone under the age of 21 within the context of an official Church function;
- Committing of any act, other than by accidental means or by actions taken in self-defense or under similar justifiable circumstances, that results in any injury or death to a child or commission of any act by accidental means that results in any injury or death to a child and that is at variance with the history given about the injury or death;
- Inflicting by any individual of physical or mental injury that threatens to harm a child’s health or welfare.

- Possessing, viewing, distributing, or reproducing Child Pornography, or violating any state or federal law regarding receipt and/or possession of Child Pornography. “Child Pornography” means: any visual depiction, including any photograph, film (whether its developed or not), video, picture, data stored on computer discs or electronically, or computer-generated images or pictures, no matter how it was produced, of sexually explicit conduct; where a) the production of such visual depiction involves the use of a minor (someone under 18 years of age) engaging in sexually explicit conduct; b) such visual depiction is a digital image, computer image, or computer-generated image that is indistinguishable from that of a minor engaging in sexually explicit conduct; c) or a visual depiction has been created, adapted, or modified to appear that an identifiable minor is engaging in sexually explicit conduct.

Employee - any person who is employed by the Archdiocese or an Archdiocesan Organization, as defined above. An employee may be a cleric or a lay person, either of whom may also be a member of a religious institute. The Archbishop utilizes this *Decree* for USCCB charter compliance.

NOTE: All candidates for ordination, clerics, and employees must attend the training program approved by the Archbishop on this Decree before they have contact with children. All employees must complete a B4 form, be physically fingerprinted, and do the on-line background check BEFORE working.

Locations which are governed by State Law such as Ohio Department of Education, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, etc, may be required to follow their requirements regarding background checks.

Volunteer - for purposes of this *Decree*, a “volunteer” is an adult who is not a cleric or employee (for example, a catechist, scout leader, coach, server coordinator, parent interns, student teachers and others in similar capacities etc.) who function in any capacity to assist in activities with children. This includes all adults accompanying children on any overnight activity.

NOTE: All volunteers must attend the training program approved by the Archbishop on this Decree before they have contact with children. All volunteers

must do the on-line background check BEFORE working.

Locations which are governed by State Law such as Ohio Department of Education, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, etc, may be required to follow their requirements regarding background checks.

Vulnerable Adult - any person 18 years of age or older whose ability to physically protect him/herself from any form of abuse (as defined in this *Decree*) is impaired due to a persistent mental, physical, cognitive or developmental disability.

Policies Aimed at Preventing Child Abuse

- Except when civil law explicitly permits certain persons (for example, licensed social workers) to counsel children without parental consent, a child may receive scheduled, individual instruction or counseling from a cleric, employee, or volunteer only with the written consent of the child's parent.
- A child may participate in an organized program or activity sponsored by the Archdiocese or an Archdiocesan Organization only with the written consent of the child's parent on a standard *Permission, Release and Medical Power of Attorney* form (available on line at the Archdiocese website at: www.catholiccincinnati.org). Such written consent should provide for emergency care of the child, as warranted by the program or activity.
- For any organized program or activity sponsored by the Archdiocese or an Archdiocesan Organization, at least two adults, both of whom have successfully completed a training program approved by the Archbishop and background check through fingerprinting or otherwise in a manner approved by the Chancellor in accord with the current policies of the Archdiocese, and who are not related to each other or living in the same household, must be present for any activity including, but not limited to, after school tutoring of any sort (whether the tutor is hired by the parents or not).
 - a) Moreover, the number and gender of the adults are to be in proportion to the age, number, and gender of the participants, and the duration and difficulty of the activity. Prudence is required in applying this policy to different age groups, length of activity, and the risk level of the activity. (i) A ratio of 1:10

is recommended; (ii) Whenever there is a mixed group of boys and girls it is preferred that one adult of each gender is present. The proportion of male/female chaperones should be similar to the proportion of the children; (iii) Single gender athletics must have at least one adult of the same gender as the players (e.g., in case of injury or illness requiring attention in a rest room).

- b) Whenever possible, one of the adults should be a parent of a participant.
- c) Exceptions for this C.3 Policy are only allowed for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, regular day-school or religion classes conducted on the grounds of the Archdiocese or any Archdiocesan Organization, and if, for unanticipated reasons, only one adult can actually be present for an activity which is not overnight.
- d) For purposes of this C.3 Policy only, “adult” excludes 18 and 19 year olds not yet graduated from high school and others who have graduated from high school but who wish to attend activities with members of their high school class during the three months following their graduation with others who are less than 18 years of age, i.e. mission trips, High School summer sports, etc.

This C.3 Policy must be adhered to strictly for any overnight activity; otherwise said activity must be cancelled.

- No child may be disciplined corporally or corrected with abusive language.
- A cleric, employee, or volunteer must obtain the consent of the child’s parent before inviting or allowing a child to visit in the adult’s home. If the adult has little or no advance notice of the visit, and another adult is present, such consent is not required.
- Responsible supervisors are to ensure that the policies of schools, education programs, youth, athletic and scouting groups, and the like provide for implementation of the first four policies listed above, including the definition of responsibility for enforcement. The names of all responsible supervisors for any extracurricular activities shall be clearly stated on materials given to parents when any child is signed up to attend such events.
- Clerics, employees, and volunteers will use prudence when

communicating with a child including, but not limited to, written communications, electronic messaging, the Internet, online services, e-mails, instant messaging, online bulletin boards, social networking sites, social media, text messaging, pod casts, blogs, chat areas, and telephones, including cell phones. Appropriate and ethical communication boundaries in ministry must always be observed. Any form of communication that is intended to inappropriately manipulate a child or that incorporates any suggestive language, suggestive photos, sexual innuendos, inappropriate personal self-disclosures, etc., is forbidden. This includes visual, digital, or electronic communications in any format.

Behavior Expectations

These are behavior expectations of adults who are priests, deacons, auxiliary services personnel, personnel furnished by a third party contractor, employees and all volunteers of the Archdiocese and its subdivisions.

Emotional boundaries: In addition to physical boundaries that must be set, emotional boundaries must be created between children and any person who is bound by this *Decree*. Examples of emotional boundary violations include:

- Compliments that relate to physique or body development;
- Meeting alone in locations away from a parish, school, agency, institution, or other Archdiocesan Organization;
- Meeting alone in remote locations on the property of a parish, school, agency or other Archdiocesan Organization;
- Calling, e-mailing, or texting a child for purposes other than those directly related to academics or ministry;
- Displaying and/or taking excessive photographs of a child;
- Engaging in sexually oriented conversations not related to education or ministry;
- Privately contacting a child by social media for any purpose.

Prohibited physical contact: Some forms of physical contact have been used by adults to initiate inappropriate contact with children. In order to maintain the safest possible environment for children, the following are examples of physical contact prohibited from use by priests, deacons, auxiliary services personnel, personnel furnished by third party contractors, employees, and all volunteers:

- Any physical contact that the child resists; any touching without the permission of the child;
- Any form of unwanted affection;
- Inappropriate, forceful or lengthy embraces, and/or “bear hugs;”

- Kisses;
- Lap-sitting;
- Touching buttocks, chest, knees, thighs or genital areas;
- Placing hands in the pockets of a child;
- Showing affection in isolated areas such as bedrooms, closets, adult-only or staff-only areas or other private rooms;
- Laying down, cuddling or sleeping near a child;
- Being in bed with a child at any time;
- Wrestling;
- Tickling;
- Piggyback rides;
- Massage given by an adult to a child;
- Massage given by a child to an adult;
- Stroking the hair or shoulders of a child;
- Any activity with a sexual connotation.

Prohibited behaviors: In addition, priests, deacons, auxiliary services personnel, personnel furnished by third party contractors, employees and all volunteers are prohibited from the following:

- Using, possessing, or being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drugs while working with children;
- Offering a child cigarettes, other smoking materials, or tobacco products, alcohol or illegal drugs, or allowing a child to use or consume these items;
- Encouraging or allowing a child to visit inappropriate, sexual, or violent internet websites;
- Providing a child with gifts/money without the permission of parents unless when distributed equitably to all children (for example, buying inexpensive gifts for all the altar servers);
- Ridiculing beliefs held by a child's parents;
- Asking a child to keep secrets from the child's parents;
- Speaking to a child in a way that is or could be construed by any observer as harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning or humiliating;
- Using bad language, swearing and/or cursing in the presence of a child;
- Behaving rudely in the presence of a child;
- Possessing any sexually-oriented or morally inappropriate materials (e.g. magazines, cards, videos, films, DVDs, clothing, etc.) in the presence of a child;
- Engaging in, viewing, and/or listening to child pornography, possessing child pornography on any personal electronic device, or on any electronic device owned by the Archdiocese or an Archdiocesan Organization;

- Being nude in the presence of a child; exposing a person's genital or erogenous zones in the presence of a child including, but not limited to, buttocks, pubic regions, or chest;
- Engaging in sexual contact with a child. Sexual contact is defined as vaginal intercourse, anal intercourse, oral intercourse, or the touching of any erogenous zone of another including, but not limited to the thighs, genitals, buttocks, pubic region or chest for the purposes of sexually arousing or gratifying either person;
- Any overnight activity that does not provide for separate rooms for chaperones and children.

Matters related to transporting children: If it becomes necessary for any priest, deacon, auxiliary services personnel, personnel furnished by a third party contractor, employee or volunteer to provide transportation for children, the following guidelines must be strictly observed:

- Priests, deacons, auxiliary services personnel, personnel furnished by a third party contractor, employees, and volunteers must **never transport one child alone**. There should be at least two adults in every vehicle that transports children. In exceptional situations, it may be permitted for one adult to transport children in a vehicle, provided a caravan of vehicles goes directly from point A to point B, with no stops in between;
- When traveling in a caravan there must be a minimum of one adult in every vehicle. If a vehicle is traveling alone, there must be at least two adults in the vehicle;
- Children must be directly transported to their destination, or make only previously planned stops (e.g. stopping for food or gas on a long trip). If an emergency stop must be made, all reasonable efforts must be made to ensure that two adults are present (e.g. calling another car in the caravan to pull over as well);
- Children must never be transported without written permission from the child's parent;
- Clerics, auxiliary services personnel, personnel furnished by a third party contractor, employees, and any volunteers must comply with the other provisions in C.9 with children while in the vehicle.

Proper Response to Actual or Suspected Child Abuse

Reporting to Civil Authorities

The Archdiocese will comply with all applicable civil laws with respect to reporting allegations of known or suspected abuse of children, or use or possession of child pornography to Civil

Authorities. The full cooperation of the Archdiocese will be offered. Ohio law ***requires*** all persons acting in an official or professional capacity to immediately report any actual or suspected act of child abuse to the public children's service agency or to a municipal or county peace officer in the county where the child resides or where the abuse or neglect is occurring.

The Archdiocese encourages all persons to immediately report any actual or suspected acts of child abuse to Civil Authorities.

An allegation of child abuse which is made by someone who chooses to remain anonymous must be reported to the Civil Authorities in the same way as an allegation made by someone who chooses not to remain anonymous.

Signs of abuse or neglect

If you observe that a child is exhibiting any one of the signs of child abuse or neglect, be aware that the presence of any one of the signs does not confirm abuse or neglect. However, the presence of these signs is reason to discuss concerns or observations with the staff person to whom the volunteer or employee is responsible.

Acts of abuse perpetrated by a cleric, employee or volunteer of the Archdiocese

Any cleric, employee or volunteer, who observes another cleric, employee, or other volunteer behaving in a manner which may pose a potential risk to a child is to report the matter to the Civil Authorities and must comply with all applicable laws. In such cases, if abuse is suspected or observed, all persons who suspect or observe the abuse shall follow the Section II Response provisions of this Decree.

Any cleric, employee or volunteer, whether obligated by state law to report to the Civil Authorities or not, who witnesses an act of child abuse perpetrated by another cleric, employee or volunteer or suspects that such an act has occurred or receives a report of such an act, must immediately report the incident to the Chancellor at (513) 421-3131.

Potentially abusive behavior

Any cleric, employee or volunteer who observes another cleric, employee or volunteer behaving in a manner which may pose a potential risk to a child is to report the matter to the Civil Authorities and must comply with all applicable civil laws.

Types of Child Abuse

Physical abuse is any non-accidental physical injury to a child caused by an adult which results in or threatens serious injury. Often adults who physically abuse children do not intend to seriously injure the children but get carried away by anger and frustration in their own lives.

Signs of physical abuse include:

- A child has unexplained burns, bruises, broken bones, black eyes.
- A child has fading bruises after an absence from class or regularly scheduled activity.
- Unusual shyness, wariness of physical contact.
- A child reports injury from adult.

Sexual abuse is any sexual activity upon or with a child. The act may be for the sexual gratification of the perpetrator or a third party. Other terms for sexual abuse include child molestation, incest (if the abuser is a member of the child's family) or child pornography. Often the child knows the abuser.

Signs of sexual abuse include:

- A child exhibits change in behavior such as loss of appetite, nightmares, inability to sleep or withdrawal from usual activities and peer relationships.
- A child returns to bedwetting or thumb sucking.
- A child has genital pain, itching, swelling or bleeding.
- A child indicates fear of a person or an intense dislike of being left somewhere or with a particular person.
- A child shows unusual interest in or knowledge of sexual matters, expressing affection in ways inappropriate for a child of his or her age.

Neglect is the failure of a parent or guardian to provide a child with adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care, education or supervision. Neglect is a chronic problem often resulting, not from poverty, but from lack of knowledge as to the proper care required by children.

Signs of neglect include:

- A child is frequently absent.
- A child begs or steals food or money.
- A child lacks medical or dental care, glasses (if needed) and immunizations.
- A child lacks sufficient clothing.

- A child is consistently dirty and has severe body odor/poor hygiene.
- A child abuses alcohol or drugs.
- A child states that no one provides care.
- A child assuming adult responsibilities.

Emotional abuse is an important factor in all forms of child abuse. To be hurt so much by someone who should care and protect is very damaging to the emotional development of a child. Adults who do not physically harm a child may cause emotional harm by using words that threaten, harshly criticize, ridicule or harass.

Signs of emotional abuse include:

- A child shows extremes in behavior.
- A child is either inappropriately adult or infantile.
- A child is delayed in physical or emotional development.
- A child has attempted suicide.
- A child reports lack of attachment to parents.
- A child is exhibiting extremes of behavior, overly anxious to please, to assume blame or extremely passive or aggressive, demanding or undemanding.

**Contact Numbers to
Report Allegations of Child Abuse
Resources: County Children’s Protective Services**

| | | |
|-------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| Adams County | Children’s Services | 937.544.2511 |
| Auglaize County | Dept. of Job and Family Services | 567.242.2700 |
| | | 419.739.6505 |
| | Sheriff’s Office (After Hours) | 419.739.2147 |
| Brown County | Dept. of Jobs and Family Services | 937.378.6104 |
| | Sheriff’s Office (After Hours) | 937.378.4435 |
| Butler County | Children’s Services | 513.887.4055 |
| Champaign County | Job and Family Services | 937.484.1500 |
| Clark County | Family and Children Services (intake) | 937.327.1748 |
| | (After Hours) | 836.328.2560 |
| Clermont County | Children’s Protective Services and Adult | 513.732.7173 |
| | (After Hours-Dispatch) | 513.732.7867 |
| Clinton County | Child Protection Unit | 937.382.5935 |
| | (After Hours) | 937.382.2449 |
| Darke County | Job and Family Services | 937.548.4132 |
| | Sheriff’s Office (After Hours) | 937.548.2020 |
| Greene County | Children’s Services | 937.562.6600 |
| | (After Hours) | 937.372.4357 |
| | From Fairborn | 937.878.1415 |
| | (After Hours) | 937.879.4357 |
| Hamilton County | Children’s Protective Services (Hotline) | 513.241.KIDS (513.241.5437) |
| Highland County | Children’s Services Agency | 937.393.3111 |
| | Sheriff’s Office (After Hours) | 937.393.1421 |
| Logan County | Children’s Services | 937.599.7290 |
| Mercer County | Dept. of Job and Family Services | 419.586.5106 |
| | Sheriff’s Office (After Hours) | 419.586.7724 |
| Miami County | Children’s Services | 937.335.4103 |
| | (After Hours-Goes to 911 Center) | 937.339.6400 |
| Montgomery County | Children Services Division | 937.224.5437 |
| Preble County | Dept. of Job and Family Services | 937.456.1135 |
| Shelby County | Dept. of Job and Family Services | 937.498.4981 |
| | Sheriff’s Office (After Hours) | 937.498.1111 |
| Warren County | Children Services | 513.695.1546 |
| | (After Hours) | 513.695.1600 |

**If the number is not listed as a HOTLINE,
ask for the Children’s Intake Worker before beginning the report.**