

POLICIES FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH FROM ABUSE: DIOCESE OF OHIO.

These policies will govern all ministry with children and youth at Diocesan events and activities effective October 1, 2010 and all parishes are strongly urged to adopt similar policies as soon as possible. In advance of every diocesan children and youth event, the diocese will designate and list for that event an appropriate number of Adult Event Leaders (adults over 21 in charge of the event) and Adult Volunteers (adults over 18 working as chaperones, drivers, helpers, etc.)

1. All Adult Event Leaders and Adult Volunteers who work with children or youth must complete and submit to the Office for Congregations and Christian Formation a completed *Adult Event Leader and Adult Volunteer Participant Form* (Appendix A) and the *Driver's Declaration Form*, if applicable, (Appendix B) prior to the event. Such forms will be considered valid for a period of one calendar year.
2. No lay person will be allowed to participate as an Adult Event Leader until the person has been known to a congregation and its clergy for at least six months.
3. Programs for infants and children under six (6) years old will ensure that children are released only to their parents or legal guardians or those designated by them.
4. Adult Event Leaders and Adult Volunteers are prohibited from the use, possession, distribution, or being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or the misuse of legal drugs while participating in or assisting with programs or activities of the Diocese of Ohio.
5. Parents or guardians must complete written consent form before Adult Event Leaders and Adult Volunteers transport children and youth.
6. Adult Event Leaders and Adult Volunteers will respond to children and youth with respect, consideration and equal treatment, regardless of sex, race, religion, sexual orientation, culture or socio-economic status. Adult Event Leaders and Adult Volunteers will portray a positive role model for children and youth by maintaining an attitude of respect, patience, and maturity.

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7. One-to-one counseling with children or youth will be done in an open or public or other place where private conversations are possible but occur in full view of others.

8. Adult Event Leaders and Adult Volunteers are prohibited from dating or becoming romantically involved with a child or youth.

9. Adult Event Leaders and Adult Volunteers are prohibited from having sexual contact with a child or youth.

10. Adult Event Leaders and Adult Volunteers are prohibited from possessing any sexually oriented materials (magazines, cards, videos, films, clothing etc.) at diocesan events or activities or in the presence of children or youth except as expressly permitted as part of a pre-authorized educational program.

11. Adult Event Leaders and Adult Volunteers are prohibited from using the internet to view or download any sexually oriented materials at diocesan events or activities or in the presence of children or youth.

12. Adult Event Leaders and Adult Volunteers are prohibited from discussing their own sexual activities, including dreams and fantasies, or discussing their use of sexually oriented or explicit materials such as pornography, videos, or materials on or from the internet, with children or youth.

13. Adult Event Leaders and Adult Volunteers are prohibited from sleeping in the same beds, sleeping bags, tents, hotel rooms, or other rooms with children or youth unless the adult is an immediate family member of all children or youth in the bed, sleeping bag, tent, hotel room or other room. It is acceptable to have multiple adults sleep with all the children or youth participating in one open space such as a church basement or camp lodge.

14. Adult Event Leaders and Adult Volunteers are prohibited from dressing, undressing, bathing, or showering in the presence of children or youth.

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15. Adult Event Leaders and Adult Volunteers are prohibited from using physical punishment in any way for behavior management of children and youth. No form of physical discipline is acceptable. This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force. Physical force may only be used to stop a behavior that may cause immediate harm to the individual or to a child, youth or others.

16. Adult Event Leaders and Adult Volunteers are prohibited from using profane language, degrading punishment, or mechanical restraint such as rope or tape for behavior management.

17. Adult Event Leaders and Adult Volunteers are prohibited from participating in or allowing others to conduct any hazing activities relating to children's or youth ministry or camp activities.

18. Adult Event Leaders and Adult Volunteers are prohibited from being alone with a child or youth, or multiple children and youth, where other adults cannot easily observe them.

19. There will always be a minimum of two Adult Event Leaders at a diocesan event or activity and a minimum ratio of one adult (including Adult Volunteers) to ten children or youth when the number of children or youth surpasses ten.

20. Bathrooms and sleeping spaces will be clearly designated.

21. A *Safeguarding God's Children* training will be offered at the parish hosting a diocesan event or activity prior to the event or activity.

22. All Adult Event Leaders will have been criminal background checks prior to each event or activity unless record of the same is on file at the Office for Congregations and Christian Formation and is no more than one year old.

23. The Sex Offender Registry will be checked before each event or activity for All Adult Event Leaders and Adult Volunteers.

I. Guidelines for Appropriate Affection

The following guidelines are to be carefully followed by all Adult Event Leaders and Adult Volunteers at diocesan events and activities with children or youth.

1. Love and affection are part of church life and ministry. There are many ways to demonstrate affection while maintaining positive and safe boundaries with children and youth.

Some **positive** and **appropriate** forms of affection are listed below:

- ✓ Brief hugs
- ✓ Pats on the shoulder or back
- ✓ Handshakes
- ✓ “High-fives” and hand slapping
- ✓ Verbal praise
- ✓ Touching hands, faces, shoulders and arms of children or youth
- ✓ Arms around shoulders
- ✓ Holding hands while walking with small children
- ✓ Sitting beside small children
- ✓ Kneeling or bending down for hugs with small children
- ✓ Holding hands during prayer
- ✓ Pats on the head when culturally appropriate. (For example, this gesture should typically be avoided in some Asian communities).

2. The following forms of affection are considered **inappropriate** with children and youth in ministry setting because many of them are the behaviors that child molesters use to groom children or youth and their parents for later molestation or can be, in and of themselves, sexual abuse.

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- ✓ Inappropriate or lengthy embraces
- ✓ Kisses on the mouth
- ✓ Holding children over three years old on the lap
- ✓ Touching bottoms, chests or genital areas other than for appropriate diapering or toileting of infants and toddlers
- ✓ Showing affection in isolated areas such as bedrooms, closets, staff only areas or other private rooms
- ✓ Occupying a bed with a child or youth
- ✓ Touching knees or legs of children or youth
- ✓ Wrestling with children or youth
- ✓ Tickling children or youth
- ✓ Piggyback rides
- ✓ Any type of massage given by a child or youth to an adult
- ✓ Any type of massage given by an adult to a child or youth
- ✓ Any form of unwanted affection
- ✓ Comments or compliments (spoken, written, or electronic) that relate to physique or body development. Examples would be, "You sure are developing," or "You look really hot in those jeans."
- ✓ Snapping bras or giving wedgies or similar touch of underwear whether or not it is covered by other clothing
- ✓ Giving gifts or money to individual children or youth
- ✓ Private meals with individual children or youth