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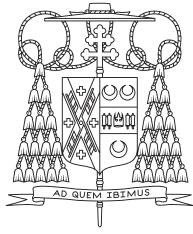
GUIDELINES AND POLICIES

*For Parish Catholic Youth Ministry
in the Archdiocese of New York*



ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK

The Archdiocese of New York would like to acknowledge and thank the archdioceses of Cincinnati, Galveston-Houston and Seattle, and the dioceses of Columbus and Dallas, for their assistance and the permission to use many of their policies for our guide. Our adaptation of the Code of Ethics for Youth Ministry Leaders is used with permission from the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry.



OFFICE OF THE CARDINAL
1011 FIRST AVENUE
NEW YORK, NY 10022

March 2, 2020

Dear Partners in Youth Ministry,

My sincere gratitude for investing your time, talent, and treasure in our young people!

You often hear that “youth are the future of the Church.” However, they are not just the *future*, they are also the *present* Church! You are keenly aware of this reality, and for that I thank you.

As we seek to foster the spiritual growth of our young people, we must remain readily aware of our responsibility to also ensure their safety. This safety includes their physical, spiritual, and emotional well-being. Thus, I am pleased to present the *Guidelines and Policies for Parish Catholic Youth Ministry in the Archdiocese of New York*. The policies and procedures contained herein are designed “to assist adult leaders in forming sound practices and judgments in the various aspects of their ministry [and] to ensure the safety of the young people in their groups and activities and to minimize risks to their well-being.” In this manual you will find both policies (required) and best practices (suggestions) for your ministry, which will help guide you and all those who work with you in creating fruitful opportunities for encounter and formation in ways that ensure all aspects of the young person’s safety.

This manual is the result of countless hours of work, and the collaboration of the Departments of Youth Faith Formation, Safe Environment, Catholic Mutual Insurance, and Legal Affairs, as well as practitioners in the field of youth ministry. I am confident that the successful implementation of these policies and guidelines will help to ensure the safety and well-being of all young people in our parishes.

My hope is that this proves to be a valuable handbook for every aspect of your ministry by, with, and to youth in our great archdiocese.

With gratitude for all you do, and prayerful best wishes, I am,

Faithfully in Christ,

† Timothy Michael Cardinal Dolan
Archbishop of New York

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OVERVIEW OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The policies and guidelines contained in this handbook have been written to provide information and guidance to youth ministry leaders of the Archdiocese of New York. It is a resource to assist adult leaders in forming sound practices and judgments in the various aspects of their ministry. The policies and procedures are not intended primarily to limit activities; rather, they direct youth ministry leaders to develop and take necessary measures to ensure the safety of the young people in their groups and activities and minimize risks to their well-being.

This manual is in no way a replacement for the archdiocesan Safe Environment Policy Manual. It is a supplement. The Safe Environment Policy Manual needs to be read first, in its entirety. This handbook contains both archdiocesan policies, such as those related to safe environment, and guidelines. Policies in this manual are highlighted in red while best practices are highlighted in blue. Adult leaders ministering under the auspices of the Catholic Church in this archdiocese must comply with all policies regardless of what program they are running (for example, LifeTeen, YDisciple) or what ministry/order (for example, CYFM, PTAF, Salesian) the parish might be affiliated with. Addenda and updates to policies will be distributed directly to the

pastors who are responsible for adult leaders ministering to youth.

By following these provisions and the spirit in which they are written, adults who lead youth ministry demonstrate their good faith and their intention to minister ethically, responsibly and within the bounds of the law.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

The archdiocese's primary concern is the safety of everyone involved in our youth ministry programs. This concern takes many forms: clear communication of information on the nature of anticipated activities and any associated risks; adequate adult supervision, including any necessary training; proper maintenance of facilities to reduce the possibility of injury; and more.

These guidelines and policies may seem overwhelming at first, but planning for the safety of our youth is an act of caring. Many experienced youth ministry leaders have found that after a short while, these practices become second nature.

At all times, the Safe Environment Program of the Archdiocese of New York must be followed. For questions about the provisions of this program, please call the Safe Environment Office at 646-794-2807.

PERSONNEL

DEFINITIONS

Youth/Young Person/Minor

These terms will be used to describe anyone under the age of 18 **and those aged 18 or over who are still in high school.**

Policy: Those 18 or older but still in high school and those considered vulnerable adults **are to be regarded as minors** for the purposes of these policies. An adult who habitually lacks the use of reason or a person of any age who lacks the capacity to give consent due to a mental/developmental condition/disability is also considered a minor for the purposes of these policies. “Vos Estis” defines *vulnerable person* as “any person in a state of infirmity, physical or mental deficiency, or deprivation of personal liberty which, in fact, even occasionally, limits their ability to understand or to want or otherwise resist the offence.”

Youth Ministry Coordinator

Any individual, lay or ordained, who serves with the authorization of a pastor as a coordinator/director of a ministry with, to and/or by youth.

This may be a paid or unpaid position. Titles in the parish setting may include, but are not limited to, director of youth ministry, youth ministry coordinator. Responsibilities in this area are often also included in the work of directors/coordinators of religious education, coordinators of confirmation, etc. The persons filling these positions must be least 21 years of age and able to supervise minors within safe environment policies and the guidelines outlined in this manual.

Ministry Team Member

An individual, lay or ordained, who serves within a parish-structured ministry to youth.

This term is not linked to age, but to role. This role may include organizing activities to evangelize and catechize youth, facilitating small group discussions, leading prayer or providing direction for an activity or retreat. Ministry team members are typically volunteers from the faith community.

Supervising Adult Team Member/Adult Team Member

A ministry team member at least 21 years of age who is able to supervise minors within the safe environment policies and the guidelines outlined in this manual.

These individuals engage with young people on a regular basis by committing to participate in activities such as youth nights, service experiences, and retreats. Supervising adult team members/adult team members are typical volunteers from the faith community.

Occasional Adult Helper

An individual, lay or ordained, who serves within a parish-structured ministry to youth. This role is typically filled by a volunteer from the faith community. Helpers are not committed to ministering with young people regularly but assist on an as-needed basis. This could include chaperoning, preparing meals or giving a presentation.

Chaperone

This term applies to adults at least 21 years of age whose sole role is to provide supervision.

Chaperones who are serving within the ministry are ministry team members. Those used for a special event are occasional adult helpers.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Relationships among people are the foundation of Christian ministry and are central to our life as a church. Our standards pay particular attention to those whose ministry calls them to work with minors, to ensure they do this important work in a manner that is genuine and respectful.

Parish youth ministry is not a separate “club” within the parish but a fundamental ministry of the church to all the young people in the parish community. In light of this, youth ministry programs need to reflect the mission of the Church and vision of the pastor.

Best Practice: Youth ministry coordinator should meet with the pastor monthly to discuss past events and upcoming programs to ensure he is aware of the direction of the ministry, share any concerns, and seek insight.

Best Practice: Embrace the principle of “no surprises.” The pastor should never be surprised to hear about any incident or event from anyone but the youth ministry coordinator. When the time is appropriate, the youth ministry coordinator should contact the pastor.

Policy: Follow the principle of “going one up.” Confidentiality does not mean secrecy. Going one up means sharing with your supervisor (e.g. pastor, pastoral associate, DRE, youth ministry coordinator) difficult conversations with and/or concerns for young people and/or their parents. This practice helps to ensure healthy decision-making, contextualizing of issues within the larger family situations, and awareness of the pastor to potential situations.

The following ethical standards upheld by the Archdiocese of New York are based on principles of integrity articulated by the National Federation of Catholic Youth Ministry as essential to effective ministry leadership.

- Ministry team members shall exhibit the highest ethical standards and personal integrity reflective of the

- teachings of the Gospel and shall avoid even the appearance of impropriety.
- Ministry team members shall at all times conduct themselves in a professional manner, including by developing and maintaining a level of professional competence commensurate with their ministerial duties.
 - Ministry team members shall witness God’s love for every person by showing sensitivity, reverence, and respect for each individual with and to whom they minister.
 - Ministry team members shall be conscious of the unique power they have in relationships due to the trust they are given and the visibility of their witness and leadership.
 - Ministry team members, whether paid or unpaid, are obligated to comply with archdiocesan policies related to protection of minors, including Safe Environment Policies, the Policy on Sexual Misconduct, the Code of Ethics for Youth Ministry Leaders, and the Code of Conduct for Employees and Volunteers Working with Children and Young People.
 - Ministry team members, as people of God, share actively in the ministry of Christ and the Church by living lives of Christian witness and by proclaiming the message of the Gospel in word and deed. They share in the mission God has entrusted to the Church to fulfill in the world, in accord with the gifts and talents they possess. These gifts and talents are shared with all members of the Church, thus providing for the continual building up of the Kingdom of God.

Policy: All adult team members and regular ministry team members aged 18-20 must read and sign the Code of Ethics for Youth Ministry Leaders. A copy will be placed in their personnel file. A copy of this Code of Ethics is found in the back under “Forms.”

Code of Ethics for Youth Ministry Leaders

The National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry has developed the following code of ethics for youth ministry leaders. The Archdiocese of New York has adapted this code. The code is for youth ministry leaders regardless of employment status. This code is to be used in conjunction with existing archdiocesan policies, protocols or codes.

Professional Ethical Obligations

- I. Ministerial Role – Youth ministry leaders:
 - a. Work collaboratively with the pastor (and/or other supervisors) and associates in ministry.
 - b. Faithfully represent the teachings of the Catholic Church with integrity in word and action.
 - c. Are competent and receive education and training commensurate with their role(s) and responsibilities (§ 231, Code of Canon Law).

- d. Respect the diversity of spiritualities in the faith community and will not make their personal form of spirituality normative.
- II. Inclusion – Youth ministry leaders:
 - a. Recognize the dignity of each person and refrain from behaviors or words that are disrespectful of anyone or any group.
 - b. Serve all people without regard to sex, creed, national origin, race, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, marital status, socioeconomic status, immigration status or political beliefs.
 - c. Ensure all persons have access to the resources, services and opportunities they require with particular regard for persons with special needs or disabilities.
 - d. Exercise intercultural competency in their ministries.
- III. Accountability – Youth ministry leaders:
 - a. Are accountable to the pastor or other duly appointed representative, under the authority of the archbishop.
 - b. Are called to serve the faith community, carrying out their ministerial functions “...conscientiously, zealously, and diligently” (§ 231, Code of Canon Law).
 - c. Exercise responsible stewardship of resources while holding themselves to the highest standards of integrity regarding the fiscal matters placed in their trust.
 - d. Upon having reasonable cause to suspect abuse of a minor, must notify the appropriate civil authorities, including law enforcement, the local District Attorney’s Office and/or the New York Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment, as well as church leadership responsible for responding to alleged abuse, including either the director of the Safe Environment Office or the general counsel of the Office of Legal Affairs, in accordance with civil law, ecclesial law and the archdiocesan Policy on Sexual Misconduct.
- IV. Confidentiality – Youth ministry leaders:
 - a. Respect confidentiality, yet are not held to confidentiality in the same way as ordained ministers and licensed, certified counselors.
 - b. Adhere to civil and ecclesial law concerning the reporting of neglect and abuse or when physical harm could come to another person. There is no confidentiality where there is a reasonable suspicion that abuse of a minor is, has or will occur.
 - c. Support the rights and roles of parents while ministering to the needs and concerns of their children.
- V. Conduct – Youth ministry leaders:
 - a. Know that they have considerable personal power because of their ministerial position. Therefore, they will sustain respectful ministerial

relationships, avoiding manipulation and other abuses of power.

- b. Maintain appropriate professional boundaries (e.g., physical, sexual, spiritual, relational and emotional). Romantic, dating or sexual relationships between a youth ministry leader and any youth is inappropriate, unethical, illegal and impermissible.
 - c. Shall exhibit the highest ethical standards and personal integrity reflective of the Gospel and will avoid even the appearance of impropriety.
 - d. Shall not use alcohol while supervising youth; shall never use illicit substances; and shall never provide alcohol or illicit substances to youth.
 - e. Shall not share, show, watch or discuss any sexually suggestive materials, including pornographic videos and images, with minors.
- VI. Referrals and Intervention – Youth ministry leaders:
- a. Know the signs of neglect and physical, sexual, and psychological abuse.
 - i. Indicators of physical abuse can include: injuries to the eyes or both sides of the head or body, frequently appearing injuries such as bruises, cuts and/or burns, especially if the child is unable to provide an adequate explanation of the cause. These may appear in distinctive patterns such as grab marks, human bite marks, cigarette burns or impressions of other instruments; destructive, aggressive or disruptive behavior; passive, withdrawn or emotionless behavior; and fear of going home or fear of parent(s).
 - ii. Indicators of sexual abuse can include: symptoms of sexually transmitted diseases; injury to genital area; difficulty and/or pain when sitting or walking; sexually suggestive, inappropriate or promiscuous behavior or verbalization; expressing age-inappropriate knowledge of sexual relations; and sexual victimization of other children.
 - iii. Indicators of maltreatment can include: obvious malnourishment, listlessness or fatigue; stealing or begging for food; lack of personal care – poor personal hygiene, torn and/or dirty clothes; untreated need for glasses, dental care or other medical attention; frequent absence from or tardiness to school; and a child inappropriately left unattended or without supervision.
 - b. Know their limitations with respect to paraprofessional counseling and make appropriate referrals.
- VII. Parish/Diocesan Policies – Youth ministry leaders:
- a. Know of and comply with all applicable parish, organizational and/or archdiocesan policies, with special attention to sexual misconduct, safe

environment, risk management, safety, transportation, parental permission and medical emergency policies.

References

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- Gula, Richard (1996). *Ethics in Pastoral Ministry*. New York: Paulist Press.
- National Association for Lay Ministry Standards Code of Ethics. Downloaded from the Internet on October 16, 2002, at www.nalm.org/standards.html.
- National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry's Organizational Code of Conduct. March 2000.
- NALM, NCCL, and NFCYM (September 29, 2002). *Common Competency Project Core Certification Standards and Competencies*. Draft 3. Copyright ©2008 by the NFCYM, 415 Michigan Avenue NE, Suite 40, Washington DC 20017. All rights reserved. The NFCYM grants permission to Catholic dioceses and parishes to reproduce and distribute this document for educational purposes. Approved by the NFCYM membership February 2008. Adapted with permission July 2019.

FORMATION AND KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Youth Ministry Coordinator

- I. Safe Environment Formation
- a. **Policy:** Prior to starting in youth ministry, the youth ministry coordinator must successfully complete the screening process, which includes a background check and Safe Environment Questionnaire. He/she must complete the “VIRTUS: Protecting God’s Children” safe environment training within 45 days of starting youth ministry. If a youth ministry coordinator is arrested or informed that he/she is under investigation by any law enforcement agency, he/she must immediately disclose this to the Safe Environment Office.
 - b. **Policy:** The youth ministry coordinator must know, follow and comply with all archdiocesan Safe Environment Policies, Policies on Sexual Misconduct and the Code of Conduct found at archny.org/safe-environment-program, as well as the policies in this manual.
 - c. **Policy:** The youth ministry coordinator will renew his/her background check at intervals established by the Safe Environment Office.
 - d. If a supervising adult team member is arrested or informed that he or she is under investigation by any law enforcement agency, he/she must immediately disclose this to the Safe Environment Office.
- II. Ministry Formation
- a. **Policy:** The youth ministry coordinator must complete the Office of Youth Ministry Starting Smart course within the first 15 months of ministry in this archdiocese.
 - b. The youth ministry coordinator is expected to participate in ongoing annual formation.

- c. **Best Practice:** The youth ministry coordinator completes a CPR/first aid course and keeps certification renewed.
 - d. **Best Practice:** The youth ministry coordinator engages in ongoing ministerial and spiritual formation regardless of certification level or experience.
- III. Key Responsibilities of the Youth Ministry Coordinator
- a. **Policy:** Work under the authorization and authority of a pastor to coordinate an adult team to direct programs and services to and with young people that reflect the principles found in the U.S. Bishops' document *Renewing the Vision* and the needs and gifts of the parish community.
 - b. **Policy:** Monitor adult volunteers for compliance with safe environment policies, general youth ministry policies of the archdiocese and applicable local and federal laws.
 - c. **Policy:** Annually report to the parish safe environment coordinator a list of all adults engaged in youth ministry in the parish.
 - d. **Policy:** Review the safe environment compliance (background checks, etc.) of adult team members at least twice a year.
 - e. **Policy:** Maintain records and forms.
 - f. **Policy:** Follow the principle of "going one up" as outlined earlier.
 - g. Foster an environment where young people can encounter Christ and grow in their Catholic faith.
 - h. Build healthy relationships with youth of the parish.
 - i. Provide tools, resources, and programs that help families grow in their faith together.
 - j. Minister as a teaching representative of the Church.
 - k. Communicate frequently with the pastor or an individual designated by the pastor regarding youth ministry events, successes and issues.
 - l. Develop and publish an annual calendar of activities.
 - m. Ensure clear communication of youth ministry events and programs to parish leadership, parents and youth.
 - n. Actively communicate with the archdiocesan Office of Youth Ministry.
 - o. Provide resources and professional referrals to parents and youth as needed.
 - p. Collaborate with the parish religious education office and other ministries.
 - q. Operate within an established budget; monitors and fully accounts for spending and receipts.

Supervising Adult Team Member

- I. Safe Environment Formation
 - a. **Policy:** Prior to beginning in youth ministry, supervising adult team members must successfully

complete a background check and the Safe Environment Questionnaire. They must complete the "Safer Spaces" training within 45 days of starting youth ministry. If the adult team member facilitates programs or activities where the coordinator of youth ministry is not present, he/she must participate in the VIRTUS class.

- b. **Policy:** Supervising adult team members must know, follow and comply with all archdiocesan Safe Environment Policies, Policies on Sexual Misconduct and the Code of Conduct found at archny.org/safe-environment-program as well as the policies in this manual.
 - c. **Policy:** Supervising adult team members will renew their background check at intervals established by the Safe Environment Office.
 - d. If a supervising adult team member is arrested or informed that he or she is under investigation by any law enforcement agency, he/she must immediately disclose this to the Safe Environment Office.
- II. Ministry Formation
- a. It is recommended that supervising adult team members complete the Office of Youth Ministry Starting Smart course before or during the first 15 months of ministry in this archdiocese.
 - b. Supervising adult team members are expected to engage in ongoing ministry and faith formation.
 - c. **Best Practice:** It is strongly recommended that supervising adult team members have completed a CPR/first aid course and keep certification renewed.
 - d. **Best Practice:** Supervising adult team members should engage in ongoing ministerial and spiritual formation regardless of certification level or experience.
- III. Key Responsibilities of Supervising Adult Team Members
- a. **Policy:** Ensure compliance with archdiocesan safe environment and ministry with youth policies.
 - b. **Policy:** Follow the principle of "going one up" as outlined earlier.
 - c. Work collaboratively with the team to provide programs and services to and with young people that reflect the principles found in the U.S. Bishops' document *Renewing the Vision* and the needs and gifts of the parish community.
 - d. Minister as teaching representatives of the Church.
 - e. Attend scheduled planning meetings.
 - f. Build healthy relationships with the youth in the parish community.
 - g. Foster an environment where young people can encounter Christ and grow in their Catholic faith.
 - h. Assist in helping families foster a stronger faith at home.



Occasional Adult Helper

I. Safe Environment Formation

- a. **Policy:** Prior to assisting in youth ministry, occasional adult helpers must successfully complete a background check and complete the Safe Environment Questionnaire and the online or video training “Safer Spaces.”
- b. **Policy:** Occasional adult helpers must know, follow, and comply with all archdiocesan Safe Environment Policies, Policies on Sexual Misconduct and the Code of Conduct found at archny.org/safe-environment-program as well the policies found in this manual.
- c. **Policy:** Occasional adult helpers will renew their background check at intervals established by the Safe Environment Office.

II. Ministry Formation

- a. Occasional adult helpers should receive the ministry formation appropriate to the help they are offering.
- b. **Best Practice:** Occasional adult helpers should be invited to participate in any youth ministry training and spiritual formation being offered by the parish or archdiocese.

III. Key Responsibilities of Occasional Adult Helpers

- a. **Policy:** Ensure compliance with archdiocesan safe environment and ministry with youth policies.
- b. **Policy:** Follow the principle of “going one up” as outlined earlier.
- c. Build healthy relationships with the youth in the parish community.
- d. Foster an environment where young people can encounter Christ and grow in their Catholic faith.
- e. Engage in the aspect of the ministry in which they are called to help.

Special Note on Ministry Team Members Who Are Adults Aged 18-20

These guidelines refer to those who are at least 18 years of age and have graduated from high school. Adults aged 18-20 can be a major asset in the development and implementation of a youth ministry program. It is the youth ministry coordinator’s responsibility to appropriately and effectively utilize adults aged 18-20 to assist with ministry and supervision of minors in a variety of roles. These might include:

- Ministry team members
- Facilitators of small groups

- Retreat team members
- Assisting the youth ministry coordinator/director with programs and special events (e.g., service projects, retreats, prayer experiences)

Policy: Those who are out of high school and aged 18-20, and who have met all archdiocesan ministry team member clearance requirements, may assist in supervision at activities and events, but may not be solely responsible for supervision of minors.

Policy: The policies and procedures set forth under the formation and responsibilities of Supervising Adult Team Members apply to all adult ministry team members aged 18-20.

Best Practice: Have an individual wait one year after

graduating high school before becoming a regular ministry team member. This enables them to have time to develop a spiritual community of individuals their own age and essentially “grow” out of the youth ministry community as their source of faith growth.

Best Practice: It is helpful and appropriate to pair those out of high school and 18- to 20-year-old adults with a supervising ministry team member who will serve as a mentor.

Best Practice: Small group breakout discussions within a larger setting may appropriately be facilitated by those out of high school and 18-20 years of age, with a supervising ministry team member in the vicinity and with consideration of the training, skills and maturity of the particular adult who is age 18-20 and serving as a ministry team member.

GENERAL INFORMATION

APPROPRIATE AND PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES

Policy: All youth ministry team members—paid or volunteer—must adhere to the Archdiocese of New York’s Safe Environment Policies and the Code of Conduct found on the Safe Environment web page.

Policy: It is the responsibility of the youth ministry coordinator to ensure that ministry team members have access to, know and follow the Safe Environment Policies and the Code of Conduct.

Policy: Although all employees are employees “at will” and all volunteers serve at the pleasure of their pastor, any violation of the Safe Environment Policies, Code of Conduct or the policies in this manual that represents a risk to minors, or violations that are repeated after having been corrected, shall be the basis for termination of a person’s employment or volunteer service.

It is important to recognize that the inevitable inequality of power in relational ministry demands clearly established and appropriate boundaries. The burden of responsibility always falls on the youth ministry leader to respect and maintain appropriate boundaries. Boundaries include professional, personal, ethical, ministerial, physical, emotional, behavioral and sexual boundaries.

It is the youth ministry team members’ sacred responsibility to promote, protect and safeguard the well-being of each individual entrusted to their care. Youth ministry team members serve as examples to others for appropriate behavior, setting boundaries and following a Christian lifestyle.

Professionalism requires that adults maintain clear boundaries in their relationships with the minors they are serving.

Adults bear the responsibility to ensure that:

- Their relationship with minors is clearly professional in nature.

- Proper boundaries are maintained at all times.
- Minors are made aware of these boundaries.
- Any minor who intrudes upon these boundaries is counseled as to proper behavior.

Here are some specific guidelines to help maintain proper professional boundaries with minors:

- Excessive familiarity or intimacy between adults and minors is not permitted.
- Adults should not relate to minors as if they were peers or friends.
- Adults are never to take on a role of surrogate parent or confidant to a minor with whom they are working.
- Adults must take special care to observe boundaries when they are dealing with minors who are especially vulnerable (e.g., children who have experienced sexual or other kinds of abuse).
- Adults may not give undue attention or favorable treatment to a minor or group of minors, such that there is the appearance that there is a special relationship with the adult, or that a minor is a favorite of the adult.
- Adults must always be with another adult or be in the proximity of another adult when working with minors in unsupervised settings.
- Adults may not be alone with minors in private locations. In any location where an adult is alone with a minor, they must always be observable and interruptible. The door must always be open and the adult and minor may never be behind a locked door or blocked window.
- Adults may not engage in peer-like relationships with minors, including during school and non-school events and activities.
- Adults may attend a supervised graduation party or participate in a ministry-approved sporting event. All adults who work with minors must request permission to attend said event.

- Adults may not enter into a dating relationship with a person who is in a youth program, even if that person is now an adult (e.g., a youth minister dating a current member of the youth group).

Definition of Child Sexual Abuse

Child Sexual Abuse shall include, but not be limited to: any sexual act between an adult and a minor; soliciting sexual acts or sexual materials from a minor; possession of child pornography; providing sexual materials to a minor; performing a sexual act or the indecent exposure of the private or intimate parts of the body under circumstances where it is reasonably likely that the act may be witnessed by a minor; and any offense involving sexual conduct committed against a minor that is prohibited by civil or canon law.

Physical Contact with Minors

Physical contact between adults and minors must be approached with a high degree of caution and must be very strictly limited. Adults are responsible for ensuring that there is no inappropriate physical contact with minors.

Physical contact with a minor is only permissible if:

- It is fully appropriate to the situation.
- It is appropriate to the age of the minor.
- It is entirely nonsexual.
- The minor consents to the contact and is fully comfortable with it.
- It will not be misconstrued by the minor or others.
- It does not constitute an abuse of the adult's position of power or trust.

Here are some specific guidelines regarding physical contact with minors:

- Physical contact with minors may never take place in private.
- Physical contact in the context of any kind of counseling may never take place.
- Physical contact with minors may never be routine behavior for an adult.
- The kinds of prohibited physical contact include, but are not limited to:
 - Physical acts of a sexual nature, such as touching, pinching, patting, kissing, hugging, grabbing or brushing against a minor's body.
 - Any contact with the areas of the body that are ordinarily covered by a bathing suit.
 - Kissing on the mouth or prolonged hugs (these are never permitted under any circumstances).
 - Routine greeting/departure hugs or social kisses to the cheek.
 - Extended physical contact, such as allowing a minor to sit on his/her lap or giving a rubdown or massage.
 - Holding hands (other than briefly holding the hand

of a young child in public for their safety, for example while crossing the street).

- Placing and leaving one's arm around a minor's shoulder, back or waist for a prolonged period.
- Patting a child on the backside (even during a sporting event).
- Repeatedly touching on the arm, back, or legs.
- Touching on any part of the body in a way that may be construed as a caress.
- Physical horseplay, roughhousing, tickling, wrestling or other inappropriate games.
- Placing and leaving hands on the shoulders of a child sitting at a desk.
- Having a child sit on one's lap.
- Placing and leaving hands on the legs of a minor who is seated alongside.
- Sitting with one's legs crossed with the legs of another.
- Some kinds of incidental and brief physical contact may be acceptable under special circumstances, such as:
 - Briefly shaking hands as a social greeting.
 - Very brief public social contact in connection with a special event or circumstance (such as a public greeting hug, an arm placed around the shoulder for a moment, or a short pat on the back, to congratulate a student at graduation).
 - Lightly and briefly tapping on the arm or shoulder to get their attention.
 - A "high five" or "fist bump," for instance during a sporting event.
 - An arm briefly placed around the shoulder of an upset or injured minor in public.

Please note: These kinds of behavior should be rare, and under no circumstances can they be regular or routine behavior. Adults must use extreme caution to ensure that these behaviors cannot be misconstrued by an observer or by the minor and that they do not otherwise violate appropriate boundaries.

- Adults may not discipline minors in any physical manner. However, they may engage in physical contact to protect a child from harming himself/herself or another.
- The age of the minor is a very significant factor in determining whether physical contact is appropriate.
- Otherwise unacceptable behavior does not become acceptable if it is done by a minor to an adult. The adult has the obligation to stop the conduct and counsel the minor as to proper behavior. The adult should also report any such incident to their supervisor.
- Cultural customs, or the ordinary behavior of minors toward their peers, do not give permission for otherwise inappropriate physical contact by adults.

SUPERVISION OF YOUTH AND ADULT/YOUTH RATIOS

It is the sacred duty of youth ministry leaders to ensure the young people entrusted in their care are able to grow in their faith in an environment that is safe physically, emotionally and spiritually. A key way to accomplish this is with appropriate adult supervision. Determining the appropriate number of supervising team members depends on several factors. The two primary considerations are safety and ministerial experience. Other factors include type of activity, location of activity and age of the young people participating.

For high school youth, proper supervision does not require constant presence if there is an event with sufficient, appropriate boundaries and young people are in groups of at least three (e.g., at a conference where there is a set venue with security that young people can freely navigate with personal check-ins with ministry team members throughout the day between workshops and events).

Policy: Younger adolescents (grades 6-8) need to be under constant supervision.

Policy: At all times, older and younger adolescents should be aware of the quickest way of reaching a supervising ministry team member/chaperone. At no time should an adolescent be unable to quickly contact a supervising ministry team member/chaperone.

Policy: All youth activities and gatherings require a minimum of two adults who are qualified to serve as supervising team members.

Policy: For on-site, non-overnight activities, the ratio is 1 adult per 10 youth after meeting the two-adult requirement. In practice this means:

- 1-20 youth: minimum of 2 adult leaders (over 21)
- 21-30 youth: minimum of 3 adult leaders (over 21)
- 31-40 youth: minimum of 4 adult leaders (over 21)
- Etc.

Policy: For off-site and overnight events, the ratio is 1 adult per 8 youth after meeting the two-adult requirement. In practice this means:

- 1-16 youth: minimum of 2 adult leaders (over 21)
- 17-24 youth: minimum of 3 adult leaders (over 21)
- 25-32 youth: minimum of 4 adult leaders (over 21)
- Etc.

Policy: For overnight events, adult ratios must reflect the sex of the young people participating, with a minimum of two adults over 21 of the same sex as the young people participating.

Best Practice: Small-group dynamics and effective relational ministry can be challenging when there are not enough adults to interact with the youth participating. Consider an on-site ratio of 1 adult to every 6-8 young people (with a minimum of two adults).

Best Practice: When thinking through the number of

supervising ministry team members needed, one should consider how many would be needed in case of emergency. Will the gathering be in a rural or urban environment? What transportation options are available? Will there be enough adults to accompany a young person to a hospital and still have enough to appropriately supervise the remaining youth?

Best Practice: For activities that will be in crowded areas, such as theme parks, or farther away from home, like the National Catholic Youth Conference, consider a chaperone ratio of 1 adult to every 5-6 youth (with a minimum of two supervising adult leaders).

SAFE ENVIRONMENT

Policy: All those ministering with/to minors in the Archdiocese of New York must comply with the archdiocesan Policies on Sexual Misconduct.

Some of the policies are highlighted in sections of this document. However, **all of the Safe Environment policies not highlighted in this document must still be followed.**

Answers to frequently asked questions regarding the archdiocesan Safe Environment Policies can be accessed online.

Best Practice: Complete a Safe Environment Checklist (see Forms) at least twice a year to ensure compliance.

MINISTRIES THAT INCLUDE YOUNG ADULTS (OVER 18) AS PARTICIPANTS

Many parishes have adopted a style of youth ministry that includes young adults – individuals aged 18 and older – as participants. An example is a parish prayer group for young people aged 14-29. The young adults in this group may not be in charge of planning gatherings nor supervising participants who are minors. However, they are in direct contact with minors on a regular basis and could potentially be alone with a minor.

Policy: All individuals over 18 years of age who participate on a regular basis in ministries that include minors must have background checks and safe environment training regardless of their supervision status.

Policy: Young adults participating in such groups cannot be romantically involved with any minor participants.

Best Practice: Separate groups into youth (middle and/or high school) and young adults (18+). Young adults need their own space to discuss issues unique to them and to develop a more adult spirituality.

USE OF PRIVATE HOMES OR PUBLIC SPACES FOR YOUTH MINISTRY

Parishes often seek options for gathering young people off-site when physical space in the parish is limited. The use of public spaces, such as coffee shops, may be neces-

sary for some parish communities when physical space for small group ministry may be limited.

Policy: Because of potential liability and concerns regarding safe environment, private homes/apartments cannot be used for youth ministry.

If public spaces are used, then the following policies must be observed:

Policy: The use of public spaces can be considered after all on-site options have been explored and must have written approval of the pastor.

Policy: Parents must have explicit knowledge of the details, nature and location of the program in which their young person is involved. These details need to include:

- Date, time and topic(s) of gatherings.
- Names and phone numbers of adult leaders.
- Name, address, and phone number of location.

Policy: Permission slips must be provided to parents with regard to their young person's involvement in a program held in a public space.

Policy: Students must remain in the designated areas.

Policy: Individual young people should never be left alone.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Preparedness

Policy: Youth ministries are to ensure that processes, individuals, organizations and resources are identified and accessible to prevent and respond to emergency situations. Minimally, this needs to include:

- Procedures for dealing with immediate treatment of youth in case of emergency, including providing the parent/guardian(s) of all youth with a written form authorizing emergency medical treatment.
- Procedures for an annual practice for emergency situations: fire, active shooters and tornado drills.
- Records of fire drills and seasonal tornado drills.
- Emergency procedures posted in meeting rooms and available to parents, youth and youth ministry team members.
- Identification of nearest emergency rooms and trauma centers.
- Emergency telephone numbers posted by office telephones.
- Supervision of parish grounds, recreational areas and other facilities when scheduled for use by youth.
- A file of written incident reports.

Medical Emergency

Policy: In life-threatening situations, always call 911.

Youth Ministry Leaders must be aware of directions to the nearest hospital or medical facility (both locally and when traveling off-site).

911 should be called when a person:

- Becomes unconscious.
- Has trouble breathing.
- Has chest pain or pressure.
- Is bleeding severely.
- Has pain or pressure in the abdomen that does not go away.
- Is vomiting/passing blood.
- Has seizures, a severe headache or slurred speech.
- Appears to have been poisoned.
- Has injuries to the head, neck or back.
- Has possible broken bones.

Accidents and Injuries

Policy: If there is an accident, do not make any judgment regarding liability or negligence. If an accident prompts a police investigation, cooperate fully by stating what you witnessed, but do not speculate or offer opinions about any matter. Politely refer all additional questions to the pastor or the Office of Legal Affairs at the Archdiocese of New York. You should not make any statements or comments to the press or news media; refer them to the pastor.

If there is an accident:

- Assist those involved and call for professional help if the injury warrants it.
- Wear gloves if blood is present.
- Comfort and protect the injured person.
- Complete an Incident Report (found in Forms).
 - Do not presuppose that the injury is minor enough not to warrant the completion of an Incident Report. Even minor cuts and bruises can become a health concern.
 - Be as concise and accurate as possible in completing all information.
 - Do not speculate or make any judgment regarding liability or negligence or commit to paying for medical treatment.
 - Immediately file the incident report with your pastor or the appropriate parish administrator and the archdiocesan Catholic Mutual (insurance) representative.

First Aid

Policy: Each parish youth ministry program must have a well-stocked and easily accessible first aid kit, which also includes feminine hygiene products. This kit is to accompany the group on any events off parish property.

Red Cross First Aid Kit recommendations: www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/anatomy-of-a-first-aid-kit

Best practice: Supervising ministry team members should have basic first aid and CPR training.

Policy: If a young person is injured and needs first aid, an incident report must be completed within 24 hours and submitted to the pastor.



Best practice: Anything besides a minor injury should be reported to your pastor as soon as possible.

Best practice: Review expiration dates on items in first aid kit annually.

Medications

It is preferable that all prescription medications be administered by a parent/legal guardian of the youth participant. If that is not possible, then the following policies apply.

Policy: If a young person is experiencing an emergency and needs medication that is readily available, e.g., an EpiPen™ for allergic reactions, adult youth leaders or the young person him/herself may administer the medication as directed on the container.

Policy: If youth need to take medication during an event or trip, the medication must be handed to a supervising adult leader in a resealable bag. The bag needs to be labeled in permanent marker with the name of the student, the date, and the times the medication should be administered. The bag must include instructions from the parent/guardian on how and when medication/treatments should be taken. Medications need to be stored by the supervising adult leader in a secure area. At the prescribed times, youth

can take their medications/treatments in the presence of a supervising adult leader. Medications/treatments that require any form of disrobing should be self-administered by the student privately. Exceptions to this policy are medications that need to be in the constant possession of the youth (e.g. insulin, inhalers, or epinephrine pens).

Expressing Intent to Harm Self or Others

Policy: If a young person expresses a plan to hurt him/herself or others:

- Take his/her words seriously.
- Do not leave the young person alone. Engage another adult or two to remain with the student or take the necessary next steps.
- Contact the parent/guardian(s).
 - Calmly share the conversation you have had with the young person and your reasons for concern.
 - Ask the parent/guardian to come immediately.
- Contact the pastor. Let him know what has happened and the steps you have taken.
- Contact health professionals or the authorities, if warranted.
- Depending on the urgency of the situation, you may need to contact emergency medical services or police.

Inclement Weather

Policy: Know your parish’s disaster preparedness plan and follow all evacuation warnings when facing severe weather.

- If local public or Catholic schools cancel, youth ministry events should be canceled as well.
- Monitor weather conditions prior to events.
- Notify parents/guardians regarding cancellations/early dismissals.
- Do not allow youth who drive to leave without notifying a parent/guardian.
- Secure property after all have departed.

POLICY: REPORTING AN INCIDENT OF ABUSE

Whenever there is reasonable cause to suspect that a minor has been the victim of child abuse or maltreatment, including sexual abuse, the Office of Legal Affairs or the Safe Environment Office will be notified and will make an immediate report to the appropriate civil authorities, including law enforcement, the local District Attorney’s office, and/or the New York Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment if applicable. Staff members who are New York State mandated reporters must also fully comply with the requirements of the law. Any adult who has reasonable cause to suspect any incident of child abuse, sexual misconduct, violations of safe environment policies, or violations of Codes of Conduct must report it immediately to the youth ministry coordinator. If that is not practical (e.g., if the complaint involves conduct by the youth ministry coordinator), then the complaint must be reported to the pastor or the director of the archdiocesan Safe Environment Office. Any allegation of child sexual abuse or sexual misconduct must also be reported to the director of the archdiocesan Safe Environment Office. If there is an emergency situation or an immediate threat or danger, call 911 and seek medical attention (if necessary). Persons who report alleged incidents pursuant to this policy, and those who cooperate with investigations of such reports, shall be entitled to the protections of the archdiocesan “whistleblower” policy. The archdiocese expressly prohibits any form of retaliation, including harassment, intimidation, or adverse employment actions against personnel who in good faith raise suspected violations of law, cooperate in inquiries or investigations, or identify potential violations of archdiocesan policies.

Process to Be Followed in Response to Suspected Child Abuse Internal to the Youth Ministry Program and Involving a Parish Employee or Volunteer

An “internal incident” is an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor made against any person within the parish youth ministry program (priest, deacon, sister, brother,

layman, laywoman, employee, volunteer). In response, the following is done:

- The person(s) receiving the information immediately informs the youth ministry coordinator.
- The youth ministry coordinator notifies the pastor and immediately calls the archdiocesan Safe Environment Office (646-794-2807). If Safe Environment Office cannot be reached, the Office of Legal Affairs is called.
- The Safe Environment Office or the Office of Legal Affairs will immediately notify law enforcement. The minor’s parent or guardian must be immediately notified as well.
- If there is an emergency situation or an immediate threat or danger to the security or safety of the child, the pastor or coordinator of youth ministry must call the police immediately. In an emergency, they should not wait to speak to the Safe Environment Office before dialing 911. The first priority is to ensure the child’s safety.

Process to Be Followed in Response to Suspected Child Abuse External to the Parish Youth Ministry and Not Involving a Parish Employee or Volunteer

An “external incident” is something that happens to a child/youth outside of the parish youth ministry program and not committed by a member of the parish staff. The report is typically a self-report by a child/youth to a youth ministry leader. In response the following is to be done:

- The person receiving the information immediately notifies the coordinator of youth ministry.
- The coordinator of youth ministry notifies the pastor and immediately calls the archdiocesan Safe Environment Office (646-794-2807), which will direct the parish leadership through the situation according to archdiocesan policy.
- The Safe Environment Office or the Office of Legal Affairs will immediately notify law enforcement. The minor’s parent or guardian will be notified as well, unless the suspected abuse took place in the home, in which case Child Protective Services should be notified.
- If there is an emergency situation or an immediate threat or danger to the child, the coordinator of youth ministry or pastor must call the police immediately. They should not wait to speak to the Safe Environment Office before dialing 911. The first priority is to ensure the child’s safety.

COUNSELING, PROFESSIONAL REFERRALS AND DISCLOSURE

Counseling

When ministering to individuals who are encountering a time of crisis or difficulty, it is important to remem-

ber that specialized training and licensing is necessary to serve as a counselor. It is important to be clear that a minister is not a counselor. It is important to acknowledge the limits of one's own competence and be willing to make referrals to professionals whose perspective is in line with the moral and ethical beliefs of the Catholic Church.

Professional Referrals

Policy: Each parish should maintain a readily accessible list of social agencies whose work is in line with the moral and ethical beliefs of the Catholic Church.

Best Practice: Catholic Charities has a parish counseling network that provides low-cost, short-term counseling to parishioners referred by the pastor or an individual designated by him. Talk to your pastor about this program.

Best Practice: Should a young person or parent/guardian request information regarding a counseling referral, it is advised that the ministry leader recommend that the family meet with their primary care physician and receive a referral within their insurance plan. It is not recommended that ministry leaders make referrals directly to counselors; however, in cases where the family does not have a primary care physician or requests a referral, ministry leaders making any type of referral should furnish at least three resource options.

Disclosure

We are partners with the parents/guardians of those to whom we minister and are to act as such. Transparency is an essential element of the youth ministry-parent/guardian relationship.

Policy: Youth ministry leaders recognize a young person's expectation of privacy relating to information the young person may share, and honor that in a professional way. While a young person may request that the youth ministry leader keep information confidential, a youth ministry leader may not under any circumstances ask or require a young person to keep their conversations with the youth ministry leader confidential. Moreover, a young person's privacy considerations do not extend to information regarding serious foreseeable and imminent harm to the young person or others. Examples of issues that would contravene a young person's privacy include, but are not limited to, child abuse, sexual/physical threats to others, abortion and suicidal ideation. In these situations, it is essential to seek the appropriate resources for assistance for the young person(s) and family(ies) involved in partnership with parent/guardian(s). If a minor discloses abuse in the home, the parents or guardian will not be notified, and a report should be made to Child Protective Services immediately. If a minor discloses abuse outside the home, the parents or guardian will be notified immediately, along with appropriate authorities.

Policy: Follow the principle of "going one up." Confidentiality does not mean secrecy. Going one up means sharing with your supervisor (e.g. pastor, pastoral associate, DRE, youth ministry coordinator) difficult conversations with and/or concerns for young people and/or their parents. This practice helps to ensure healthy decision-making, contextualizing of issues within the larger family situations, and awareness of the pastor to potential situations.

FINANCES

Budget

It is good stewardship for all youth ministries to keep a clear record of how money is collected and used.

Best Practice: Work with your pastor or parish manager to develop and maintain an annual budget.

Deposits and Expenditures

Policy: A record of all money collected and spent shall be kept and submitted monthly to the parish manager or pastor.

Policy: Youth ministries cannot keep separate checking accounts from the parish. Parish youth ministry is not a separate "club" but an intrinsic ministry of the parish.

Policy: All money must be deposited into the parish accounts. No collected money can be deposited into personal accounts.

RECORD KEEPING AND RETENTION

Policy: The following forms/electronic records need to be kept for the indicated time. All forms associated with an injury or other incident are to be kept permanently:

- Youth Ministry Information Sheet: 12 months
- Sign-In/Sign-Out Sheets: 12 months unless an incident occurs
- Volunteer Records: Permanently
- Permission Forms/Medical Release Forms: Permanently
- Incident Reports: Permanently

Policy: Ensure that there is a locked location to keep forms. Medical forms contain personal information and must be locked in a safe location.

Best Practice: Scan forms annually and place the electronic files on two password-encrypted USB drives. See storage policy below.

Policy: If forms are scanned, scan them annually and place the scans on two encrypted USB drives. Place one drive in the parish safe and keep the other drive in a secure location in case of fire. Create a binder for each year that contains the Youth Ministry Information Sheets and Sign-In/Sign-Out Sheets.

Best Practice: Consider electronic data and record-keeping programs such as MinHub.

CONTRACTS

Contracts are legally binding agreements between two or more parties. Contracts should not be entered into lightly no matter how small or how well one knows the individual or group with whom one is contracting. For that reason, youth ministry coordinators do not have the legal authority to sign contracts on behalf of the parish or cluster.

Policy: All contracts must be approved and signed by the pastor. In cases of multi-parish sponsorship of events, the contract needs to be reviewed and signed by the pastor of the parish from which payments are being made.

USE OF OUTSIDE PRESENTERS AND/OR GROUPS FOR RETREATS, PRESENTATIONS, OR EVENTS

Bringing in an outside presenter for youth ministry can provide young people with a voice, perspective, expertise, or experience that cannot be found within the parish community. These individuals and groups are a valuable resource for parishes; however, a certain amount of caution must be taken to ensure that the individual or group is appropriate for your young people.

Policy: The following policies should be followed:

- Approval by the pastor must be given prior to confirming the presenter/group.
- Parishes that bring in presenters or organizations from other dioceses to conduct retreats or presentations must fill out a Speaker Approval Form (see appendix). This form should be given to the pastor.
- Parishes are responsible to make sure that the presenter and/or members of the group are in compliance with the archdiocesan Safe Environment Program and have had background checks.
- Speakers and groups must be informed of and follow Office of Youth Ministry policies regarding Inappropriate Environments and Experiences for Youth and archdiocesan Safe Environment Policies.

Policy: If the presenter or group is from outside the Archdiocese of New York, the following policies should be followed:

- Presenters must submit a letter from the presenter or group's home archdiocese's chancery stating that this individual or group is in good standing within their archdiocese and is in compliance with the Bishops' Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People as specified by the policies within their home archdiocese. This form should be given to the pastor.
- If the presenter is a member of the clergy, parishes must also present the cleric's faculties to the Office of Priest Personnel for permission to use those faculties within the archdiocese.

Best Practice: Check references for presenters and

groups. Ask specific questions to discern whether this individual or group is appropriate for your needs.

Best Practice: Call the Office of Youth Ministry to check on their experience/knowledge with the presenter or group.

ORGANIZATIONS AND/OR INDIVIDUALS DESIRING TO HOST REGIONAL OR ARCHDIOCESAN EVENTS ON ARCHDIOCESAN OR PARISH PROPERTIES

Parishes and youth ministries are often approached to host an event, gathering, or retreat facilitated by an outside organization for young people in the region or the archdiocese. It is important that these events reflect the vision of youth ministry of the archbishop.

Policy:

- Approval by the pastor is required prior to confirming the event.
- Organizations and individuals that desire to host events within the archdiocese on archdiocesan or parish property must first notify the pastor/principal and then Office of Youth Ministry of their intent and reasoning.
- To ensure that the content of the events reflects the vision of youth ministry promoted by the cardinal/archbishop, a schedule of the event and outline of content should be submitted to the Office of Youth Ministry prior to marketing of the event.
- Event structure and content must comply with Safe Environment Policies and policies on Inappropriate Environments and Experiences for Youth.
- Scheduling of events must not conflict with major events of the archdiocese and the Office of Youth Ministry.
- Speakers must also have a letter from the presenter or group's home archdiocese's chancery stating that this individual or group is in good standing within their archdiocese and is in compliance with the Bishops' Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People as specified by the policies within their home archdiocese. (See "Forms" for sample.)
- If the presenter is a member of the clergy from outside of the Archdiocese of New York, he must also present his cleric's faculties to the Office of Priest Personnel for permission to use those faculties within the archdiocese.

INAPPROPRIATE ENVIRONMENTS AND EXPERIENCES FOR YOUTH

Environments and experiences for youth events must be paragons of acceptance, growth and freedom. It is

never appropriate to manipulate either an experience or the environment in order to obtain a specific response. Spiritual and emotional manipulation are inappropriate, and it is essential to assure young people that whatever emotions they experience at any given time during an event are valid and have no moral overtones or consequences.

The following actions may be seen as manipulative and inappropriate and must be avoided at all times:

- “It is absolutely forbidden under any circumstances during an overnight event for minors to be physically restrained or deprived of their ordinary senses in any way (e.g., blindfolded, kept in darkness), subjected to any humiliating or demeaning treatment (e.g., any form of hazing), deprived of a reasonable amount of sleep, or deliberately frightened.” (Safe Environment Policy of the Archdiocese of New York)
- “Contradicting any authoritative teaching of the Church on faith and morals, or encouraging youth to disagree with or act contrary to any authoritative teaching of the Church on faith and morals.” (Safe Environment Policy of the Archdiocese of New York)
- Damaging images of Christ, overtly or covertly.
- Public confession of sins.

- Public admission of sinfulness that implicates another.
- Altar calls that elicit pledges of conversion.
- Not providing opportunities for adequate sleep at overnight events.
- Manipulating the physical environment in order to cause dissonance (e.g., covering windows so one is unable to see the time of day).
- Pressure to display physical action/reaction to prayer/music.
- Singular emotional attachments between youth minister and adolescent.
- Counseling teens without a professional license.
- Showing of R-rated movies or PG-13 films with morally objectionable content.
- Sexual contact between adult minister and adolescent.
- Activities or consultation that involve isolating a youth with an adult minister – for private discussion, transporting, dating, etc.
- Public displays of affection.
- Encouraging teens to idolize youth ministry personnel.
- Encouraging dissension or division between youth and parents.
- Encouraging young people to be secretive about the content and experiences of events.

ON-SITE SUPERVISION

PARTICIPATION

Youth ministry is the outreach, evangelization, mentoring, support, and formation provided by the parish to the young people of the community. Youth groups can be an aspect of youth ministry but should not be the only one. A key component is evangelization. It is important that all young people are welcome to participate in the parish youth ministry; however, some activities or programs, such as peer ministry or confirmation preparation, can be limited to specific youth.

Best Practice: Youth ministry teams should annually discern how well they are reaching a variety of young people who have different spiritual dispositions by using a diversity of methods and programs.

Best Practice: Include programming that all young people can participate in regardless of whether they are registered members of the parish or Catholic.

REGISTRATION AND FEES

Since youth ministry can consist of a variety of programs and activities, registration may not be the best method of keeping track of students. Registration can be required for components of youth ministry, such as con-

firmation preparation or small group ministries.

It is important to keep a record of young people who participate in your youth ministry. This record can give the youth ministry team easy access to emergency contacts and information regarding health concerns as well as birthdays, interests, and contact information.

Policy: Students and parents/guardians should complete a Youth Ministry Information Sheet each year. This form should be kept on file.

It is up to the parish community whether to charge a fee for participation in youth ministry. Fees are often a necessity for events and some programs. However, no young person should be denied the ability to participate in youth ministry because of financial constraints.

Best Practice: Budget for “scholarships” for events and programs for young people whose families cannot pay full fees.

Best Practice: If possible, budget to cover the costs of chaperones and adult leaders for activities.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Youth ministry has a responsibility to know where young people are at all times when they are in its care. This means being intentional: knowing who has attended, when they arrive and when they leave, and having appropriate



adult ministry leaders present. When planning events and programs, it is important that adult ministry leaders arrive early enough to be there when students begin arriving. Adults need to plan on staying until all young people have left the grounds of the parish or event. Sign-in/Sign-Out sheets (see sample in “Forms and Tools”) provide a record of attendance if a parent/guardian calls and asks when his/her child arrived or left. They also ensure that you have emergency contact numbers on hand if needed.

Policy: Youth are never to be left unsupervised while attending any youth ministry function or activity, whether on parish premises or at another location.

Policy: All participants must sign in at arrival and sign out upon departure. Sign-in sheets must include an emergency contact phone number.

Policy: Students may not leave an event or program before its conclusion without documented permission of a parent or guardian. A notation should be made on the sign-out sheet.

Policy: Once a youth has left an event, he/she should not be allowed to return to the event.

Policy: A minimum of two adult youth ministry leaders must remain with the youth until all youth have left the function or church premises, including parking areas, or been picked up by a parent/guardian.

Best Practice: Parishes should set up procedures to

notify parents of youth non-attendance at an event for which the youth is registered or anticipated to attend.

Best Practice: Invite adult leaders to complete a Youth Ministry Information sheet for adults. This will ensure you have emergency contacts for your leaders as well.

LATE PARENT/GUARDIAN PICK-UP

There are occasions that a young person’s parent/guardian is late in picking up him/her from an event. All attempts should be made to contact parents/guardians by phone from the program site. After a specified amount of time set by the parish, it is appropriate to contact the emergency contact from the Youth Ministry Information Sheet. These procedures should be communicated to all parents at the beginning of the year or at registration time for an activity or program.

Policy: Never allow a youth to ride home with someone without a parent/guardian’s written consent.

DRUGS, ALCOHOL, WEAPONS AND PORNOGRAPHY

Policy: Being under the influence of illegal drugs, alcohol and/or mood-altering substances, and/or being in possession of pornography, weapons, illegal drugs, alco-

holic beverages, drug- or alcohol-related paraphernalia, tobacco products, tobacco-related paraphernalia and/or prescription drugs not indicated on the Permission and Release Form are forbidden. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action for:

- Any youth on parish property
- Any youth attending or participating in any youth ministry-sponsored activity
- Any youth attending or participating in any activity that may be associated in any way with the youth ministry

Disciplinary action may include dismissal from the parish youth ministry, even for a first offense. The decision as to the most appropriate consequence should be made in consultation with the pastor or supervisor and should take into consideration the law and the pastoral needs of the situation. The parent/guardian should be given information regarding counseling resources and engaged in the parish discussion of appropriate consequences related to the ministry environment.

Policy: Ministry team members and chaperones may not possess or consume drugs, alcohol or pornography at any youth ministry event/gathering. On overnights, this restriction applies around-the-clock, continuing to apply for adults during the evening hours, even after the young people have gone to sleep. Any ministry team member who violates this policy will be dismissed immediately.

Policy: Any adult who provides or assists youth in obtaining alcohol, weapons, drugs or pornography will be dismissed, and the proper authorities will be notified.

Policy: Any youth found to have drugs, alcohol, weapons or pornography in their possession, or who uses or arrives to an event/activity under the influence of drugs/alcohol, may not be allowed to remain at the event/activity and must be picked up immediately by the parent/guardian.

Policy: In keeping with our partnership with parents/guardians, the youth ministry coordinator must inform the parents/guardians of any youth who have possessed/consumed alcohol, possessed/used illegal drugs or possessed pornography or weapons at a youth ministry meeting, activity or event.

Policy: The youth ministry coordinator must inform the

pastor of any young person who has possessed/consumed alcohol, possessed/used illegal drugs or possessed pornography or weapons at a youth ministry meeting, activity or event.

Policy: Although bag checks may occur before leaving for events, allegations of possession of drugs, alcohol, weapons and/or pornography still occur. If an allegation of possession is presented, the party or parties should be approached by at least two supervising ministry team members together to determine the accuracy of the allegation. If there is a reasonable cause to believe the allegation is true, then ministry team members should request permission to search the possessions of the accused. This should always occur in the presence of at least two supervising ministry team members. It should never be done by a single adult. Ideally, it should be done by the youth ministry coordinator.

Policy: Intergenerational gatherings that are primarily youth-oriented (e.g., a high school graduation reception) should not serve alcohol.

Policy: If youth are attending an activity/event for intergenerational audiences where alcohol is available/served (e.g., parish dinner), parents/guardians of youth must be aware that alcohol will be available/served. Chaperones and event sponsors have the responsibility to ensure that no underage drinking will be allowed. Adults chaperoning youth at such events cannot consume alcohol.

TOBACCO PRODUCTS AND E-CIGARETTES

Policy: The use of tobacco products and e-cigarettes is not permitted by young people at any youth ministry gathering.

Policy: No one, youth or adult, is permitted to give, lend or sell tobacco or e-cigarette products to a minor. It is a violation of the law.

Policy: Adults are asked to refrain from using tobacco and nicotine products at youth ministry events. If they do use tobacco or nicotine products, they are to remove themselves from proximity of young people and use the product in a discreet, designated area.

OFF-SITE EVENTS AND OVERNIGHT TRIPS

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Off-site events and overnight trips can be effective tools in youth ministry. However, they also can present unique issues in supervision and safety of young people. This is why the archdiocese is instituting a policy that young people under grade 9 cannot participate in overnight events. With this in mind, special care must be taken

when planning such events.

Policy: Parishes cannot host overnight events or trips for young people in grades below 9th grade.

Policy: Permission for parish-sponsored overnight events must be submitted for approval to the pastor at least six weeks prior to the event (see Forms).

Policy: Priority must be given during any off-site or overnight trip to ensure that all participants fulfill their

Sunday and Holy Day obligations to attend Mass.

Policy: All safe environment policies and previously mentioned supervision ratios must be followed.

Policy: Rules and expectations, along with consequences for violations, need to be presented clearly to both minors and adults at the beginning of any event.

Policy: It is absolutely forbidden to ask or require a minor to keep a secret from his/her parents/guardians or to make a vow of secrecy about what happens on a trip.

It is permissible to instruct minors to respect the privacy of their peers by not revealing personal or private information about them to other minors, but they may not be instructed to keep it from their parents/guardians.

Policy: Minors are forbidden from texting, messaging, or transmitting via any form of electronic communication or social media, any images, videos, memes, GIFs, or screenshots of anyone or anything that might cause embarrassment, humiliation or distress to the person depicted or the person on the receiving end. Additionally, no nude or semi-nude images may be sent or asked for via electronic communication or social media. NOTE: Images of minors that are sexually explicit constitute child pornography and must be reported immediately to law enforcement.

Best Practice: Create, distribute, and discuss a code of conduct (see sample in Forms) that outlines expectations for youth and adults on the trip. Have youth and parents sign and turn in with permission forms.

Policy: It is absolutely forbidden under any circumstances during a trip for minors to be physically restrained or deprived of their ordinary senses in any way (e.g., blindfolded, kept in darkness), subjected to any humiliating or demeaning treatment (e.g., any form of hazing) or deliberately frightened.

Policy: One-on-one private contact between adults and minors is not permitted. If a personal meeting is required with a minor, it must be conducted in view of other adults and minors.

Policy: An adult may not engage in any private direct electronic communication with an unrelated minor (e.g., text messaging, phone calls) unless it is necessary for safety (e.g., to contact a lost child).

Best Practice: Use an approved communication tool such as Flocknote or Remind to communicate with participants on trips. Refer to the Office of Youth Ministry website for recommended communication tools.

PARTICIPATION

Efforts should be made to ensure that all young people, regardless of physical ability, documentation status or financial situation, be able to participate in trips. It is appropriate to require young people to participate in specific activities or preparation as a requirement to partici-

pate on trips. Private health insurance is not required for participation in events.

Policy: If a parent is uncomfortable with his/her young person participating in an overnight retreat, that young person cannot be required by the parish/program to attend. If it is a “required” retreat for something like confirmation preparation or youth leadership development, arrangements will need to be made with the parents for the young person to engage in substitute experiences. For example, if a parent is uncomfortable with their teen attending a weekend confirmation retreat, the young person could have the option of participating in extra service work, personal study, adoration, etc.

PERMISSION AND RELEASE FORMS

Permission and release forms are an important way to ensure that parents/guardians are aware of and approve of the activity/program in which their minor is participating. Medical release provides supervising team members with critical information such as medical conditions, allergies and emergency contacts.

Policy: Youth participating in any off-site or overnight event must have a completed archdiocese-approved permission and release form signed by a parent/guardian.

Policy: Adult leaders need to complete and sign a medical release form.

TRANSPORTATION AND DRIVERS

The best way to transport youth is through approved, contracted carriers. An updated list of approved bus companies is available on the Office of Youth Ministry website.

Policy: Contracted carriers must fully execute a bus service contract and shall obtain and maintain commercial auto liability insurance, commercial general liability insurance and statutory workers compensation and employers’ liability insurance. The pastor must also sign this agreement. Contracted carriers must also submit a certificate of insurance (COI) with a minimum limit of commercial automobile liability insurance with a combined single limit of \$5,000,000 per occurrence. Contracted carrier must also provide commercial general liability insurance for bodily injury and property damage with a combined single limit of \$1,000,000 per occurrence and statutory workers compensation and employers’ liability insurance as required by New York State or any other state to which they are required to maintain workers’ compensation and employers’ liability insurance. Language on the COI for commercial automobile liability insurance and commercial general liability insurance should include as additional insured the parish, the Archdiocese of New York and His Eminence Timothy M. Cardinal Dolan. A Certificate of Insurance must also be provid-



ed for workers compensation insurance. Language on the COI should also include that excess or umbrella liability policies are primary and non-contributory insurance to any other insurance available to the additional insured with respect to claims arising hereunder.

Policy: 10- to 15-passenger vans cannot be used to transport youth.

Policy: In transporting minors, two adults should be present in each vehicle; if that is not possible, the minimum required is one adult and two or more minors. A youth may never ride in a vehicle alone with an adult other than their parent or guardian.

Policy: If private passenger vehicles are to be used, the following policies must be followed, supplied and certified by the driver.

- Driver is 21 years of age or older.
- Driver has a valid, non-probationary driver's license and the ability to drive the vehicle safely.
- Vehicle must be in safe working condition and have valid and current registration and license plates.
- Vehicle must be insured for at least \$100,000 per person and \$300,000 per occurrence.

Best Practice: Do not assume a driver's personal insurance will cover liability for a youth ministry event. Always check with insurance carriers to make sure they are covered.

Best Practice: Build into the event fee the cost of transportation and reimbursement for drivers' gas.

Travel by Public Transportation

Policy: Supervising team members need to be on the same bus or in the same compartment as their young people.

INSURANCE AND ACTIVITIES

Policy: Before planning any event that may involve a higher-risk activity (e.g., swimming, skiing) contact Catholic Mutual for current guidelines regarding coverage. In cases where risk is greater due to the nature of the experience (e.g., rafting, rock climbing), supervision by professionals with appropriate training is required.

Best Practice: Trip insurance is recommended for off-site activities.

PHYSICAL SPACE AND SAFETY

Policy: Adult leaders must ensure that they are fully familiar with the safety plan for the facility (fire exits, boundaries, etc.), and must give event participants a briefing on safety plans.

Policy: Minors are not permitted to leave the location where an event is taking place except as part of a group under the direct supervision of at least one adult.

Policy: All fire codes (e.g., maximum occupancy) must be followed.

Best Practice: Visit the location before the event. Make sure you know where the emergency exits are, where there are fire extinguishers, and where the automated external defibrillator (AED) is. Look for potential hazards and discuss how to minimize them.

SLEEPING AND BATHROOM ARRANGEMENTS

Policy: There must be separate bathrooms, changing rooms, and showers for males and females.

Policy: Minors may only use the facilities that conform to their biological sex.

Policy: Male and female participants may not sleep in connecting rooms.

Policy: No minor is permitted to sleep in a bedroom with an adult except in the case of a minor sleeping in the room of their own parent or guardian.

Policy: In dormitory-style facilities, minors and adults, and males and females, must have separate areas.

Policy: Adults and minors may not change or shower in the same place at the same time.

Policy: Adults are never to share rooms/spaces with youth that accommodate fewer than six people.

Policy: A minimum of two adult chaperones may share sleeping rooms with youth in group sleeping situations where there are beds/space for six or more people (e.g., dormitory, bunk rooms, cabins, gym floor, large room). Adult beds/sleeping space should be set apart from youth and preferably near an exit.

Policy: Minors who are staying in private rooms with no adults, which would be the case when rooms accommodate fewer than six people, should be periodically checked by two adult chaperones of the same sex. Typically, this is done immediately at curfew to ensure all youth are present and in their assigned rooms.

Policy: Male and female adults may not share a private bedroom unless they are joined in a valid marriage, are

adult siblings, or are a parent with an adult child.

Best Practice: Consider planning for awake-overnight supervision by a minimum of two safe environment compliant adults who are not directly responsible for the following morning's programming.

Policy: A lone adult may never enter a shower, changing room, or bathroom being used by a minor, except in the case of an emergency to ensure safety or health, or to preserve order, such as stopping an altercation.

Policy: An adult may never be in a state of undress in the presence of any minor.

Best Practice: Set designated times for "adult only" showers.

PARTICIPATING IN RETREAT OR OVERNIGHT PROGRAMS NOT SPONSORED BY THE PARISH OR ARCHDIOCESE

Policy: It is the responsibility of the parish and the youth ministry coordinator to confirm prior to participating:

- That the sponsors and team members of the event are safe environment compliant up to the standards of the Archdiocese of New York
- That housing arrangements comply with the standards of the Archdiocese of New York.
- That the content of the event is age-appropriate and not contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church.

TECHNOLOGY AND MEDIA

In today's world, a significant portion of our communication occurs through electronic devices. Our young people, and increasingly their parents, reside in a world where they are much more likely to read a text than a letter and find out what is happening through social media rather than through the bulletin or newspaper. These forms of communication have brought the world into our back pockets. However, they also pose some serious safe environment and copyright concerns. This section addresses not only the policies of the archdiocese but also gives guiding principles for healthy, safe and legal engagement in technology and media.

ARCHDIOCESAN POLICIES ON ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS, INTERNET AND COMPUTER USE

The following is an excerpt from the archdiocesan Safe Environment Policies manual. All content in this section is considered **policy**.

General Principles

In using the Internet, computers, and the various methods of electronic communication, adults who are working with minors in archdiocesan institutions and programs must maintain appropriate behavior and serve as examples of Christian conduct. They must also take care to avoid any situation or conduct that might be misinterpreted or that might be the source of scandal for themselves or others.

Definitions

The term *electronic communication* shall include, but not be limited to, telephone, cell phone, email, text messaging, instant messaging, comments posted on blogs or websites, chat rooms, social networking sites, online gaming, file transfers, Internet phone calls and Internet video or audio conferencing.

The term *indecent material* shall include, but not be limited to, sexually explicit or suggestive images or written material. The determination of whether material is

indecent shall be in the discretion of the responsible administrator of the archdiocesan institution or program, based on the moral doctrines of the Church and applicable local and federal laws.

The term *web page* shall include, but not be limited to, a website, a page on a social networking site, or a blog.

(FOR THIS SECTION ONLY) The term *minor* shall mean any person under the age of 18, who is not related to the adult, and with whom the adult is working or has previously worked in an archdiocesan institution or program.

Proper Relationships and Electronic Communications

Because of the easy, informal, and at times anonymous nature of many forms of electronic communication, the proper relationship between adults and minors can easily become confused. Adults must make sure their use of electronic communication maintains a proper professional relationship with minors, and does not create or give the appearance of an inappropriate relationship, or encourage inappropriate behavior.

In using electronic communications, proper and healthy boundaries between adults and minors must always be maintained:

- Excessive familiarity or a purely social relationship between adults and minors are not appropriate. Adults must recognize that there is a difference between being “friendly” and being “friends” with children. Minors are not peers of an adult who works with them in a church program or institution.
- It is always inappropriate for there to be a “special” relationship between an adult and a young person or to give the appearance that a minor is a “favorite” of an adult.
- Adults are never to take on a role of surrogate parent or confidant to a minor with whom they are working.

Electronic Communications in General

- a. Any adult who misuses any form of electronic communication or computer is subject to disciplinary action, including dismissal from employment or volunteer service.
- b. Adults shall not transmit or display any indecent material to minors by any means of electronic communication.
- c. There shall be no private direct electronic communication between an adult and a minor, except as provided below. The use of a private email account to communicate with a minor is never permitted. Text messaging a minor is never permitted, except as set forth in section (g) below.
- d. Adults are permitted to have email communications with a minor through an official email account of an archdiocesan institution, provided that: the account is subject to monitoring and oversight by a supervi-

sor, only matters relating to the official archdiocesan activity are communicated, and a proper professional relationship is maintained at all times.

- e. If electronic communication is necessary for the orderly operation of an activity sponsored by or connected with an archdiocesan institution or program (to notify participants of changes of schedule, weather cancellations, etc.), the adult moderator of that activity should contact a parent or guardian first, and subsequent communication should be from parent to parent or from minor to minor (e.g., a telephone tree). If that is not feasible, the policy in section (g) below should be followed.
- f. An archdiocesan institution, or an adult moderator of an archdiocesan program, may send group emails to minors with whom they are working in an archdiocesan institution or program (e.g., an email to all members of a club to notify them about scheduling matters or to remind them of events). Only matters relating to the activity are to be communicated, and parents or guardians are to be sent a copy of such emails, if possible. An official email account of the archdiocesan institution or program must be used for these communications, and never a personal account. In all such direct communication with minors, a proper professional relationship must be maintained at all times.
- g. If an adult is serving as a chaperone on a trip sponsored by or connected with an archdiocesan institution or program, the adult may have direct electronic communication with minors to the extent that it is necessary for safety or maintaining order (e.g., a telephone call or text message to a minor who has become separated from the group). Only matters relating to the activity are to be communicated, and such communications must be immediately terminated when the trip is concluded or such communications are no longer necessary. In all such communication with minors, a proper professional relationship must be maintained at all times.
- h. An archdiocesan institution or program may establish a system for sending emergency alerts to minors through text messages, emails, or voice mails (e.g., a warning about a significant, imminent threat to safety at a school). Only matters relating to the emergency are to be communicated, and parents or guardians are to be sent a copy of such alerts, if possible. This system shall only be used for emergencies, and not for routine communications.
- i. If a minor initiates a private electronic communication with an adult, the adult shall advise the minor that, under the policies of the archdiocese, private direct communications are not permitted between an adult and a minor, and then seek to establish contact with the minor’s parent or guardian instead, or with the minor

through an official email account of an archdiocesan institution, as set forth in section (d) above.

- j. If a minor initiates an electronic communication to report a violation of the archdiocesan Policy Relating to Sexual Misconduct or the Code of Conduct, or any civil law relating to child abuse or neglect, the adult must immediately comply with archdiocesan policies and applicable mandatory reporting laws regarding the reporting of incidents (see Section 10 of the Safe Environment Policies).
- k. Any questions about the application of these policies to particular circumstances should be directed to the responsible administrator of the archdiocesan institution or program or to the Safe Environment Office.

Internet and Computer Use

- a. Adults who use any computer that is owned by or used in an archdiocesan institution or program must consent to and abide by the proper usage policies of the institution.
- b. Adults may not view or download from the Internet any indecent material on any computer that is owned by or used in an archdiocesan institution or program. Adults may never give, transmit or display such material to minors by any means. Adults may never display or save such material in any way in which a minor may have access to it.
- c. No image of a minor who is involved in an archdiocesan institution or program may be posted on a web page associated with that institution or program (e.g., an official school website) without the written permission of the responsible administrator of the program and the minor's parent or guardian. Such images must be removed immediately if the minor's parent or guardian refuses or withdraws their consent.
- d. No personal information about minors involved in an archdiocesan institution or program may be posted on a web page associated with that institution or program (e.g., listing of names and contact information of sports participants or altar servers on an official parish website).
- e. Adults may not maintain links on a personal web page to a minor's web page.
- f. No images of a minor may be posted on the personal web page or social networking page of an adult who is working or has worked with that minor in an archdiocesan institution or program.
- g. The policies set forth in Sections (e) and (f) shall not apply if the adult is related to the minor.
- h. Adults should not patrol the Internet, including social networking sites, for the minors with whom they work, monitor their behavior online or seek out a young person's personal sites for details of his or her life. This policy shall not apply if the adult is the

parent or guardian of the minor.

- i. Adults may never post to any web page or social networking site any statements, pictures or other materials that are false, derogatory, defamatory, degrading, malicious, disrespectful or threatening to any minor.
- j. Adults who maintain a personal web page or social networking page must be aware that any information displayed may be evaluated in light of the individual's position in the Church. The posting of any indecent material on such a site may lead to disciplinary action by the archdiocesan institution or program in which the adult works.

Social Networking Sites

- a. Archdiocesan institutions and programs may maintain social networking sites only under the following circumstances:
 - Access to the site is strictly restricted to those adults and minors who are actively involved in the program.
 - Access to the site is subject to the invitation and approval of the program's adult moderator.
 - Private direct communications ("chat" or private messages) may not take place between adults and minors.
 - To the fullest extent possible, adults must use the social networking site's privacy settings to block private direct communications.
 - The adult moderator of the program oversees the content of the site and ensures that no inappropriate or indecent material is posted.
 - The adult moderator of the program ensures that no personal information or photographs of minors involved in the institution or program are posted without the written permission of the minor's parent or guardian.
- b. Adults may not use personal social networking sites to have private direct communication with a minor with whom they are working or have previously worked in an archdiocesan institution or program.
- c. Adults with personal social networking sites may not have in their groups or on their friend or buddy lists any minor with whom they are working or have previously worked in an archdiocesan institution or program.
- d. The policies set forth in Sections (b) and (c) shall not apply if the adult is related to the minor.

SOCIAL MEDIA DO'S AND DON'TS

Social media and social media sites change constantly. By the time you're reading this, the most-used app may be one that was unheard-of when this manual was being written. This is why our policies are critical: They can be used to evaluate whether or not a new app is appropriate to use.



Is It an Appropriate App?

Ask yourself the following questions:

- Will this app be used in compliance with the previous policies outlined?
- Is the popular image of this app contrary to the values and principles of the Catholic Church?
- Does this app encourage one-on-one communication in violation of archdiocesan policy?
- Does this app keep an easily accessible record of posts and communication? (For example, Snapchat clearly fails to satisfy this test.)
- Does this app allow the setting up of an organizational account on which multiple individuals can be administrators?
- Would I be comfortable if my pastor/grandmother/parent explored or used this app?

The Office of Youth Ministry site will keep an updated list of approved social communication applications. If you are unsure about an application, contact the Office of Youth Ministry.

Policy: Always inform your pastor of the applications and social media platforms used to communicate with and engage young people.

Is It Okay to Post This?

Ask yourself the following questions before posting:

- Does my post fall within the previous policies outlined?

- Does the post disclose any private/personal information?
- Does the post denigrate, humiliate, or dehumanize others?
- Does the post take a stand against/for an issue but not for/against a political party?
- Does it include pictures of young people that are appropriate and have the proper parental permissions?
- Does the post reflect positively upon my parish/school/archdiocese?
- Would Jesus like this post?

FILM, MUSIC, IMAGES AND COPYRIGHT LAW

Copyright law is probably one of the least understood legal areas relevant to youth ministry. Violations of copyright are both illegal and immoral in the sense that offenders are stealing from composers, artists, authors, photographers, and publishers who depend on the sale of their material to make a living. Following are some areas to be aware of concerning possible copyright violations.

Showing Movies/Shows

Showing the entirety of a movie outside of the home (even though you are not charging admission) is a violation of copyright unless properly licensed. The

“educational use” exception officially applies to government-sanctioned or otherwise formally accredited educational institutions and does not specifically indicate an exception for church religious education programs. A couple of sites for purchasing licenses are CVLI (us.cvli.com) and Swank (www.swank.com).

Likewise, it is illegal to copy any movie or show without the permission of the author or publisher. It is also illegal to record any television broadcast for public showing without permission.

Music

In using music, permission from the publisher is required to do any of the following:

- Copy lyrics from a song sheet, even on a one-time basis.
- Make slides of music and/or lyrics or project them onto a screen.
- Compile song books or make song sheets from original music.
- Make copies of recordings of church services, con-

certs or programs that include copyrighted music.

- Make and distribute a CD containing the songs used on a retreat or other program.
- Print lyrics even on a one-time basis.

A parish, school or institution already may have a copyright license for a great deal of liturgical music. Permission to use other copyrighted music or lyrics may be secured for a nominal fee by calling or writing the publisher.

Images

The fact that an image is on a web page or comes up in a search engine does not mean it isn't copyrighted. Most images on the Internet are covered by copyright law. Using images from the Internet requires permission from the copyright holder. The safest and most ethical way to acquire images for your use is to purchase them from the copyright holders or use a site that specializes in royalty-free stock photos.

Policy: Proper licenses for film, lyrics, music or images from copyright holders or representatives must be secured prior to use.

FORMS, CHECKLISTS, ETC.

Code of Ethics for Youth Ministry Leaders

The National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry has developed the following code of ethics for youth ministry leaders. The Archdiocese of New York has adapted this code. The code is for youth ministry leaders regardless of employment status. This code is to be used in conjunction with existing archdiocesan policies, protocols or codes.

Professional Ethical Obligations

- I. Ministerial Role – Youth ministry leaders:
 - a. Work collaboratively with the pastor (and/or other supervisors) and associates in ministry.
 - b. Faithfully represent the teachings of the Catholic Church with integrity in word and action.
 - c. Are competent and receive education and training commensurate with their role(s) and responsibilities (§ 231, Code of Canon Law).
 - d. Respect the diversity of spiritualities in the faith community and will not make their personal form of spirituality normative.
- II. Inclusion – Youth ministry leaders:
 - a. Recognize the dignity of each person and refrain from behaviors or words that are disrespectful of anyone or any group.
 - b. Serve all people without regard to sex, creed, national origin, race, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, marital status, socioeconomic status, immigration status or political beliefs.
 - c. Ensure all persons have access to the resources, services, and opportunities they require with particular regard for persons with special needs or disabilities.
 - d. Exercise intercultural competency in their ministries.
- III. Accountability – Youth ministry leaders:
 - a. Are accountable to the pastor or other duly appointed representative, under the authority of the archbishop.
 - b. Are called to serve the faith community, carrying out their ministerial functions “...conscientiously, zealously, and diligently” (§ 231, Code of Canon Law).
 - c. Exercise responsible stewardship of resources while holding themselves to the highest standards of integrity regarding the fiscal matters placed in their trust.
 - d. Upon having reasonable cause to suspect abuse of a minor, must notify the appropriate civil authorities, including law enforcement, the local District Attorney’s Office and/or the New York Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment, as well as church leadership responsible for responding to alleged abuse, including either the director of the Safe Environment Office or the general counsel of the Office of Legal Affairs, in accordance with civil law, ecclesial law and the archdiocesan Policy on Sexual Misconduct.
- IV. Confidentiality – Youth ministry leaders:
 - a. Respect confidentiality, yet are not held to confidentiality in the same way as ordained ministers and licensed, certified counselors.
 - b. Adhere to civil and ecclesial law concerning the reporting of neglect and abuse or when physical harm could come to another person. There is no confidentiality where there is a reasonable suspicion that abuse of a minor is, has or will occur.
 - c. Support the rights and roles of parents while ministering to the needs and concerns of their children.
- V. Conduct – Youth ministry leaders:
 - a. Know that they have considerable personal power because of their ministerial position. Therefore, they will sustain respectful ministerial relationships, avoiding manipulation and other abuses of power.
 - b. Maintain appropriate professional boundaries (e.g., physical, sexual, spiritual, relational and emotional). Romantic, dating or sexual relationships between a youth ministry leader and any youth is inappropriate, unethical, illegal and impermissible.
 - c. Shall exhibit the highest ethical standards and personal integrity reflective of the Gospel and will avoid even the appearance of impropriety.
 - d. Shall not use alcohol while supervising youth; shall never use illicit substances; and shall never provide alcohol or illicit substances to youth.
 - e. Shall not share, show, watch or discuss any sexually suggestive materials, including pornographic videos and images, with minors.
- VI. Referrals and Intervention – Youth ministry leaders:
 - a. Know the signs of neglect and physical, sexual and psychological abuse.
 - i. Indicators of physical abuse can include: injuries to the eyes or both sides of the head or body, frequently appearing injuries such as bruises, cuts and/or burns, especially if the child is unable to provide an adequate explanation of the cause. These may appear in distinctive patterns such as grab marks, human bite marks, cigarette burns or impressions of other instruments; destructive, aggressive or disruptive behavior; passive, withdrawn or emotionless behavior; and fear of going home or fear of parent(s).
 - ii. Indicators of sexual abuse can include: symptoms of sexually transmitted diseases; injury to genital area; difficulty and/or pain when sitting or walking; sexually suggestive, inappropriate or promiscuous behavior or verbalization; expressing age-inappropriate knowledge of sexual relations; and sexual victimization of other children.
 - iii. Indicators of maltreatment can include: obvious malnourishment, listlessness or fatigue; stealing or begging for food; lack of personal care – poor personal hygiene, torn and/or dirty clothes; untreated need for glasses, dental care, or other medical attention; frequent absence from or tardiness to school; and child inappropriately left unattended or without supervision.
 - b. Know their limitations with respect to paraprofessional counseling and make appropriate referrals.
- VII. Parish/Diocesan Policies – Youth ministry leaders:
 - a. Know of and comply with all applicable parish, organizational and/or archdiocesan policies, with special attention to sexual misconduct, safe environment, risk management, safety, transportation, parental permission and medical emergency policies.

I have read and understand the above code of ethics and commit to uphold this code in my ministry.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

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Parent/Guardian Consent Form and Liability Waiver

Description of Activity or Event

Activity/event: _____
Date of activity/event: _____
Location of activity/event: _____

Individuals in Charge:

From the parish/school: _____
Meeting site: _____
Mode of transportation: _____

Estimated Time of Departure/Arrival:

Departure from parish/school/site: Date: _____ Time: _____
Departure from activity/event site: Date: _____ Time: _____

Participant Information

Participant's name: _____
Birth date: _____ Age: _____ Sex: _____

Parent/guardian's name(s): _____

Home address: _____

Home phone: () _____

Work phone: () _____

Mobile phone(s): () _____

() _____

Permission to Participate

I, _____ (parent or guardian's name), grant permission for my child, _____ (child's name), to participate in this event that requires transportation to a location away from the parish/school site. This activity will take place under the guidance and direction of the parish/school employees and/or volunteers from _____ (name of parish/school).

OPTIONAL: (Initial here: _____) **I CONSENT** for my child to be photographed or recorded on video during the course of youth ministry events and for their image to be used in either print, electronic or video form for the promotional purpose of future activities.

Hold Harmless Agreement

As parent and/or legal guardian, I remain legally responsible for any personal actions taken by the above named minor ("participant").

I agree on behalf of myself, my child named herein, or our heirs, successors and assigns, to hold harmless and defend _____ (name of parish/school), its officers, directors, employees and agents, and the Archdiocese of New York, its employees and agents, chaperones or representatives associated with the event, from any claim arising from or in connection with my child attending the event or in connection with any illness or injury (including death) or cost of medical treatment in connection therewith, and I agree to compensate the parish, its officers, directors and agents, and the Archdiocese of New York, its employees and agents and chaperones, or representative associated with the event for reasonable attorney's fees and expenses which may incur in any action brought against them as a result of such injury or damage, unless such claim arises from the negligence of the parish/diocese.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Permiso de Padres/Tutores y Renuncia de Responsabilidad

Descripción de la Actividad/Evento

Evento/actividad: _____
Fecha de evento/actividad: _____
Lugar de evento/actividad: _____

Persona(s) Responsable(s):

De parte de la parroquia/escuela: _____
Lugar para reunirse: _____
Modo de transportación: _____

Horario Estimado para Partir/Regresar:

Partida de parroquia/escuela: Fecha: _____ Hora: _____
Partida de evento/actividad: Fecha: _____ Hora: _____

Información del Participante:

Nombre del participante: _____
Fecha de nacimiento: _____ Edad: _____ Sexo: _____

Nombre del padre o guardián : _____

Dirección completa: _____

Teléfono de casa: () _____

Teléfono del trabajo: () _____

Celular: () _____

() _____

Permiso para Participar

Yo, _____ (nombre del padre o tutor), doy permiso para que mi hijo(a), _____ (nombre del niño/niña), participe en los eventos de la iglesia donde requiere transportación a lugares fuera de la iglesia. Esta actividad se llevará a cabo bajo la dirección y guía de voluntarios y trabajadores de la Arquidiócesis de Nueva York y de la parroquia _____ (nombre de la parroquia/escuela).

OPCIONAL : _____ Al iniciar, **ME NIEGO** a dar mi consentimiento a que mi hijo(a) sea fotografiado y grabado, y que las imágenes puedan ser usadas en materiales de promoción de video, impresos, o electrónicos para futuro eventos.

Acuerdo para eximir de toda responsabilidad

Como padre y/o tutor legal, continúo siendo legalmente responsable por las acciones personales realizadas por el menor antes mencionado ("participante").

Estoy de acuerdo en nombre de mi mismo(a), mi hijo(a) antes mencionado(a), y nuestros herederos, sucesores, cesionarios, a eximir de responsabilidades y defender _____ (nombre de parroquia/escuela), sus funcionarios, directiva, empleados y agentes empleados, la Arquidiócesis de Nueva York, sus empleados y agentes, acompañantes, o representantes que están vinculados con el evento, de cualquier reclamación que surja de o en conexión con la asistencia de mi hijo/a al evento o en conexión con una enfermedad o lesión (incluyendo muerte) o costos de tratamiento médico en conexión con el mismo, y estoy de acuerdo de compensar a la parroquia, sus funcionarios, directivos y agentes, y la Arquidiócesis de Nueva York, sus empleados y agentes, o representantes que están vinculados con el evento los honorarios razonables de abogado y gastos que puedan incurrir en cualquier acción contra ellos como resultado de tales lesiones o daño, a menos que tal reclamación resulte de la negligencia de la parroquia/diócesis.

Firma: _____ Fecha: _____

Medical Consent and Permission to Treat

I hereby warrant that to the best of my knowledge, my child is in good health, and I assume all responsibility for the health of my child.

Of the following statements pertaining to medical matters, sign only those that are applicable.

Insurance Information:

Family health plan carrier: _____ Policy number: _____

Emergency Medical Treatment:

In the event of an emergency, I hereby give permission to transport my child to a hospital for emergency medical or surgical treatment. I wish to be advised prior to any further treatment by the hospital or doctor.

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

In the event of an emergency, if you are unable to reach me at the above numbers, contact:

Name: _____

Relationship: _____ Phone: () _____

My child is under the care of a medical provider: Yes No

Provider name: _____ Phone: () _____

Other Medical Treatment:

In the event it comes to the attention of the parish, its officers, directors and agents, and the chaperones or representatives associated with the activity, that my child becomes ill with symptoms such as headache, vomiting, sore throat, fever, diarrhea, I want to be called.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

READ AND SIGN IF YOUR CHILD IS TAKING MEDICATION AT PRESENT.

My child will bring all such medications necessary, and such medications will be well-labeled in a resealable bag. The bag must include instructions from the parent/guardian on how and when medication/treatments should be taken. Medications will be stored by the supervising adult leader in a secure area. At the prescribed times, youth can take their medications/treatments in the presence of a supervising adult leader. **Medications/treatments that require any form of disrobing must be self-administered by the student privately.** Exceptions to this policy are medications that need to be in the constant possession of the youth (e.g. insulin, inhalers or epinephrine pens).

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Specific Medical Information:

The parish will take reasonable care to see that the following information will be held in confidence.

Allergic reactions (medications, foods, plants, insects, etc.): _____

Date of last tetanus/diphtheria immunization: _____

Does your child have a medically prescribed diet? Yes No

Any physical limitations? Yes No

Is your child subject to chronic homesickness, emotional reactions to new situations, sleepwalking or fainting?

Yes: _____ No

Has your child recently been exposed to contagious disease or conditions, such as mumps, measles, chicken pox, etc.?

Yes No

If yes, list date and disease/condition: _____

You should be aware of these special medical conditions of my child: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Consentimiento Médico y Permiso para Ser Tratado

Por la presente, garantizo que en base a mi conocimiento, mi hijo(a) se encuentra en buen estado de salud y asumo toda la responsabilidad por la salud de mi hijo(a).

De las siguientes declaraciones relacionadas con los asuntos médicos, firme sólo las que son aplicables.

Información del seguro:

Compañía de plan de salud familiar: _____ Numero de póliza: _____

Tratamiento médico de emergencia:

En el caso de una emergencia, por la presente doy permiso a transportar a mi hijo(a) a un hospital para el tratamiento médico de emergencia o tratamiento quirúrgico. Deseo ser informado antes de cualquier tratamiento adicional por el hospital o médico.

Firma: _____ Fecha: _____

En el caso de una emergencia, si Ud. no puede ponerse en contacto conmigo en los números antedichos, póngase en contacto con:

Nombre: _____

Relación: _____ Teléfono: () _____

Mi hijo(a) está bajo el cuidado de un proveedor medico: Si No

Médico familiar: _____ Teléfono: () _____

Otro tratamiento médico:

En el caso de que llega a la atención de la parroquia/escuela, sus funcionarios, directivos y agentes, y de la Arquidiócesis de Nueva York, acompañantes, o representantes que están vinculados con la actividad, que mi hijo(a) se pone malo con síntomas como dolor de la cabeza, vómito, dolor de la garganta, fiebre, diarrea, quiero que me llame por llamada a cobrar (por cobrar yo mismo).

Firma: _____ Fecha: _____

LEA Y FIRME SI TU HIJO(A) ESTÁ TOMANDO MEDICAMENTOS EN ESTE MOMENTO.

Mi hijo(a) traerá todos los medicamentos necesarios, y tales medicamentos deberán llevar una etiqueta que indique claramente su contenido. Los medicamentos/tratamientos que requieran cualquier forma de desnudez deben ser auto administrados por el alumno en privado. Las excepciones a esta política son medicamentos que deben estar en posesión constante del joven. (p.ej. insulina, inhaladores, EpiPens). Nombres de los medicamentos y direcciones concisas para asegurar que el niño toma tales medicamentos, incluyendo la dosis y frecuencia de la dosis, son los siguientes.

Firma: _____ Fecha: _____

Información médica específica:

La parroquia asegura de tomar las medidas necesarias para que toda esta información sea mantenida confidencial.

Reacciones alérgicas (medicamentos, comidas, plantas, insectos, etc.): _____

Inmunizaciones: Fecha de última inmunización de tétanos/difteria: _____

¿Tiene su hijo(a) una dieta medicamente recetada? Si No

¿Tiene su hijo(a) alguna limitación física? Si No

¿Tiene su hijo(a) nostalgia crónica, reacciones emocionales a situaciones nuevas, sonambulismo, enuresis nocturnal, o desmayos?

Si: _____ No

¿Ha estado expuesto recientemente su hijo(a) a alguna enfermedad contagiosa o condiciones, como las paperas, el sarampión, la varicela? Si No

En caso afirmativo, escriba la fecha y la enfermedad o condición: _____

Necesita estar consciente de estas condiciones médicas específicas de mi hijo(a): _____

Firma: _____ Fecha: _____

Adult Liability Waiver

Each adult participant, including group leaders and chaperones, must sign this form.

Release of Liability/Medical Release

I, _____ (full name), agree on behalf of myself, my heirs, assigns, executors and personal representatives, to hold harmless and defend _____ (name of parish/school), its officers, directors, employees and agents, the Archdiocese of New York, its employees and agents, chaperones or representatives associated with the event, from any claim arising from or in connection with my attending the event or in connection with any illness or injury (including death) or cost of medical treatment in connection therewith, and I agree to compensate the parish, its officers, directors and agents, and the Archdiocese of New York, its employees, agents, chaperones or representative associated with the event for reasonable attorney's fees and expenses which may incur in any action brought against them as a result of such injury or damage, unless such claim arises from the negligence of the parish/diocese.

I know and will uphold the Safe Environment policies and practices of the Archdiocese of New York.

In the event that I should require medical treatment and I am not able to communicate my desires to attending physicians or other medical personnel, I give permission for the necessary emergency treatment to be administered. Please advise the doctors of the following:

Allergies: _____

(Optional) Medical conditions: _____

(Optional) Medications: _____

In case of an emergency and for permission for treatment beyond emergency procedures, please contact:

Name: _____

Relationship to me: _____

Daytime phone: () _____ Evening phone: () _____

Health insurance carrier: _____

Insurance ID number: _____ Insurance policy number: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Print name: _____

Formulario de Conformidad Para Adultos

Este formulario debe de ser completado por cada adulto y chaperón que asista al evento.

Acuerdo para eximir de toda responsabilidad/Consentimiento Médico

Yo, _____ (nombre completo), estoy de acuerdo en nombre de mi mismo(a), mis herederos, sucesores, cesionarios, a eximir de responsabilidades y defender _____ (nombre de parroquia/escuela), sus funcionarios, directiva, empleados y agentes empleados, y la Arquidiócesis de Nueva York, sus empleados y agentes, acompañantes, o representantes que están vinculados con el evento, de cualquier reclamación que surja de o en conexión con mi asistencia al evento o en conexión con una enfermedad o lesión (incluyendo muerte) o costos de tratamiento médico en conexión con el mismo, y estoy de acuerdo de compensar a la parroquia, sus funcionarios, directivos y agentes, y la Arquidiócesis de Nueva York, sus empleados y agentes, o representantes que están vinculados con el evento los honorarios razonables de abogado y gastos que puedan incurrir en cualquier acción contra ellos como resultado de tales lesiones o daños, a menos que tal reclamación resulte de la negligencia de la parroquia/diócesis.

Sé que debo y defenderé las políticas y prácticas del departamento de Safe Environment (Departamento de Ambiente Seguro) de la Arquidiócesis de Nueva York.

En el caso de que necesite algún tratamiento médico y no pueda comunicar mis deseos a los médicos u otro personal médico, doy permiso para que se administre cualquier tratamiento de emergencia que sea necesario. Por favor avise a los doctores de lo siguiente:

Alergias: _____

(Opcional) Condiciones médicas: _____

(Opcional) Medicamentos: _____

En caso de una emergencia y para un permiso de tratamiento más allá de los procedimientos de emergencia, por favor de comunicarse con:

Nombre: _____

Relación: _____

Tel. celular: () _____ Tel. alternativo: () _____

Compañía de seguro medico: _____

No. de póliza: _____ No. de identificación del seguro: _____

Firma: _____ Fecha: _____

Imprima nombre: _____

Driver Information Sheet

Driver:

Name: _____ Date of birth: _____

Address: _____

Driver's license number: _____ License expiration date: _____

Phone number: _____

Vehicle that will be used:

Name of owner: _____

Address of owner: _____

Make of vehicle: _____ Model of vehicle: _____

Year of vehicle: _____ Registration expiration date: _____

License plate number: _____ License plate expiration date: _____

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

Insurance information:

When using a privately owned vehicle, the insurance coverage is the limit of the insurance policy covering that specific vehicle.

Insurance company: _____ Policy number: _____

Policy expiration date: _____ Policy liability limits: _____

**Please note: The minimal, acceptable liability for privately owned vehicles is \$100,000 / \$300,000.*

In order to provide for the safety of our students or other members of the parish and those we serve, we must ask each volunteer driver to list all accidents or moving violations they have had in the past five years:

Please be aware that as a volunteer driver, your insurance is primary.

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 driver, I must be 21 years of age or older, possess a valid driver's license, have the proper and current license and vehicle registration, and have the required insurance coverage in effect on any vehicle used to transport students. I agree that I will refrain from using a cellphone or any other electronic device while operating my vehicle.*

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Creating a Code of Conduct for Youth and Adults for Events

The following is a sample of content you may desire to have in a youth code of conduct for events, retreats, or other gatherings. Having clear expectations and consequences can prevent issues from arising.

Here are the three key questions a code of conduct must address:

- What is the behavior you desire?
- What is not acceptable?
- What are the consequences if someone does not follow the code of conduct?

Sample Code of Conduct

As a participant, I will:

- Project an image of Christian consideration, sensitivity and respect to everyone and to the property around them through language, dress and behavior
- Maintain the spirit of the event
- Attend all scheduled activities, arriving promptly and staying for the entire event
- Refrain from inappropriate touching, public displays of affection and verbal harassment
- Respect other persons and/or property
- Refrain from actions that could result in injury and/or damage to property
- Adhere to stated curfew and “lights out”
- Report emergency or problems of any kind to a trusted adult

As a participant, I will not:

- Possess weapons of any kind
- Purchase, possess, consume or distribute alcohol
- Purchase, possess, consume or distribute illegal drugs
- Engage in any form of sexual activity or peer sexual harassment
- Engage in any form of bullying, intimidation or harassment – verbal, physical or online
- Purchase, download, possess or distribute pornography
- Visit or gather in sleeping areas of or with the opposite sex

If a problem of any kind occurs during the event, I will immediately go to a trusted adult to discuss the matter.

We, my parent(s)/guardian and I, understand that failure to agree to and abide by the Youth Code of Conduct will result in the dismissal from the event and my parents being called to pick me up in a timely manner. If the violation in any way violates laws, local authorities may need to be notified.

Signature of participant: _____

Signature of parent/guardian: _____

Incident Investigation Report for Injuries

Complete this report for all incidents/injuries. (Also, complete this report for near-miss incidents/injuries). This report is for information only. All claims should be reported immediately to Catholic Mutual Group and faxed to (212) 826-8379. Please read each question carefully and answer all questions as completely as you can. **Please do not leave any blanks**, unless the question does not apply.

Name of injured person: _____

Phone: () _____

Complete address: _____

Names of witnesses and their complete addresses and phone numbers:

Describe the incident

State what the individual was doing and all circumstances leading up to the incident. Try to reconstruct the chain of events leading up to the incident/injury. Be specific.

Who was involved? _____

What took place? _____

Date and time of incident: _____

Where did it happen? _____

Why did it happen? _____

How did it happen? _____

Incident investigation conducted by: _____

Signature of individual in charge: _____

Date report prepared: _____

Youth Ministry Information Sheet

Name of parish: _____

Name of student: _____

Address: _____

Birthdate: _____ Phone: () _____

School attending: _____ Current grade: _____

Please complete all relevant information:

Mother's full name: _____ Mobile phone: () _____

Father's full name: _____ Mobile phone: () _____

Stepparent's full name: _____ Mobile phone: () _____

Stepparent's full name: _____ Mobile phone: () _____

Legal guardian's full name: _____ Mobile phone: () _____

Name of **primary emergency contact**: _____ Mobile phone: () _____

Are there any medical, physical or cognitive conditions that the youth ministry team needs to be aware of, such as allergies, seizures, physical limitations, etc.? Yes No

If yes, please describe condition and any appropriate guidelines for our volunteers. We also recommend speaking directly to the youth ministry coordinator.

Please **INITIAL** all appropriate items:

_____ I give you permission to contact my child via FLOCKNOTE text (Safe-Environment compliant)

_____ I give you permission to contact my child via FLOCKNOTE email (Safe-Environment compliant)

_____ I give you permission to be photographed or recorded on video during the course of youth ministry events. By initialing I provide consent for their image to be used in either print, electronic or video form for the promotional purpose of future activities.

Signature of legal guardian: _____

Date: _____



ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK

Testimonial of Suitability for Lay Speakers/Presenters

Please mail completed form to:

Pastor: _____

Parish: _____

Street address: _____ Apt: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

I write to inform you that the following person has been invited by _____
_____ (parish name) to present in the Archdiocese of New York.

Speaker name: _____

Event: _____

Date(s): _____

I have carefully reviewed all of our personnel files and all other records, and I have consulted with those who have served with _____ regarding his/her suitability to serve as a speaker who is in union with the Magisterium of the Roman Catholic Church with respect to faith and morals. Based on these inquiries, I make the following statements:

- He/she is a person in good standing of our (arch)diocese.
- He/she has never behaved in such a way as to indicate that they might deal with minors in an inappropriate manner.
- The date of his/her last Safe Environment training is _____
- The date of his/her last background check is _____

Based on my inquiries and my personal knowledge, _____ is fully qualified to serve as speaker/presenter in an effective and suitable manner.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name (printed): _____ Title: _____

Request for Approval: Overnight Event

This form must be submitted at least six weeks in advance to the pastor, and is also available online at OYMNY.org, under "Guidelines and Policies."

Parish name: _____

Parish city: _____

Contact person: _____ Phone: () _____

Address: _____

City: _____ ZIP: _____

Type of overnight event (e.g. retreat, service trip): _____

Event dates: _____ Location: _____

What is the purpose of this event? _____

What activities will occur on this event? Please attach a schedule. _____

The participants are: Male only Female only Male and female

What are the sleeping accommodations, and how are they compliant with Safe Environment/Youth Ministry policies?

What are the bathroom/shower arrangements, and how are they compliant with Safe Environment/Youth Ministry policies?

What is the adult/student ratio? _____

Have you ensured all adults are Safe Environment trained and background screened? Yes No

What type of transportation will be used? _____

What type of training/preparation will be done for your adult leaders in advance? _____

Pastor signature: _____ Date: _____

Safe Environment and Smart Ministry Checklist

Safe Environment

- All of the adults (18+) who are regularly involved in the ministry are safe environment compliant and current.
Remember:
 - Background checks need to be updated every six years.
 - Young adult participants must also be safe environment compliant.
 - There are different requirements for different levels of adult involvement (see the Safe Environment Policy Manual).
- We always have appropriate adult supervision at all gatherings of young people:
 - Minimum of two adults over 21 years old at every gathering.
 - 1 adult for every 10 youth for on-site events.
 - 1 adult for every 8 youth for off-site events.
- We never hold youth gatherings in private homes.
- Every few months we give the names of all adults to our parish safe environment coordinator.
- We use a physical space that is well lit and safe.
- We never meet with a young person by him/herself in a location where no one else can see us.
- We seek approval for all overnight events.
- We follow archdiocesan safe environment protocols even when attending events held by non-archdiocesan groups (e.g., a weekend at a retreat center or an event hosted by a ministry organization or movement).

Smart Ministry

- Young people always sign in and sign out at every gathering.
- We have the phone number of our teens' parents/guardians in case of emergency.
- We use permission and release forms for all off-site events and overnight events.
- Our youth ministry coordinator has a phone number for the pastor in case of an emergency.
- There is easy access to an up-to-date first-aid kit at all gatherings.
- All of our adults know what to do in the following emergencies:
 - Injuries and injuries involving blood/body fluids
 - Threats of suicide or harm to others
 - Fire
 - Sudden weather event
 - Unauthorized individual(s) on church property
 - Active shooter



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