

Archdiocese of New Orleans

Safe Environment Program

Promise To Protect,

Pledge To Heal

August 2009



A Prayer For Healing

God of endless love, ever caring, ever strong, always present, always just: You gave us your only Son to save us by the blood of his cross. Gentle Jesus, shepherd of peace, join to your own suffering the pain of all who have been hurt in body, mind, and spirit by those who betrayed the trust placed in them.

Hear our cries as we agonize over the harm done to our brothers and sisters. Breathe wisdom into our prayers, soothe restless hearts with hope, steady shaken spirits with faith: Show us the way to justice and wholeness, enlightened by truth and enfolded in your mercy.

Holy Spirit, comforter of hearts, heal your people's wounds and transform our brokenness. Grant us courage and wisdom, humility and grace, so that we may act with justice and find peace in you.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

The Archdiocese of New Orleans will ensure that children who worship, study, and participate in activities sponsored by the Archdiocese can do so in the safest and most secure setting possible.





The Archdiocese of New Orleans will cooperate with parents, civil authorities, educators, and community organizations to provide education and training for children, youth, parents, ministers, educators, and others about ways to make and maintain a safe environment for children.

The Archdiocese will make clear to clergy and members of the community the standards of conduct for clergy and other persons in positions of trust with regard to sexual abuse.

(Article 12, Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People)

<http://www.usccb.org/ocyp/charter.shtml>

Under the Charter, the Archdiocese of New Orleans does all of the following

Established **age-appropriate** safe environment
training for children

Training is offered to the children

The **Archdiocese** provides the training

We provide forms for documentation
to ensure training has taken place



<http://www.arch-no.org/>

PRINCIPLES FOR CHILD PROTECTION CATECHESIS



1. Each person is uniquely made in the image and likeness of God.

God is love.

Each person is made in the image of love and created to act in love.

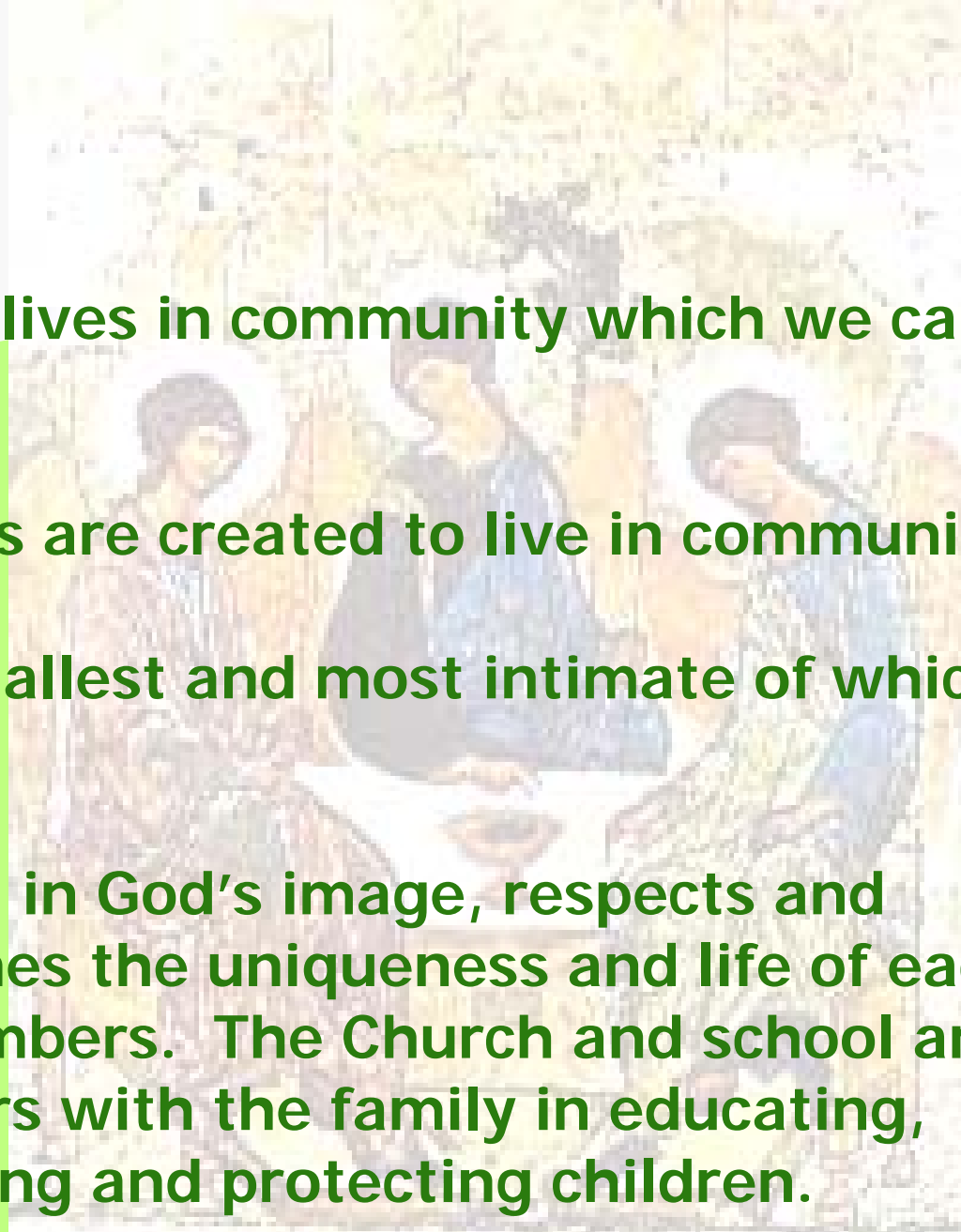
Our bodies are sacred and holy.

2. God lives in community which we call Trinity.

Persons are created to live in community.

The smallest and most intimate of which is family.

Family, in God's image, respects and cherishes the uniqueness and life of each of its members. The Church and school are partners with the family in educating, nurturing and protecting children.



3. Each person has dignity and must be treated with respect. We show our respect in our language, behavior, and interactions with each other.



Caring and concern and empathy for each other must be a hallmark of our lives as followers of Jesus. Because of the dignity of each person, our right to respect includes the right to privacy, especially privacy for our own bodies.



4. Touch is an integral part of being human. Touch can be safe, unsafe or unwanted. Safe touch, appropriate physical affection, is that kind of touch which is good for the person's body, makes one feel cared for, loved and important.

Unsafe and unwanted touch makes a person feel uncomfortable and unhappy.

5. God has blessed every person with the gift of choice.

Some bad choices affect a number of people negatively. Suffering, which is not willed by God and is not the fault of innocent persons, is the result of those bad choices.





6. Some actions or behaviors are wrong.

Some actions or behaviors between adults, between adults and children and between children are wrong.

Behavior that harms self or others physically, psychologically, emotionally, or spiritually is wrong.

7. There are good secrets and bad secrets.

There is good play and bad play.

We can share good secrets and good play experiences and we must avoid bad secrets and bad experiences.





8. Good and loving human relationships and friendships can help us understand ourselves, God and others. Some people misuse friendship and harm others.



9. Every person has the right to be safe. Children have the right to be protected from anything and anyone who may harm them. Adults have the responsibility to make the environment in which children live as safe as possible. That includes teaching children and young people proper, adequate coping and safety skills which will enable them to be safe and healthy.



http://www.missingkids.com/en_US/publications/NC60.pdf

See Missing & Exploited Children Handout

10. Parents and teachers have the responsibility to assist children to identify a number of people in their lives to whom they can talk openly and honestly.



Children must be taught that if help is not received to keep telling other trusted adults until someone helps them.

Policy Concerning Abuse or Neglect of Minors

Archdiocese of New Orleans

July 1, 2003

Questionnaire



Acknowledges personnel have received and read *"The Policy Concerning Abuse and Neglect of Minors of the Archdiocese of New Orleans"* , revised July 2003

Prospective Employees or Volunteers who will have regular contact with minors must complete this form once.

Agreement of adult to conduct himself/herself in accordance with the above mentioned policy.

Background Check



- **Volunteer or Employee Background Check Disclosure & Authorization Form.**
- Gives permission to conduct the background check and disclose information to the parish, school, office, agency.
- Disclosed information is kept on file in the parish, school, office, or agency in a secure place.
- Information is kept on file permanently and the background check must be conducted every three years. **ALL EMPLOYEES and VOLUNTEERS MUST BE SCREENED IN FALL OF 2007.**

Supervisory personnel within the Archdiocese of New Orleans evaluate the results of the background investigation.

-Pastor



-Director of the department, agency, institution, or related entity.

-Confidential; permanent record

Policy Concerning Abuse or Neglect of Minors, July 1, 2003 V. #3 & 4

What constitutes child abuse?

Sexual abuse:

includes sexual molestation or sexual exploitation of a minor and other behavior by which an adult uses a minor as an object of sexual gratification.

Other Physical Abuse:

The infliction or attempted infliction of physical injury or, as a result of inadequate supervision, the allowance of physical injury to a minor.

Corporal punishment is not to be administered to any child or young person in the Archdiocese of New Orleans.

Principles of Ethics and Integrity in Ministry, p. 14

Neglect:

The refusal or willful failure by a caretaker to provide for a minor the proper or necessary medical care, nutrition, or other care necessary for a minor's well-being.

See Prevent Child Abuse Louisiana Handout

Actions, procedures, and policies used to prevent child abuse in the Archdiocese of New Orleans:



Education, training required for clergy, ministers, educators, parents volunteers, church personnel and all adults who have regular contact with minors in the Archdiocese

- Policy Concerning Abuse or Neglect of Minors, July 1, 2003
- Principles of Ethics and Integrity in Ministry: Code of Ethics

The exploitation of children has unfortunately become a “growth industry,” according to FBI Director Robert S. Mueller, III, but the Bureau is “working every day to find and stop those who prey on our children.”



http://www.fbi.gov/page2/august08/cac_082208.html



Principles of Ethics and Integrity in Ministry: CODE OF ETHICS

December 5, 2003



In the interest of protecting minors, Church personnel are prohibited from:

Emotional Abuse:

- A. Being intoxicated or using or possessing illegal drugs while in the presence of minors.**
- B. Using profanity in the presence of minor.**
- C. Speaking to minors in a way that is or could be reasonable construed by any observer as harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating.**

In the interest of protecting minors, Church personnel are prohibited from: (continued)

Sexual Abuse:

- A. Discussing their own sexual activities with minors.**
- B. Engaging in any sexually oriented conversations with minors unless the conversations are part of a legitimate lesson and discussion for teenagers regarding human sexuality issues. On such occasions, the lessons will convey to youth the Church's teachings on these topics. If youth have further questions not answered or addressed by the individual teachers they should be referred to their parents or guardians for clarification or counseling.**
- C. Being nude in the presence of minors.**
- D. Possessing sexually oriented or morally inappropriate printed materials (magazines, cards, videos, films, clothing, etc...).**
- E. Sleeping in the same beds, sleeping bags or small tents with minors unless the adult is an immediate family member of the minor.**

Standards of the Archdiocese As to Physical Contact with Minors

Principles of
Ethics and Integrity in Ministry:
CODE OF ETHICS

December 5, 2003

Pages 14 - 15



Identifying an adult who may be abusing a minor . . .

- An adult who is more comfortable around children than persons his/her age.
- An adult who, although subtle, is consistent in giving attention and small gifts to a particular child.
- An adult who hangs around school yards and play areas without appropriate reasons.

http://www.usccb.org/ocyp/children_safety.shtml

Laws and Policies regarding the reporting of abuse of a minor . . .

Louisiana Child Abuse or Neglect Reporting Law
(LS.A.,RS. 14:403; LA. Children's Code Arts. 601 – 616)
Addendum 4

Policy Concerning Abuse or Neglect of Minors, July 1, 2003

See LA Code Handout

**Principles of Ethics and Integrity in
Ministry: Code of Ethics**

Abuse Reporting Form for LA

<http://www.dss.state.la.us/assets/docs/seachable/OCS/CPI-2.pdf>



Action to be taken by an adult when they believe a minor is being abused by those who serve the Archdiocese

Policy Concerning Abuse or Neglect of Minors, July 1, 2003
VI – X pages 3 – 8

✓ **OBLIGATION TO REPORT**

Must comply with state, local, and federal laws

✓ Must report suspected abuse *IMMEDIATELY TO THE PROPER AUTHORITIES*

Verbal report - immediately – to their Supervisor who will report to the Executive Director of Department

Written report – Addendum 3 (yellow)

to Executive Director – by person who initially received the report or learned of abuse or neglect

Consultation with Archdiocesan Attorney – regarding fulfillment of requirements under this policy and LA law

Training for Children and Youth

- **Include age appropriate materials pertaining to personal safety.**
- **Information about improper touching and relationships.**
- **How children and youth can seek assistance from a trusted adult.**
- **Children and youth in Catholic Schools and Parish Religious Education Programs are to receive the same basic training in the school or parish. Some parish programs may have to be modified due to time constraints.**

Training for Children and Youth

a PARENT can refuse the Safe Environment training

FOUR CONDITIONS MUST BE MET:

- Archdiocese must offer the training to the child
- Safe Environment training material must be provided to the parent
- Parent must state in writing: (1) training was offered to their child; (2) that they refused to allow their child to participate in the training; (3) that they have received the training materials
- This document must be maintained by the archdiocese for accountability

TRAINING FOR PARENTS

Multiple delivery methods:

- **Formal training sessions**
- **Information posted on the Archdiocese of New Orleans web-site.**
- **Notices sent home from principal, DRE, or director of the youth group.**

What must be sent to the Archdiocese

**The Safe Environment Employee and
Volunteer Training Form (with signatures)**

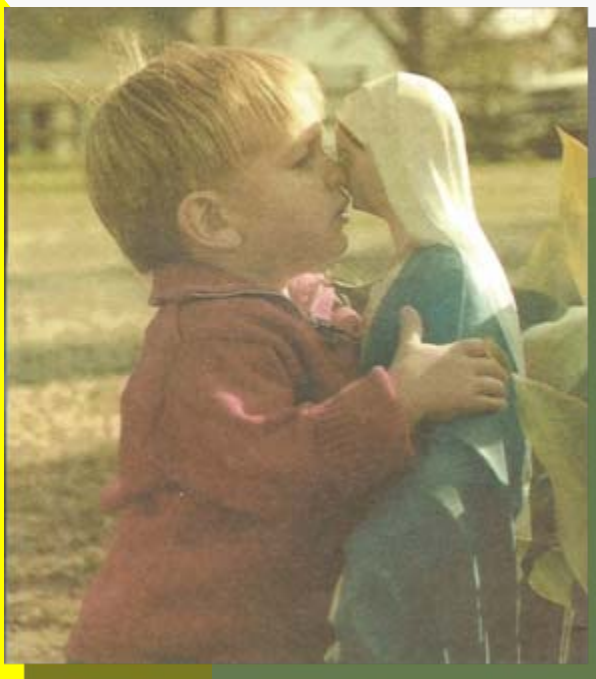
**2009 – 2010 PARISH and SCHOOL
ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORTS**

**Written statements from parents who have
refused the training**

MEDIA



**ALL media contacts are made by the
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS.**



Due to the dynamic nature of parish life and personnel turnover, the safe environment program will be incorporated into the long-term mission of the Archdiocese of New Orleans.

All new employees, volunteers, and all who have regular contact with minors are to receive "safe environment" training and adhere to the codes of conduct of the Archdiocese of New Orleans.