

Code of Conduct
CYO Coaches' Safe Environment Training
November 2008

Summary of policy:

- The Diocese of Springfield desires to implement and maintain a positive and nurturing environment for our children and youth while at the same time preventing harm. The following agreement addresses conduct expected of all staff and volunteers working with children and youth in Diocesan programs.
- Physical contact with minors, youth and vulnerable adults should occur (a) only when completely nonsexual and otherwise appropriate, and (b) never in private.
- Corporal punishment (spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting or any touching that a reasonable person would construe as punitive) is prohibited.
- Personnel must be aware of their own and others' vulnerability when working alone with minors. Use a team approach by ensuring that there are always two or more adults present when managing all activities where children and youth are present.

Appropriate affection between Diocesan Personnel and minors is often important for a child's development and can be a positive part of church life and ministry. Some examples of appropriate forms of affection include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Verbal praise
- Shoulder-to-shoulder hugs or "side hugs"
- Pats on the shoulder or back
- Handshakes, "high-fives," hand slapping or knuckle-bumps
- Holding hands while walking with small children
- Holding hands during prayer
- Pats on the head, when culturally appropriate

Examples of INAPPROPRIATE contact not to be used include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Kisses on the mouth and inappropriate or lengthy hugs or embraces
- Holding children and youth on one's lap
- Touching buttocks, genital areas, or breasts, and touching knees, thighs, or legs as a show of affection.
- Showing physical displays of affection in isolated areas of the premises such as bathrooms, closets, "Employee-Only" areas, or other private rooms.
- Wrestling, tickling, horseplay and piggyback rides
- Any type of massage
- Any unwanted display of affection
- Actions that include compliments relating to sexual attractiveness or sexual development

As a staff or volunteer of a program sponsored by the Diocese of Springfield, I pledge to follow the rules and guidelines in the Code of Conduct when I am working with children and youth,

1. I will treat everyone with respect, loyalty, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity, and consideration.
2. I will respect the physical, emotional and behavioral boundaries of other staff and volunteers, children and youth.
3. I will participate in a "Safe Environment" training provided by the Diocese, complete a CORI background check through the Diocese, and read and sign the Code of Conduct.
4. I will avoid situations in which I am the only adult responsible for children and youth in CYO/parish activities, such as practices, games, meetings, and setting up or clearing up such events.
5. I will avoid smoking and/or using tobacco products in the presence of children/youth.

6. I will use positive reinforcement and praise rather than criticism, competition, or comparison when working with children and/or youth.
7. I will refrain from giving or accepting gifts to/from minors without prior written approval from the parents or guardian and the pastor or administrator.
8. I will take allegations of child abuse seriously and will report suspected child abuse to the Department of Social Services. I understand that as a volunteer or staff in a church-sponsored program, I am legally mandated to report suspected abuse to civil authorities. I understand that failure to report to the police or the Department of Children and Families (DSS or DCF) is a misdemeanor according to the law. I will also report allegations or suspicions of abuse to the CYO Coordinator.
9. I will cooperate fully within the requirements of the law in any investigation involving abuse of a minor.
10. I will comply with other rules, regulations and guidelines for the protection and safety of children and youth that are required by the CYO.

I will not:

1. I will not make contact with any child or youth in a sexual or other inappropriate manner.
2. I will not bring sexually oriented or morally inappropriate materials (magazines, calendars, cards, videos, films, website material, computer files, cell phone camera images, clothing or other items containing inappropriate materials) onto Diocesan or CYO property or show them to children or youth.
3. I will not strike, spank, shake, push, or slap children or youth.
4. I will not use any discipline or coaching method that verbally abuses and/or humiliates children and/or youth.
5. I will not use, possess, provide, or be under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol when working with children or youth.
6. I will not use, possess or allow access to a firearm when in the presence of children/youth.
7. I will not use vulgarity or profanity in the presence of children and/or youth.

I understand that as a staff or volunteer of the CYO in a program sponsored by the Diocese of Springfield, I am subject to a thorough background check including criminal history. I understand that any action inconsistent with this Code of Conduct or failure to take action mandated by this Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action.

Printed Name

Position

Signature

Date

Parish

City/Town