

The Catholic Community of Saint Francis of Assisi
Child and Youth Protection

Sensitivity Training

In order to create a safe environment for your children and youth, it is necessary to make sure our actions and our words are clearly wholesome. Care must be taken that there is no misunderstanding regarding the intentions of what we say and do. For this reason, the following behavioral guidelines are required for all employees and volunteers in the presence of minors.

Physical Contact

For preschool children, frontal hugs and allowing children to sit on laps should be the exception and not the rule, and should always be done in the presence of other adults approved as employees or Level C or B volunteer (two deep ministry).

For Kindergarten and older, there should be no frontal hugs and no sitting on laps.

For Grade 4 and older, there should be no hugs, back rubs, arms draped over shoulders, or any other physical contact that may be misconstrued.

Physical discipline should never be used for any reason.

Restroom assistance can be given to preschool-age children if needed but only using proper procedures. The child should have his/her back to the volunteer/employee who should reach around the child to assist. The restroom door should be open at all times and two-deep ministry is required. The employee/volunteer should remain outside the restroom stall. Personal hygiene is the responsibility of the child. Children too young to attend to their personal hygiene should be accompanied by parents/guardians for all programs.

For changing diapers, two adults approved for employee or Level C or B volunteer must be present.

For Kindergarten and older, assistance in the restroom should be given only when absolutely required. Adults assisting in restrooms should keep the door open at all times and should not be in the stall with the minor. Two-deep ministry is required.

Employees and volunteers should schedule one-on-one counseling sessions or meetings with minors only when necessary for ministerial purposes and only at times and locations that promote accountability and meet accepted standards of propriety. They should limit the length and the number of meetings, make referrals as appropriate and notify the parents/guardian of the meetings.

Employees and volunteers are prohibited from sleeping in the same bed, van or sleeping bag or tent with a minor unless the adult is a parent/guardian/sibling of the minor. Employees and volunteers should not take a trip alone with a minor who is not an immediate family member, and should avoid being along with a minor in a locker room, restroom, dressing facility, car or transportation vehicle or other isolated area that is not appropriate to a ministerial relationship. Changing and showering facilities should be separate for male and female. Facilities and

arrangements for minors should be separate from that for adults or should be used by adults at different times.

Language

For Kindergarten and older, there should be no use of nicknames such as “Sweetie”, “Honey”, or any other that might be construed as having a flirtatious implication.

Employees and volunteers should not use any language to minors in a manner that is or may be construed to be derogatory, demeaning or humiliating.

Employees and volunteers should not use swearing or foul language and should not tell derogatory or sexually-explicit jokes or stories in the presence of minors.

Inappropriate Behavior or Actions Toward a Minor

Employees or volunteers who witness inappropriate by others towards minors should take immediate steps to provide a safe environment for the minor(s) and report the behavior to the program supervisor.

Inappropriate Behavior by Minor

If a situation should arise in which an employee or volunteer feels that a minor is flirting or in some other way is trying to inappropriately attract an adult, the behavior should be reported to the program supervisor immediately.