



**POLICIES FOR THE
PROTECTION OF
CHILDREN AND YOUTH FROM ABUSE**

With additional Safety and Behavioral Guidelines for Children and Youth Programs

Episcopal Diocese of Bethlehem

*333 Wyandotte Street
Bethlehem, PA 18015
610.691.5655*

Adopted by
Diocesan Council
December 16, 2004
Amended June 30, 2005

Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Code of Conduct for Protection of Children and Youth	3
Definitions of Terms	4
A. Church Personnel.....	4
B. Children and Youth.....	4
C. Regularly Work with or around Children or Youth.....	4
D. Occasionally Work with or around Children or Youth.....	5
E. Types of Abuse.....	6
Safeguards for Children and Youth	7
A. Screening and Selection.....	7
B. Education and Training Requirements.....	8
C. Monitoring and Supervision of Programs.....	9
D. General Conduct for the Protection of Children and Youth.....	11
Responding to Problems	14
A. Reporting Inappropriate Behaviors or Policy Violations.....	14
B. Reporting Suspected Abuse of Children or Youth.....	14
Appendix	16
A. Guidelines for Appropriate Affection.....	16
B. Guidelines for Safety, Medical and Transportation.....	18
C. Applications, Medical Release Forms and Community Life Standards Form.....	20
D. Acknowledgement of Receipt of Policy.....	21
E. Acknowledgement of Receipt by the Vestry.....	22

Introduction

Philosophy

Ministry with children and youth, like much of the work Jesus Christ has given us to do, is a ministry of relationship. Children, youth and adult supervisors, parents, clergy and other volunteers come into contact with one another to share their lives, worship, have fun and explore how their spiritual beliefs shape their lives.

Jesus Christ calls us to loving relationship that are healthy and helpful to each other, not taking advantage of those who are weaker or putting people in situations that are inappropriate for their age or maturity. All persons involved in ministry with children and youth, whether child, youth or adult, deserve to be treated as Jesus Christ would treat them, with love, respect, kindness and as an end in themselves rather than a means to another's wishes. We are to seek God's purposes for one another and not our own selfish purposes.

All participants in ministry to children and youth deserve to be in a safe environment; which includes, but is not limited to, an environment that is free from harassment, abuse, and misconduct. These policies are meant to help provide for such an environment.

Theological Statement

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

One of the oldest Christian Collects helps to set the tone as we consider together the task of responding to these policies regarding the protection of children and youth from abuse. We pray, "O God, who wonderfully created, and yet more wonderfully restored, the dignity of human nature: Grant that we may share the divine life of him who humbled himself to share our humanity, your Son Jesus Christ..."

These policies are our way of responding to the culture we live within with godly respect for the dignity of human nature so wonderfully created and wonderfully restored in Christ Jesus. It is our way of humbly joining with Jesus who humbled himself to share our humanity. It is our way of carrying out the Baptismal Covenant to seek and serve Christ in all persons, respecting the dignity of every human being. It is our way of holy love, our way of loving our neighbor as we love ourselves in the love of God.

Faithfully yours,

The Right Reverend Paul V. Marshall
Bishop

Code of Conduct for Protection of Children and Youth

Relationships among people are at the foundation of Christian ministry and as such are central to the life of the church. Defining healthy and safe relationships through policies and codes of conduct is not meant, in any way, to undermine the strength and importance of personal interaction in our ministries. Rather, it is to assist in more clearly defining behaviors and practices that allow the church to more fully demonstrate its love and compassion for children and youth in sincere and genuine relationships.

Relationships in ministry should, ideally, always be experienced as caring and without intention to do harm or allow harm to occur. This Code of Conduct has been adopted by The Diocese of Bethlehem [Parish] to help the church create safe environments for children and youth and for those who minister to them. All Church Personnel are asked to carefully consider each statement in the Code and within the *Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth from Abuse* before agreeing to adhere to the statements and continue in service to the church.

Code of Conduct for Protection of Children and Youth

- Church Personnel agree to do their best to prevent abuse and neglect among children and youth involved in church activities and services.
- Church Personnel agree to not physically, sexually or emotionally abuse or neglect a child or youth.
- Church Personnel agree to comply with the policies for general conduct with children and youth as defined in these *Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth from Abuse*.
- All Church Personnel agree to comply with the *Guidelines for Appropriate Affection with children and youth*.
- In the event that Church Personnel observe any inappropriate behaviors or possible policy violations with children or youth, church personnel agree to immediately report their observations.
- All Church Personnel acknowledge their obligation and responsibility to protect children and youth and agree to report known or suspected abuse of children or youth to appropriate church leaders and state authorities in accordance with these policies.
- Church Personnel understand that the church will not tolerate abuse of children and youth and agree to comply in spirit and in action with this position.

Definition of Terms

A. Church Personnel

For the purposes of this policy, the following are included in the definition of Church Personnel when they are functioning in their respective roles for the church:

1. All clergy whether stipendiary, non-stipendiary, or otherwise who are engaged in ministry or service to the church.
2. All paid personnel whether employed in areas of ministry or other kinds of services by the diocese, its congregations, schools or other agencies.
3. Those that contract their services to the diocese, its congregations, schools or other agencies.
4. Volunteers, including any person who enters into or offers him or herself for a church related service, or who actually assists with or performs a service, whether or not they have been selected or assigned to do so. Volunteers include members of advisory boards, vestries, Bishop's Committees, and boards of directors.

B. Children and Youth

A child is defined as anyone under the age of 12 years.

A youth is defined as anyone who is at least 12 years old, but not yet 18 years old. A youth may also be an individual who is 18 years old or older, but still in high school.

C. Regularly Work With or Around Children or Youth

For the purpose of this policy, the following are included in the definition of Church Personnel who Regularly Work With or Around Children or Youth:

1. All clergy whether stipendiary, non-stipendiary, or otherwise who are engaged in ministry or service to the church.
2. All paid or volunteer Church Personnel whose work regularly takes them throughout the facility or grounds or who has keys giving them access to the buildings on the grounds.
3. All persons who supervise or assist with supervising children or youth in ministries, programs or activities more often than occasionally.

4. All persons who provide transportation to children or youth without other adults in the vehicle more often than occasionally.
5. Any paid personnel whose living quarters are on the grounds of the church, school or other related agency.
6. All vestry members or other members of similar decision-making groups who have the authority to approve the creation of ministries, programs or activities for children or youth.

Examples of Church Personnel who **Regularly Work With or Around Children or Youth**: include, but are not limited to:

- Children's or youth choir directors
- Organists who work with children or youth
- Lay youth ministers
- Volunteer youth directors
- Church School Superintendents, DREs or equivalent
- All Church Personnel who work or assist in the nursery more than four times a year
- All Church Personnel who work in the nursery if they are the only person over 21 present at any time
- All staff, whether volunteer or paid, at church camps
- Adults who participate in overnight activities with children or youth more than twice a year

D. Occasionally Work With or Around Children or Youth

For the purpose of this policy, the following are included in the definition of Church Personnel who **Occasionally Work With or Around Children or Youth**:

1. Church School Teachers.
2. All persons who supervise or assist with supervising children or youth in ministries, programs or activities infrequently, generally no more than three times a year or for one program or activity during a year that lasts less than a month (i.e. assisting with preparation for the Christmas pageant, or teaching one "unit" of Church School for a month).
3. All persons who provide transportation to children or youth without other adults in the vehicle infrequently, generally no more than three times a year.
4. All persons who work or assist in the nursery four or fewer times a year, whether on an emergency basis or otherwise.
5. Adults who participate in overnight activities with children or youth once or twice a year.

E. Types of abuse

1. **Physical abuse** is non-accidental injury, which is intentionally inflicted upon a child or youth.

2. **Sexual abuse perpetrated by an adult** is any contact or activity of a sexual nature that occurs between a child or youth and an adult. This includes any activity, which is meant to arouse or gratify the sexual desires of the adult, child or youth.

3. **Sexual abuse perpetrated by another child or youth** is any contact or activity of a sexual nature that occurs between a child or youth and another child or youth when there is no consent, when consent is not possible, or when one child or youth has power over the other child or youth. This includes any activity which is meant to arouse or gratify the sexual desires of any of the children or youth.

4. **Emotional abuse is mental or emotional injury to a child or youth** that results in an observable and material impairment in the child or youth's growth, development or psychological functioning.

5. **Neglect** is the failure to provide for a child or youth's basic needs or the failure to protect a child or youth from harm.

6. **Economic exploitation** is the deliberate misplacement, exploitation, or wrongful temporary or permanent use of a child or youth's belongings or money.

Safeguards for Children and Youth

A. Screening and Selection

1. All information gathered about an applicant will be carefully reviewed and evaluated to make a determination, in consultation with others as necessary, of whether or not the person is appropriate to work with children or youth.
2. Any and all Church Personnel who **Regularly Work With or Around Children or Youth** shall be screened and selected utilizing at least the following:
 - a. **A standard application** completed by the applicant that includes an authorization for the release of information to conduct background checks and the **Code of Conduct** (Supplemental Material – pgs. 5-9).
 - b. **Criminal records check** in any state where the applicant has resided during the past seven (7) years, and other states, if any, as determined by the church. Pennsylvania form. \$10.00. An FBI check may be used instead of a Criminal records check.
 - c. **Child Abuse History Clearance** in any state where the applicant has resided during the past seven (7) years. Pennsylvania form. \$10.00.
 - d. **Sexual offender registry check** in any state where the applicant has resided during the past seven (7) years. Use www.sexualoffenders.com. No cost.
 - e. **Individual interview** with the applicant.
 - f. **Two or more Reference checks** of persons outside the congregation who know the applicant, preferably who know how the applicant works with children.
 - g. **Driving or Motor Vehicle records check** if the person may be transporting children or youth. Pennsylvania form. \$10.00.
3. Any and all Church Personnel who **Occasionally Work With or Around Children or Youth** shall be screened and selected utilizing at least the following:
 - a. **A standard application** completed by the applicant that includes an authorization for the release of information to conduct background checks and the **Code of Conduct** (Supplemental Material – pgs. 5-9).
 - b. **Individual interview** with the applicant.

- c. **At least one Reference Check** of a person or persons outside the congregation who know the applicant, preferably who know how the applicant interacts with children.
 - d. **Driving or Motor Vehicle records check** if the person will be transporting children or youth.
4. Church Personnel who work with or around children or youth must have a personnel file that is kept where other church records are kept.
 5. Criminal, Child Abuse and sexual offender registry checks will be conducted every five (5) years for Church Personnel who Regularly Work With or Around Children or Youth.
 6. To the extent possible, no person will be permitted to supervise an immediate family member when working with or around children or youth. For the purpose of this policy, immediate family member is defined as spouse, partner, child, parent, sister, brother, similar in-law relationship, stepchild, stepparent, stepsibling, grandparent, or co-habitant.
 7. Church Personnel who transfer within the Diocese of Bethlehem and apply for or are asked to or who do undertake a position working with or around children or youth are required to undergo the same screening and selection process in Section A above. This requirement may be met through a transfer of a copy of their personnel file to the new congregation, school, agency, or program together with completion of a new application, individual interview and reference checks with the congregations, schools, agencies or other programs for which the applicant has worked with or around children or youth since the screening was last done as shown in the applicant's personnel file.

B. Education and Training Requirements

1. **Church Personnel Who Regularly Work With or Around Children or Youth** are required to take the full *Safeguarding God's Children* training plus policy review before they start their work with children or youth or, if that is not possible, within three months of starting.
2. **Church Personnel Who Occasionally Work With or Around Children or Youth** are required to take *Safeguarding God's Children Part One (For Parents and Congregations)* plus policy review before they start their work with children or youth. This training is available at parishes locally and can be offered by clergy who have been trained to offer it.

3. **All Church Personnel Who Regularly or Occasionally Work With or Around Children or Youth** will update their training every three to four years.
4. Church Personnel who are responsible for screening, selection and supervision of others in programs for children and youth are required to complete an additional three (3) hours of specialized education and training in screening, selection and monitoring every two years.

C. Monitoring and Supervision of Programs

The monitoring and supervision of programs and activities involving children or youth is important for safeguarding children and youth and involves several aspects. One aspect involves having structural guidelines or standards for the programs and activities for children and youth. These include such things as who approves new programs, how many adults need to be present and the like. In addition to setting structural guidelines and standards, church leaders must make sure the structural safeguards are followed. Programs and activities have to be monitored and supervised to do that.

Another aspect of monitoring and supervision is that supervisory personnel and others monitor and supervise the behavior of adults, youth and other children with children and youth so that inappropriate behaviors and interactions can be detected and stopped. Some behaviors and interactions are potentially harmful to children or youth in and of themselves. Examples include providing alcohol or drugs to children or youth or actually having sexual contact with a child or youth. Other behaviors and interactions are not necessarily harmful in and of themselves but are the same behaviors and interactions known to be used by those who abuse children or youth to “groom” them or their parents for eventual abuse or which provide the privacy child molesters need in order to abuse children or youth. Examples of those behaviors and interactions include holding children over the age of three on the lap, transporting a child or youth alone, and the like.

The structural guidelines and standards are covered in both this **Monitoring and Supervision** section and in the following section, **General Conduct for the Protection of Children and Youth**. The behaviors and interactions of persons with children and youth that need to be monitored and supervised are covered in the section on **General Conduct for the Protection of Children and Youth** and in the **Guidelines for Appropriate Affection**.

1. Every program for children and youth will observe the established ratios for adults and children below. Compliance with the established ratio is required at all times, including activities that occur off church premises.
 - a. A ratio of one adult per five children or youth, with a minimum of two adults present, will be maintained for all functions.

- b. The ratio requirements apply for each gender should children and youth be separated by gender, such as for sleeping arrangements.
 - c. Two unrelated adults must be present for all functions, even if there are fewer than five children or youth.
2. Church Personnel are prohibited from being alone with a child or youth or multiple children or youth where other adults cannot easily observe them.
3. Church Personnel over the age of 25 must directly supervise Church Personnel under the age of 18 and be physically present during all activities.
4. Five years older rule: All Church Personnel must be at least five years older than the oldest participant they will be supervising for any function.
5. An up to date list of approved congregation-sponsored programs for children and youth will be maintained in the church office or other place where church records are kept.
6. Church Personnel are not permitted to develop new activities for children and youth without approval from the rector or canonical equivalent. Requests to develop new activities should be submitted in writing to the rector. The rector will consider whether the plan for a new activity includes adequate adult supervision.
7. Each program will develop age-appropriate procedures to ensure the safety of children and youth using restrooms and showers or baths.
8. When supervising or assisting private activities such as dressing, showering or diapering infants or children, Church Personnel will remain in an area observable by other adults or work in pairs.
9. At least two unrelated Church Personnel must supervise activities. When both boys and girls are participating, male and female adults must be present.
10. These guidelines may be modified to make accommodations for children and youth with disabilities. A child with a physical, emotional or developmental disability may need help with activities of daily living that require more adult contact than typically developing children of the same age. The child's safety may also dictate more physical contact than would be recommended at a particular age. For example, a child with a physical disability may need adult assist in the bathroom. A young person whose disability caused him/her to wander may need a hand placed on his/her knee when seated to remain in place.

11. All modifications should be made through conversation with the child's parent(s). All accommodations are to remain within the spirit of this policy of protection.

D. General Conduct for the Protection of Children and Youth

The following guidelines are intended to assist Church Personnel in monitoring and supervising behaviors and interactions with children and youth to identify and stop those that may be inherently harmful to children or youth, that are the type used by child molesters to groom children, youth and their parents, or that may create the conditions where abuse can occur more easily. These guidelines should also be used to make decisions about interactions with children and youth in church sponsored and affiliated programs. They are not designed or intended to address interactions within families. When exceptions to these guidelines must be made, they should be reported to the supervisor of the Church Personnel making the exception as soon as possible.

1. All Church Personnel who work with children or youth must agree to comply with the Diocesan [Parish] **Guidelines for Appropriate Affection** (Appendix A).
2. No person will be allowed to volunteer to **Regularly Work With Children or Youth** until the person has been known to the clergy and congregation for at least six months.
3. Programs for infants and children under six (6) years old will have procedures to ensure that children are released only to their parents or legal guardians or those designated by them.
4. Church Personnel are prohibited from the use, possession, distribution, or being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or the misuse of legal drugs while participating in or assisting with programs or activities specifically for children or youth.
 - a. Church Personnel are prohibited from smoking in front of children and youth. Adults who feel they must smoke must find a designated area separate from the group in a well-ventilated area. Smoking indoors is not permitted.
5. Parents or guardians must complete written permission forms before Church Personnel transport children and youth for a church sponsored activity or for any purpose on more than an occasional basis.
6. Church Personnel will respond to children and youth with respect, consideration and equal treatment, regardless of sex, race, religion, sexual orientation, culture or socio-economic status. Church Personnel will portray a positive role model for children and youth by maintaining an attitude of respect, patience, and maturity. They will avoid even the appearance of favoritism.

7. One-to-one counseling with children or youth will be done in an open or public or other place where private conversations are possible but occur in full view of others.
8. Church Personnel are prohibited from dating or becoming romantically involved with a child or youth.
9. Church Personnel are prohibited from having sexual contact with a child or youth.
10. Church Personnel are prohibited from possessing any sexually oriented materials (magazines, cards, videos, films, clothing etc.) on church property or in the presence of children or youth except as expressly permitted as part of a pre-authorized educational program.
 - a. If a “delicate” or controversial topic will be discussed at a meeting or event, parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed of the subject matter.
11. Church Personnel are prohibited from using the Internet to view or download any sexually oriented materials on church property or in the presence of children or youth.
12. Church Personnel are prohibited from discussing their own sexual activities, including dreams and fantasies, or discussing their use of sexually oriented or explicit materials such as pornography, videos or materials on or from the Internet, with children or youth.
13. Church Personnel are prohibited from sleeping in the same beds, sleeping bags, tents, hotel rooms or other rooms with children or youth unless the adult is an immediate family member of all children or youth in the bed, sleeping bag, tent, hotel room or other room. It is acceptable to have multiple adults sleep with all the children or youth participating in one open space such as a church basement or camp lodge.
 - a. Only the number of people allotted to a hotel room will be allowed. For example, no more than four people to a room with two double beds. Arrangements for extra cots in a room may be made in advance with the hotel and Church Personnel and parent(s)/guardian(s) permission only.
 - b. Children and Youth sleeping areas are to be on the same floor as church Personnel, nearby and with easy access. Church Personnel must have a key for each Children and Youth room.
 - c. There will be no housing of mixed genders permitted, including married couples.
 - d. In open space accommodations, such as a gymnasium, male and female sleeping areas are to be clearly defined, separated and strictly enforced.
14. Church Personnel are prohibited from dressing, undressing, bathing, or showering in the presence of children or youth.

15. Church Personnel are prohibited from using physical punishment in any way for behavior management of children and youth. No form of physical discipline is acceptable. This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force. Physical force may only be used to stop a behavior that may cause immediate harm to the individual or to a child, youth or others.
16. Church Personnel are prohibited from using harsh language, degrading punishment or mechanical restraint such as rope or tape for behavior management.
17. Church Personnel are prohibited from participating in or allowing others to conduct any hazing activities relating to children's or youth ministry or camp activities.

Responding to Problems

A. Reporting Inappropriate Behaviors or Policy Violations with Children or Youth

1. When Church Personnel observe any inappropriate behaviors, behaviors that are inconsistent with the **Guidelines for Appropriate Affection**, or which may violate any provision of these *Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth from Abuse*, they must immediately report their observations. Examples of inappropriate behaviors or policy violations would be seeking private time with children or youth, taking children or youth on over-night trips without other adults, swearing or making suggestive comments to children or youth, or selecting or using staff or volunteers without the required screening.
2. Such inappropriate behaviors or possible policy violations that relate to interactions with children or youth should be reported in one of the following ways:
 - a. A telephone call or meeting with the immediate supervisor of the person,
 - b. A telephone call or meeting with the rector, if the person is not the rector;
 - c. A telephone call or meeting with a church warden if the person is the rector;
 - d. A telephone call, meeting or fax to the bishop;
 - e. Submit a **Notice of Concern** (Supplemental Material – pgs. 3), signed or unsigned, to the bishop.
3. All reports of inappropriate behavior or policy violations with children or youth will be taken seriously.

B. Reporting Suspected Abuse of Children or Youth

1. All Church Personnel are required by this policy to report known or suspected abuse of children or youth to the appropriate state authorities. **ChildLine 800-932-0313**.
2. Failure to report suspected abuse of children or youth may be a crime. Reports may be made confidentially or anonymously. Every state provides immunity from civil liability for persons required to report suspected abuse in good faith and without malice. Simply stated, “in good faith” means that the person submitting the report

believes what he or she is reporting to be true.

3. In addition to reporting to the state authorities, Church Personnel are required to report any suspected or known abuse of children or youth that may have been perpetrated by Church Personnel directly to the rector of the Parish so that immediate and proper steps may be taken to ensure the safety of alleged victims.
4. Reports of suspected or known abuse that involve Church Personnel may be reported to the Diocese of Bethlehem in the following ways:
 - a. A telephone call, meeting or fax to the bishop;
 - b. A telephone call or meeting with the rector, if the rector is not the person being complained about.
 - c. Submit a *Notice of Concern* (Supplemental Material – pgs. 3), signed or unsigned, to the bishop.
5. The Diocese of Bethlehem (and _____ Parish) will cooperate with any investigation by state authorities to the fullest extent appropriate and inform authorities that a concurrent internal investigation will be directed by the Diocese of Bethlehem,

Appendix

A. Guidelines for Appropriate Affection

The Diocese of Bethlehem (and _____ Parish) are committed to creating and promoting a positive, nurturing environment for our children's and youth ministries that protect our children and youth from abuse and our Church Personnel from misunderstandings. When creating safe boundaries for children and youth, it is important to establish what types of affection are appropriate and inappropriate; otherwise that decision is left to each individual. Stating which behaviors are appropriate and inappropriate allows Church Personnel to comfortably show positive affection in ministry, and yet identify individuals who are not maintaining safe boundaries with children or youth. These Guidelines are based, in large part, on avoiding behaviors known to be used by child molesters to groom children or youth and their parents for future abuse. The following guidelines are to be carefully followed by all Church Personnel working around or with children or youth.

1. Love and affection are part of church life and ministry. There are many ways to demonstrate affection while maintaining positive and safe boundaries with children and youth. Some positive and appropriate forms of affection are listed below:
 - Brief hugs.
 - Pats on the shoulder or back.
 - Handshakes.
 - "High-fives" and hand slapping.
 - Verbal praise.
 - Touching hands, faces, shoulders and arms of children or youth.
 - Arms around shoulders.
 - Holding hands while walking with small children.
 - Sitting beside small children.
 - Kneeling or bending down for hugs with small children.
 - Holding hands during prayer.
 - Pats on the head when culturally appropriate. (For example, this gesture should typically be avoided in some Asian communities.)

2. The following forms of affection are considered inappropriate with children and youth in ministry setting because many of them are the behaviors that child molesters use to groom children or youth and their parents for later molestation or can be, in and of themselves, sexual abuse.
 - Inappropriate or lengthy embraces.
 - Kisses on the mouth.
 - Holding children over three years old on the lap.
 - Touching bottoms, chests or genital areas other than for appropriate diapering or toileting of infants and toddlers.

- Showing affection in isolated areas such as bedrooms, closets, staff only areas or other private rooms.
- Occupying a bed with a child or youth
- Touching knees or legs of children or youth.
- Wrestling with children or youth.
- Tickling children or youth.
- Piggyback rides.
- Any type of massage given by a child or youth to an adult.
- Any type of massage given by an adult to a child or youth.
- Any form of unwanted affection.
- Comments or compliments (spoken, written, or electronic) that relate to physique or body development. Examples would be, "You sure are developing," or "You look really hot in those jeans."
- Snapping bras or giving wedgies or similar touch of underwear whether or not it is covered by other clothing.
- Giving gifts or money to individual children or youth.
- Private meals with individual children or youth.

B. Guidelines for Safety, Medical and Transportation for Children and Youth

Safety Issues

1. Children and youth events or meetings are to function with an open-door policy. Church Personnel and parents have a right to observe any activity at any time.
2. Church Personnel, Children and Youth are prohibited from the use, possession, distribution, or being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or the misuse of legal drugs while participating in or assisting with programs or activities specifically for children or youth.
 - a. Church Personnel are prohibited from smoking in front of children and youth. Adults who feel they must smoke must find a designated area separate from the group in a well-ventilated area. Smoking indoors is not permitted.
3. Church Personnel are prohibited from using physical punishment in any way for behavior management of children and youth. No form of physical discipline is acceptable. This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force. Physical force may only be used to stop a behavior that may cause immediate harm to the individual or to a child, youth or others.
4. Weapons, firearms, fireworks and paintball activities are prohibited at all children and youth events.

Medical & Dietary Concerns

1. A person trained in **First-Aid** must be part of the staff for day-long or overnight events. Training must include the American Red Cross CPR and basic first-aid or its equivalent.
2. A well-equipped/fully-stocked **First-Aid Kit** must be available and maintained at all functions.
3. **No medications** will be administered without parental consent; this includes Tylenol and cough drops.
 - a. Medications, such as inhalers for asthma or shots for bee-stings, that are required for an individual, should be safely stored with adult staff and procedures reviewed with parent(s)/guardian(s) and event staff before the event begins. Such situations must be noted on the youth's medical release form.
4. Dietary concerns and allergies must be obtained from parent(s)/guardian(s) and must be indicated on consent forms.

Transportation and Trips

1. **Only drivers aged 25 or over** are permitted to transport children and youth to, from or during any Diocesan children or youth event.
2. All drivers must have a valid driver's license and qualify for the vehicle being operated.
3. They must have no record of convictions for drunken driving, driving under the influence, driving with a suspended/revoked license, or reckless endangerment.
4. They must have proof of insurance.
5. **Seat belts** must be worn and their usage strictly enforced.
6. All **State Traffic Laws** must be observed. Speeding is not permitted nor will it be tolerated.
7. **All** luggage and equipment must be securely fastened and exits clear of obstructions.
8. When more than one vehicle is in transit, periodic stopping points will be pre-planned and adhered to. **Driving with headlights on is required.** The "leader" vehicle must always be sure the "follower" vehicles can see him/her and vice versa.
9. There will be **designated departure sites and explicit times set** where/when parent(s)/guardian(s) are to pick-up/drop off youth for each event.
10. **Exact** event location(s), site phone numbers, and event addresses will be provided to all parent(s)/guardian(s). Adult leaders will also provide their cellular phone numbers to parent(s)/guardian(s), if applicable, prior to departure.
11. Adults should avoid being alone with a youth in a vehicle if at all possible. Arrange pick-up/drop off where two siblings can be the last dropped off or the first to be picked up.

C. Applications, Medical Release Forms and Community Life Standards Forms

1. The event name, departure information, event location, and return arrival information will be listed on each event application. Designation of adult supervisors and contact persons will also be included.
2. Application, Medical Release Form, and Community Life Standards Forms must be filled out **completely** and signed by parent(s)/guardian(s).
 - a. Allergies to medicine and/or food must be noted on the medical release form, as well as any medications that will need to be taken during a Diocesan, parish, or youth event. The drug name, dosage and frequency must be included in the medical release form.
 - b. The following information is required in order for child or youth to participate in any Diocesan or parish event: Medical insurance information, including company, group number, and/or policy number must be filled out in its entirety; Child's or youth's social security number; Permission slips/consent forms as required for particular events.
3. Special individual concerns should be communicated to Church Personnel and be included on the medical release form.
4. All youth and event staff are required to agree and sign the Community Life Standards Form for participation in any Diocesan, parish, or youth event.

DIOCESAN OFFICERS

The Right Reverend Paul V. Marshall
Bishop
Diocesan House
333 Wyandotte Street
Bethlehem, PA 18015
(610) 691-5655

The Venerable Howard Stringfellow
Archdeacon
Diocesan House
333 Wyandotte Street
Bethlehem, PA 18015
(610) 691-5655

The Rev. Debra J. Kissinger
Missioner to Children & Child Advocate
Diocesan House
333 Wyandotte Street
Bethlehem, PA 18015
(610) 691-5655

The Reverend W. Nicholas Knisely
Vice-Chair of Diocesan Council
44 East Market Street
Bethlehem, PA 18015
(610) 867-4741

The Rev. Henry J. Pease
President of the Standing Committee
17 Lake Shore Drive
Tunkhannock, PA 18657
(570) 836-6643

Charles H. Welles, Esq.
Chancellor
321 Spruce Street
Scranton, PA 18503
(570) 348-4951