

CODE OF CONDUCT

For all those who minister to young people in the Diocese of Salina

Our Children are one of the most important gifts God has entrusted to the Church. In order to create a safe environment that will reverence the dignity of a child's life, all those who minister to young people in the Diocese of Salina will follow the guidelines and rules in this Code of Conduct.

As someone ministering to young people, I will:

- Provide prudent supervision at all youth activities. Ordinarily, this means having two qualified adults present and accessible to young people. A qualified adult is one who has fully completed the safe environment training of the diocese. Off-site or overnight trips, with both male and female youth, require both male and female adult leadership.
- In youth ministry programs, assure there is a proper ratio of adults to young people. For high school events, a ratio of 6 youth to 1 adult is necessary; for younger children more adults may be needed.
- Minister to young people in areas that are accessible and visible.
- Refrain from giving expensive gifts to children or young people without approval from the parents or guardian, and the parish pastor.
- Avoid driving alone in a vehicle with a minor or young person.
- Report suspected sexual abuse to the pastor, parish life coordinator or appropriate supervisor. In cases where there are indications of illegal actions by a parish pastor or parish life coordinator or other church leader, notification should be made immediately to the proper civil authority and to the bishop or his representative.
- Cooperate fully in any investigation that may occur into allegations of child sexual abuse.
- Periodically review this Code of Conduct with all those who minister to young people in the parish if I am the director or coordinator of parish religious education/youth ministry.
- Only use the parish/school Facebook page, parish/school website, parish/school email account or parish/school youth page to communicate with minors, or current students of majority age.
- Avoid all pornographic or sexually explicit, profane, or otherwise inappropriate materials.

As someone ministering to young people, I will NOT:

- Allow minors to be the primary supervisors over other minors. There must also be present one person over the age of 25 whenever older youth/teenagers are ministering to younger children.
- Use, possess or be under the influence of alcohol at any time while ministering to young people.
- Use, possess or be under the influence of illegal drugs at any time.
- Provide or display sexually explicit or offensive material to children and/or young people.
- Strike, spank, shake or slap any children and/or young person.
- Touch a child or young person in a sexual way or other inappropriate manner.
- Use profanity in the presence of children and/or young people.
- Use discipline that frightens or degrades any young person.
- Provide overnight accommodations in rectories or other personal residences for minors.
- "Friend" any minors, or current students of majority age, on my private accounts for Facebook, Instagram, SnapChat, or any other types of Social media, including but not limited to, e-mailing, texting, Skyping, calling on my private phone and/or exchanging videos or pictures by any private social media source. If contacted by a minor or current student of majority age, I will notify them in person, or by school/parish e-mail, or school/parish Facebook, or official school/parish youth page that I am unable to "friend" them as a matter of policy.
- Share, promote, and/or disseminate pornographic or sexually explicit, profane or otherwise inappropriate materials. I understand and agree that possessing, posting, downloading, or accessing child pornography is a criminal offense and that all who minister on behalf of the Diocese of Salina have a legal obligation to report such behavior to the proper civil authorities when discovered. I understand that Diocese of Salina reserves the right to investigate internally, following any criminal or civil investigation. Proven participation in child-pornography will result in strong disciplinary action including employment or ministerial dismissal.

Parish ministers should not go on overnight trips alone with minors other than their own children. Furthermore, parish ministers are not to share a bed with minors or sleeping quarters with minors other than their own children. Physical contact with children and/or young people can be misconstrued by both minors and other adults, and should only occur under appropriate public circumstances. (Feb. 1, 2003. Revised 2012, 2014, 2017)