



Youth and Young Adult Policies & Procedures

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Diocese of Orlando Youth and Young Adult Policies and Procedures

1.0 The Heart of Ministry

“The definitive aim of catechesis is to put people not only in touch but in communion, in intimacy with Jesus Christ: only he can lead us to the love of the Father in the Spirit and make us share in the life of the Holy Trinity.” St. Paul declared “For to me life is Christ.”

-National Directory for Catechesis / On Catechesis in Our Time (Catechesi Tradendae) #5

“The challenge of discipleship—of following Jesus—is at the heart of the Church’s mission. *All ministry with adolescents must be directed toward presenting young people with the Good News of Jesus Christ and inviting and challenging them to become his disciples.* For this reason, catechesis is an essential component of youth ministry and one that needs renewed emphasis. If we are to succeed, we must offer young people a *spiritually challenging and world shaping vision* that meets their hunger for the chance to *participate in a worthy adventure.*”

-Renewing the Vision: A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry

“God invites us to be transformed into holy people, to participate and find support in a community of believers, and to make this transformation happen by continually saying “yes” to Jesus’ invitation to “Come, follow me” (Lk 18:22). ... It is becoming people of great faith—sons and daughters of the light. It is this deepening of one’s spirituality through faith in Jesus Christ that provides the foundation and lens for life.”

-Sons and Daughters of the Light: A Pastoral Plan for Ministry with Young Adults

1.1 Role of Policies and Procedures

Policies and procedures exist to support the goal at the heart of all ministry—vibrant life in Christ. Those who are called to ministry or ordained for service in the church make a committed effort to follow in Christ’s footsteps through a life of discipleship. It is our hope that the publication and integration of these practices, policies and procedures into the Youth and Young Adult ministries of the Diocese of Orlando will allow us to serve more effectively as a community of faith, empowering us to be more truly Alive in Christ. It is our expectation that each person who reads these policies and procedures will accept personal responsibility for adherence to them. It is our belief that God’s goodness and grace supports this work and those called to service in the vineyard of our Lord.

The policies and procedures are designed to enable Young Adult and Youth Ministry Leaders to direct (and/or develop) necessary measures to ensure the safety of youth, young adults and ministry team members. This document is also intended to communicate the catechetical norms of the Diocese of Orlando while minimizing risks to the well-being of youth, young adults, ministry teams and ministry leaders.



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1.2 Ministry with Minors

Many of the policies of this office apply in a particular way to Youth Ministry, due to the nature of the interaction with minors that is a part of the ministry. This focus on young people requires a collaborative partnership with parents/guardians, and with this in mind Youth & Young Adult Ministry policies require that parish personnel, paid or volunteer, clearly communicate at all times with youth and their parents/guardians regarding programming. Youth Ministry must carefully screen volunteers who minister in the program. Activities need to be appropriately supervised and guidelines should be followed to ensure a safe environment for youth.

The policies contained herein do not supersede those of the Diocesan Office of Child & Youth Protection, they simply identify particular applications of the protection policies. Youth & Young Adult Ministry operates with strict adherence to the Diocese of Orlando Policies on Child Sexual Abuse. All Youth Ministry Leaders and ministry team members are expected to be familiar with and adhere to these policies.

2.0 Glossary of Terms

Youth Ministry: *The response of the Christian community to the needs of young people, and the sharing of the unique gifts of youth with the larger community.* Within the Diocese of Orlando, this term is used to denote ministry serving those who are 11-18 years of age and in middle/high school, as well as those over the age of 18 and still in high school. This ministry is guided by the USCCB document *Renewing the Vision: A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry*.

Young Adult Ministry: *Ministry to and evangelization of those in their late teens, who are out of high school, and people in their twenties and thirties; single, married, divorced, or widowed; and with or without children.* Within the Diocese of Orlando, this term is used to denote ministry serving those who are out of high school and age 18-39. This ministry is guided by the USCCB document *Sons and Daughters of the Light: A Pastoral Plan for Ministry with Young Adults*.

Campus Ministry: ministry serving those through a campus setting for secondary education. This ministry is guided by the Bishop's 1985 pastoral letter entitled *Empowered by the Spirit*.



Ministry Leader: an individual, lay or ordained, who serves as the coordinator/director of a parish and/or school's ministry with, to and by youth and/or young adults within the framework of youth, campus or young adult ministries. This may be a paid or unpaid position.

Ministry Team Member: An individual, lay or ordained, who serves within a parish and/or school's structured ministry with, to and by youth and/or young adults. This term is not linked to age, but to role. This role may include activities which serve to evangelize and catechize youth/young adults, facilitation of a small group discussion, leading prayer, providing direction for an activity, welcoming youth/young adults to the ministry setting, etc. This term may include adults ages 18-20 assisting in supervision, and adults age 21 and over.



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Supervising Ministry Team Member: This indicates a ministry team member at least 21 years of age who is able to supervise minors within these guidelines.

Youth Ministry Leader: an individual, lay or ordained, who serves as the coordinator/director of a parish's ministry with, to and by youth. This may be a paid or unpaid position.

Young Adult Ministry Leader: an individual, lay or ordained, who serves as the coordinator/director of a parish's ministry with, to and by young adults. This may be a paid or unpaid position.

Campus Ministry Leader: an individual, lay or ordained, who serves as the coordinator/director of a campus' ministry with, to and by young adults. This may be a paid or unpaid position.

Chaperone: This term applies only to adults at least 21 years of age, whose sole role is to provide supervision. Those who are serving within the ministry are ministry team members. Chaperones might be used for a special event with a very large number of participants that would also require a large number of supervising adults. Chaperones might also be used as the awake-overnight-supervision on an extended event.



Activity, Event, Function, Gathering, Session, Program: These terms are used to refer to an instance when the parish ministry has organized the coming together of youth or young adults for the purpose of drawing them deeper into the life of Christ as outlined in the documents governing each ministry.



Minor, young person, youth: terms used for an individual under the age of 18. Those age 18 or over and still in high school are also to be regarded as minors for purposes of these policies. NOTE: The appropriate completion of liability forms is outlined in the section on liability forms.

Older Adolescent: individuals age 14-18, generally in high school

Younger Adolescent: individuals age 11-14, generally in middle school

Young Adult: term used for an individual who is out of high school and age 18-39; single, married, divorced, or widowed; and with or without children.



3.0 Personnel and Ethical & Behavioral Standards

Relationships among people are the foundation of Christian ministry and are central to our life as a church. The standards pay particular attention to those whose ministry calls them to work with minors, and to do so in a manner that is genuine and respectful.

3.1 Overview of Guiding Principles

The ethical standards below are based on five principles of integrity articulated by the National Federation of Catholic Youth Ministry as essential to effective ministry leaders. Within the Diocese of Orlando, Youth & Young Adult Ministry maintains these same principles.

- Ministry Leaders shall exhibit the highest ethical standards and personal integrity reflective of the teachings of the Gospel and will avoid even the appearance of impropriety.
- Ministry Leaders shall at all times conduct themselves in a professional manner including developing and maintaining the level of professional competence commensurate with their ministerial duties.
- Ministry Leaders shall witness God's love for every person by sensitivity, reverence, and respect of each individual with and to whom they minister.
- Ministry Leaders shall be conscious of the unique power they have in relationships due to the trust they are given and the visibility of their witness and leadership.
- Ministry Leaders, whether paid or unpaid, are obligated to comply with Diocesan policies with regards to the protection of minors.

Ministry Leaders, as people of God, share actively in the ministry of Christ and the church by living lives of Christian witness and by proclaiming the message of the Gospel in word and deed. They share in the mission that God has entrusted to the church to fulfill in the world, in accord with the gifts and talents that they possess. These gifts and talents are shared with all members of the church thus providing for the continual building up of the Kingdom of God.

3.2 Transparency in our Ministry with Minors

Youth Ministry calls the young church into discipleship and participation in the life of the church community. It is important that ministry is not used to establish private one-on-one relationships with youth and our methods must reflect this.

- 3.2.1** One-on-one conversation with a young person is to take place in a public setting with other adults present although not necessarily a part of the conversation.



3.3 Serving as a Ministry Team Member

“Young people need to experience faithful adults in order for them to understand what faith lived out looks like. Adults themselves must be on a journey of faith if they are going to be able to accompany a young person on his or her journey.”

-Effective Practices for Dynamic Youth Ministry

- 3.3.1** All individuals who may be interested in working within Ministry within the diocese or parish are required to submit a completed *Criminal Background Check Form* as well as a complete set of fingerprints so as to facilitate a criminal background investigation. Eligibility for employment, ministry team service, &/or ministry will be contingent and conditioned upon a satisfactory background investigation. This background investigation will be updated every five (5) years, except for instructional personnel who are recertified by the State of Florida every five (5) years with an FBI check. The policy applies even if an individual has been cleared through an FBI/VECHS or FDLE check conducted by their employer or another entity.
- 3.3.2** Before beginning work or ministry team activities, the individual must complete the appropriate criminal background form(s) and fingerprinting receive approval from the Office of Fingerprinting.
- 3.3.3** Before beginning work or ministry team activities, the individual must view the safe environment video “*Protecting Our Children*”. This training can also be completed online through the Diocese of Orlando website.
- 3.3.4** Youth Ministry Leaders, paid or unpaid, ministry team members responsible for supervision, and chaperones must be at least 21 years of age or older to supervise youth participants.
- 3.3.5** All Youth Ministry Leaders and youth ministry team members are required to read and sign the *National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry Code of Ethics for Youth Ministry Leaders*.
- 3.3.6** A secured file for each ministry team member is to be kept at the parish.
This file is to contain:
- a copy of the completed *Ministry Team Member Application*, including 3 verified reference checks.
 - signed *NFCYM Code of Ethics for Youth Ministry Leaders* for those serving in youth ministry.
 - clearance/approval notice from the Office of Fingerprinting
 - proof of attendance/successful completion of Safe Environment Training/*Protecting Our Children*
 - and copies of any progress made towards certification
 - for those who will serve as drivers within the ministry setting, the file should also contain a current & complete Adult Driver Information Sheet, along with copies of valid and current proof of registration and insurance – updated annually
- 3.3.7** References should be checked prior to the individual beginning to serve as a ministry team member.
- 3.3.8** The person who will supervise the ministry team member should meet with him/her to discuss the role that the ministry team member will have in the program. A clear job description should be provided for every ministry team member.



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3.3.9 Supervisors should help ministry team members working with youth to be familiar with contact procedures in case of emergencies, in addition to basic warning signs for at-risk issues.

3.4 Utilizing Adults (ages 18-20) in Youth Ministry before they are eligible to Supervise Minors (as an adult age 21 or older)

These policies refer to those who are at least 18 year of age and have graduated from high school. Adults ages 18-20 can be a major asset in the development and implementation of a youth ministry program. It is the Youth Ministry Leader's responsibility to effectively utilize adults ages 18-20 to assist with supervision of minors in an appropriate capacity.

These might include:

- Ministry Team Members
- Facilitators of small groups
- Retreat team members
- Assisting the Youth Ministry Leader with programs and special events (e.g. service projects, retreats, prayer experiences)

3.4.1 Those who are out of high school and ages 18-20, and who have met all Diocesan ministry team member clearance requirements, may assist in supervision at activities and events, but may not be solely responsible for supervision of minors.

- ◆ *Best Practice*—it is often helpful and appropriate to pair those out of high school and 18-20 years old adults with a supervising ministry team member to serve as a mentor.
- ◆ *Best Practice*—small group breakout discussions within a larger setting may appropriately be facilitated by those out of high school and 18-20 years of age, with a supervising ministry team member in the vicinity and with consideration of the training, skills and maturity of the particular adult who is age 18-20 and serving as a ministry team member.

3.4.2 Those assisting in supervision must recognize that they are ministering as teaching representatives of the Church.

3.4.3 Those assisting in supervision are required to follow all safety guidelines and procedures.

3.4.4 The Policies and Procedures set forth under *Serving as Ministry Team Members* apply to all adult ministry team members ages 18-20.



4.0 Pastoral Care and Boundaries

Youth & Young Adult Ministry adheres to the Diocese of Orlando Standards of Conduct for Church Personnel.

It is important to recognize that the inevitable inequality of power in relational ministry demands clearly established and appropriate boundaries. The burden of responsibility always falls on the Ministry Leader to respect and maintain appropriate boundaries. Boundaries include professional, personal, ethical, ministerial and sexual boundaries.

In considering the role of touch within ministry, it is important to keep in mind that touch depends not only on intention or how it appears in public, but also on how it is received. All touch within the ministerial role should be **public, appropriate** to the relationship and **non-sexual**.

As Ministry Leaders, it is our sacred responsibility to promote, protect, and safeguard the well-being of each individual entrusted to our care. Ministry Leaders serve as examples to others for appropriate behavior, setting boundaries, and following a Christian life-style.

- 4.0.1 Ministry Leaders are expected to continue to refine professional skills and knowledge of ethics in ministry through ongoing personal study and professional development.
- 4.0.2 Specialized knowledge and competency are necessary to meet the needs of youth within specific cultural and rural settings. Our youth ministry processes must affirm the legacy of faith as handed down through values, culture, spirituality, theology and life.

4.1 Counseling and Referrals to Professional Counselors

When ministering to individuals that are encountering a time of crisis or difficulty it is important to remember that specialized training and licensing is necessary to serve as a counselor. It is important to be clear that a minister is not a counselor, unless appropriately trained and licensed.

- 4.1.1 Acknowledge the limits of one's own competence and willingly make referrals to professionals whose perspective is in line with the moral and ethical beliefs of the Catholic Church.
- 4.1.2 Each parish should maintain a readily accessible list of social agencies whose work is in line with the moral and ethical beliefs of the Catholic Church from which to refer when necessary.
 - Should a young person or parent/guardian request information regarding a counseling referral, it is advised that the Ministry Leader recommend that the family meet with their primary care physician and receive a referral within their insurance plan.
 - It is not recommended that Ministry Leaders make referrals directly to counselors, however in cases where the family does not have a primary care physician or requests a referral, Ministry Leaders making any type of referral should furnish at least 3 resource options.



4.2 Disclosure

Youth & Young Adult Ministry acknowledges that we are partners with the parents/guardians of those to whom we minister and are to act as such. Transparency is an essential element to the youth ministry - parent/guardian relationship.

4.2.1 Youth Ministry Leaders recognize a young person's expectation of privacy and honor that in a professional way. Privacy considerations do not extend to information regarding serious foreseeable and imminent harm to the young person or others. Examples of issues that would contravene a young person's privacy include child abuse, sexual/physical threats to others, abortion, and suicide threats. In these situations it is essential to seek the appropriate resources for assistance for the young person(s) and family(ies) involved in partnership with parent(s)/guardian(s).

4.2.2 By law, conversations between Youth Ministry Leaders and young people are not "privileged communication". This means that if information about what a young person says to their Youth Ministry Leader is requested by a parent/guardian, a court of law, or other individual who has a need to know, the Youth Ministry Leader must share the information.

It is also the case that conversations between Young Adult and Campus Ministry Leaders and those they serve are not "privileged communication". This means that if information about what an individual says to their Young Adult or Campus Ministry Leader is requested by a court of law, or other individual who has a need to know, the Young Adult or Campus Ministry Leader must share the information.

4.3 Prayer Journals within Ministry Setting with Minors

4.3.1 Prayer journals are often effective within the ministry setting. Journaling may be a form of prayer, even in simply being the manner in which a young person chronicles their faith journey throughout the year or reflects on various themes or questions as a part of gathered events. There is no legal obligation to read a minor's prayer journal, or to collect the prayer journal of a minor. If a parent/guardian of a minor requests the prayer journal, you should provide the prayer journal to the parent/guardian.

4.3.2 It should be made clear to both parents/guardians and youth if a journal is a form of prayer, and therefore will not be read as it is a piece of the young person's one-one conversation with God.

It should also be made clear to parents/guardians and youth if the journal will be a communication with the ministry team and will, therefore, be read by the Youth Ministry Leader or ministry team members.

If journals will be read, all content must be read, and the same issues that contravene a young person's privacy in the section on Disclosure apply to journals read by the ministry team as well.

- Whether a journal is a prayer journal or a form of communication with the ministry team may be communicated to parents/guardians in a youth ministry handbook or in the information shared with parents/guardians in regards to a specific event, e.g. a retreat.
- Whether the ministry leader wants to collect and/or read journals/prayer journals is a decision that can be made based on the objectives and considerations of the ministry.



5.0 Developmentally Appropriate Ministry

“Effective ministry with adolescents provides developmentally appropriate experiences, programs, activities, strategies, resources, content, and processes to address the unique developmental and social needs of young and older adolescents both as individuals and as members of families. The approach responds to adolescents’ unique needs, focuses ministry efforts, and establishes realistic expectations for growth during adolescence.”

-Renewing the Vision: A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry

“Young adults express a need for support from and relationships with others who are their own age or are in similar situations. We urge pastors and other church leaders to develop specific opportunities for young adults to be together. While it will be helpful to have someone from the parish or campus staff as a point of contact, young adults should be the organizers and leaders of these efforts. We know from experience that they are effective ministers, especially among their peers.”

-Sons and Daughters of the Light: A Pastoral Plan for Ministry with Young Adults

The documents of our church point to the importance of ministering to the members of our faith community throughout the life cycle in a way that is appropriate to the particular stage of development. At all stages of life it is important that a portion of our ministry involves the peer group of those that we minister to and with.

In a particular way the needs of younger and older adolescents are very distinct. There are significant differences in the social, physical, emotional and spiritual development of young people in middle school and of those in high school.

5.0.1 In the peer setting of ministry, every effort should be made to develop comprehensive youth ministries that attend in specific ways to the developmental needs of young adolescents gathered as peers and separately to the developmental needs of older adolescents gathered as peers.

- ◆ *Best Practice*—Experiences of catechesis, evangelization, prayer, retreats, social and sporting activities should be tailored to younger or older adolescents and not attempt to meet such diverse needs with one gathering/event.

- ◆ *Best Practice*—The ministry in family setting and, parish and wider community settings may well address the needs of both younger and older adolescents throughout the life of family, parish and civic community, e.g. the celebration of the Mass is a wonderful parish wide, intergenerational experience of prayer that helps to apprentice the young church into a life of discipleship.

5.0.2 Youth and Young Adult ministries have unique and separate peer communities. Shared events are strongly discouraged, in order that developmentally appropriate ministries may be developed.

- ◆ *Best Practice*—Creating a peer setting for experiences of prayer, study, service and worship is part of a well designed parish young adult ministry. This is in addition to their involvement throughout the life of the parish and within parish ministries.

5.0.3 Events with minors have special obligations in relationship to Child and Youth Protection. For this reason, if minors will be participants in an event/gathering, when parents/guardians are not present and supervising their own children, anyone over the age of 18 and out of high school who



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participates and interacts with youth must complete a background and fingerprint check and view the safe environment video “*Protecting Our Children*” and complete associated training.

- 5.0.4** Events that gather parents/guardians and teens together do not require that background checks and fingerprinting be conducted as long as young people take part in intergenerational groups with their parents/guardians, and as long as the event is not an overnight event. Those young people whose parents/guardians do not attend should be supervised and facilitated by appropriately screened and cleared ministry team members throughout the event.

6.0 Supervision of Youth

Determining the number of adults needed for supervision of youth depends on a number of factors, including the following: nature of the activity/event, age of the youth, and location of the activity/event.

6.1 Supervision Ratios of Adult:Youth

- 6.1.1** All events and activities require a minimum of two (2) adults, 21 years of age or older, as supervising ministry team members or chaperones.
- 6.1.2** Unless the group being supervised is either all boys or all girls with a supervising ministry team member or chaperone of the same gender, it is recommended that there be a supervising ministry team member/chaperone of each gender for mixed gender groups. This is required for overnight events.
- 6.1.3** Events require minimum of two (2) adult supervising ministry team members/chaperones for the first ten (10) young people; with a 1:10 ratio continuing thereafter.
- 6.1.4** Overnight events require a minimum of two (2) adult supervising ministry team members /chaperones for the first eight (8) young people; with a 1:8 ratio continuing thereafter.
- ◆ *Best Practice*—When determining the appropriate number of supervising ministry team members/chaperones you should consider the number of supervising ministry team members that would be needed in event of an emergency; are you in a rural or urban setting and what type of emergency and transportation options are available; certain types of activities may require additional supervision or assistance.
 - ◆ *Best Practice*—Looking at the ratio of adults responsible for supervision of youth, some activities such as bowling or a dance at the church may allow for the minimum adult/youth ratio. An activity at an amusement park may require minimum level supervision if the group is high school age as opposed to higher ratio for a group of middle school students. It is necessary to provide a constant supervising presence for younger adolescents. It may be appropriate for less mature adolescents of any age to provide a higher adult/youth ratio.
- 6.1.5** Constant supervision is required for younger adolescents.



6.2 Supervision Guidelines

- 6.2.1** For High School youth, proper supervision does not always require constant presence if there is an event with sufficient appropriate boundaries and young people are in groups of at least 3, e.g. when traveling to the National Catholic Youth Conference there is a set venue with security that young people can freely navigate with personal check-ins with ministry team members throughout the day between workshops and events.
- 6.2.2** At all times, high school age youth should be aware of the quickest way of reaching their adult Youth Ministry Leader and at no time should youth be unable to quickly locate a supervising ministry team member.
- ◆ *Best Practice*—Communication methods should be made clear, e.g. cell phone number of the Youth Ministry Leader. In a larger venue it may work well to have an assigned area that will always have a Youth Ministry Leader or supervising ministry team member present throughout the event, e.g. when at an amusement park for the day.
- 6.2.3** In cases where risk is greater due to the nature of the experience, supervision by professionals with appropriate training is necessary, e.g. white water rafting, rock climbing.
- 6.2.4** Periodic, in-person check-in by high school age youth to their assigned group leader is required to take place at a minimum of four (4) hour intervals during longer events. Again, youth under high school age require the constant presence of supervision.
- 6.2.5** When traveling on pilgrimages, service experiences or other extended events, assigning a particular supervising ministry team member to a small group of youth is an effective way to supervise all youth in a larger public venue, e.g. a time for dinner in a downtown area.

6.3 Medical

- 6.3.1** Each parish youth ministry program must have a well-stocked and easily accessible first-aid kit, which includes feminine hygiene products. This kit is to accompany the group on any events off parish property.
- Young ladies of high school age may have access to both sanitary pads and tampons.
 - Young ladies of middle school age may have access sanitary pads.
- 6.3.2** It is preferable that all prescription medications be administered by a parent/legal guardian of the youth participant.
- 6.3.2.1** Medications may only be dispensed by the Youth Ministry Leader or authorized adult in accordance with the written instructions provided by the parent/legal guardian on the *Parental/Guardian Consent Form, Liability Waiver & Medical Consent* for the event/activity.



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6.3.3 Medication of any kind is to be administered only after checking the *Parental/Guardian Consent Form, Liability Waiver & Medical Consent* for written parental/guardian permission, allergies, and other medical conditions. All medicine should be labeled in appropriate prescription or over-the-counter bottles and should not be in the possession of the youth unless necessary (exceptions: those taking insulin, inhalers, or needing an epinephrine pen).

6.3.4 Upon checking the *Parental/Guardian Consent Form, Liability Waiver and Medical Consent* for written parental/guardian permission, allergies, and other medical conditions; in the absence of having provided a medication with written instructions, parents/guardians must be contacted to request permission to administer an over-the-counter medication.

6.3.4.1 The medication can only be dispensed at the minimum recommended dosage indicated on the original packaging label.

6.3.4.2 The parent/guardian should be asked, following the personal conversation, to leave a voice message on the Youth Ministry Leader's parish phone confirming their consent to administration of a specific medication, the circumstance, and date to provide verification that permission was received.

6.4 Overnight Trips & Accommodations

6.4.1 Priority must be given during any Church, school, or youth ministry overnight trip to ensure that all participants fulfill their Sunday and Holy Day obligations.

6.4.2 Sleeping Arrangements

6.4.2.1 Regardless of the type of accommodations; males should never be in the females sleeping areas and vice versa. Mixed-gender social gatherings are not permitted in the sleeping areas.

6.4.2.2 All rooms must be checked by the Youth Ministry Leader before assigning them to groups to avoid males and females having adjoining rooms/doors. Adjoining rooms should only be shared by youth of the same gender.

6.4.2.3 Adults are never to share rooms/suites/tents with youth that accommodate less than eight (8) people.

6.4.2.4 A minimum of two (2) adult chaperones may share youth quarters in group sleeping situations where there are beds or space for eight (8) or more people (e.g. dormitory, bunk rooms, cabins, gym floor, large room). The adults' beds or sleeping space should be set apart from the youth and preferably near an exit.

6.4.3 In certain situations, consideration may be given to planning for awake-overnight supervision by appropriately cleared adults who are not directly responsible for the following mornings' programming.



6.5 Usage of Private Homes for Youth Gatherings

The following standards apply to youth ministry gatherings conducted in a home:

- 6.5.1** Two unrelated adults are to be present at all times for the gatherings.
- 6.5.2** In compliance with the *USCCB Charter for Protection of Children and Youth* as applied in the Diocese of Orlando, all ministry team members in home based youth ministry programs who have regular contact with youth will adhere to Youth & Young Adult Ministry policies previously set forth in these policies and procedures and *Serving as a Ministry Team Member*. This includes adults residing in the host home.
- 6.5.3** In keeping with the ideals of transparency and collaborative partnership with parents/guardians, parents/guardians must have explicit knowledge of the details of any event or program involving their minor children. Needed details in regard to the home setting include the following:
- The context for sessions/gatherings held in the home setting within the context of the formation program.
 - The name and phone number of the ministry team member/small group catechist.
 - The name, phone number, and address of the host family, if the small group is not in the ministry team member/catechist's home.
- Use of the home setting in a parish youth ministry program may be communicated through a catechetical handbook; registration form; and/or the *Parental/Guardian Consent Form, Liability Waiver and Medical Consent* for this setting/gathering.
- 6.5.4** *Parental/Guardian Consent Form, Liability Waiver and Medical Consent* should be provided to parents/guardians with specific regard to the use of the home setting within the context of youth ministry programming.
- 6.5.5** The small group sessions/gatherings should be monitored by the Youth Ministry Leader through random site visits if the session is a part of an ongoing ministry program and implementation of the following:
- Small group sessions/gatherings should be held in common areas of the home that are well lit and open.
 - Youth are to remain in the designated area for sessions/gatherings.
 - At no time should any youth be allowed in bedrooms or other secluded areas of the home.
- 6.5.6** The home is to be well maintained and provide a physically safe environment.
- 6.5.7** Pets should be kept from areas where students are arriving or attending programming and parents/guardians should be informed in advance if there are any pets in the home that is being used for the session/gathering.



6.6 Drugs, Alcohol & Pornography

6.6.1 Being under the influence of illegal drugs, alcoholic beverages, and/or mood altering substances, and/or being in possession of drug or alcohol-related, tobacco products, tobacco related paraphernalia and/or prescription drugs not indicated on the *Parental/Guardian Consent Form, Liability Waiver & Medical Consent* by:

- any youth on parish property
- any youth attending or participating in any youth ministry sponsored activity
- any youth attending or participating in any activity that may be associated in any way with the youth ministry

is forbidden and may result in disciplinary action. This may include dismissal from the parish youth ministry, even for a first offense. The decision as to the most appropriate consequence should be made in consultation with one's pastor or supervisor and should take into consideration the pastoral needs of the situation. The parent/guardian should be given information regarding counseling resources and engaged in the parish discussion of appropriate consequences in regards to the ministry environment.

6.6.2 Any youth found to have consumed alcohol or drugs, have them in their possession, or arrives to an event/activity under the influence may not be allowed to remain at the event/activity and must be picked up immediately by the parent/guardian.

6.6.3 The Youth Ministry Leader must inform the parent/guardians of any young person who has consumed alcohol or used illegal drugs at a youth ministry meeting, activity or event. Parents/guardians have a right to know. This is in keeping with our partnership with parents/guardians.

6.6.4 The discussion of the illicit use, purchase, sale, distribution, or possession of drugs/alcohol by any youth at a youth ministry meeting, activity, or at any youth ministry-related function may result in the dismissal of the individual from the parish youth ministry and the possibility of criminal charges being brought against the young person. The decision as to the most appropriate consequence should be made in consultation with one's pastor or supervisor and should take into consideration the pastoral needs of the situation and if a youth is involved the parent/guardian of the youth should be given information regarding counseling resources and engaged in the discussion of appropriate consequences in regards to the ministry environment.

6.6.5 Youth and adults participating in youth ministry activities and events will not be permitted to consume alcoholic beverages during those programs. This is inclusive of international trips, no matter if the legal drinking ages are more lenient in other countries.

6.6.6 Although bag checks may occur before leaving for events, allegations of possession of drugs, alcohol, and/or pornography still exist. If the allegation of possession is presented, the party or parties should be approached by at least two (2) supervising ministry team members to determine the accuracy of the allegation. If there is a reasonable cause, the ministry team members should request permission to search the possessions of the accused. This should always occur in the



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presence of at least two (2) supervising ministry team members. It should never be done by a single adult.

6.6.7 Ministry team members and chaperones may not consume alcohol at any youth ministry event/gathering. On overnight events, this restriction applies around-the-clock. This restriction continues to apply for adults during the evening hours, after the young people have gone to sleep.

6.6.8 The Office of Youth & Young Adult Ministry believes the education of parents/guardians, youth, and ministry team members is an important aspect of dealing with the issue of substance abuse. To this end, individuals in violations of these policies will be encouraged to seek counseling or support.

6.6.9 Ministry team members and chaperones who provide or assist youth in obtaining alcohol and/or illegal drugs for their consumption will be dismissed immediately.

6.6.10 Intergenerational gatherings that are primarily youth-oriented should not serve alcohol (e.g. reception for high school graduates following a blessing at mass).

6.6.11 Programs that sponsor events for intergenerational audiences where alcohol will be available should make sure that parents/guardians of youth are aware that alcohol will be available/served.

6.6.12 Programs that sponsor events for intergenerational audiences where alcohol will be available have the responsibility to insure that no under-age drinking will be allowed.

6.6.13 Programs that sponsor events for intergenerational audiences where alcohol will be available should act to insure that responsible drinking is modeled for the young people present.

6.6.14 An underage person should never be placed in the position of tending bar or serving alcohol.

6.7 Smoking

6.7.1 Youth under the age of eighteen are not permitted to smoke at any youth ministry gathering.

6.7.2 No one (young person or adult) is permitted to give, lend, or sell tobacco products to a minor. Any one who sells, loans, or gives tobacco products to a minor is in violation of the law. This is considered a serious offense.

6.7.3 While it is understood that smoking is addictive, adults who find it difficult to avoid smoking are to remove themselves from the proximity of young people and smoke in discreet, designated smoking areas.

- Adults are free to make choices about smoking. Adults should consider their sphere of influence, and are encouraged not to smoke at youth events/activities. This would keep adults in greater solidarity with young people.



6.8 Records of Attendance

6.8.1 Accurate records of attendance must be kept in case there is ever a question of the presence of a young person at a particular event or activity. Parents/guardians may believe their children were at a particular activity/event when, in truth, they were not. Parishes should set up procedures to notify parents/guardians of youth non-attendance at an activity/event for which the youth is registered or anticipated to attend.

6.8.2 Attendance records are to be kept on file at the parish for four (4) years.

6.9 Arrival & Dismissal

Youth Ministry Leaders must remember that their responsibility to and for youth exists from the time of arrival of the first participant until the time of departure of the last from the activity/event.

6.9.1 Two (2) supervising ministry team members must be present at the event location before the first youth participant arrives.

6.9.2 Two (2) responsible adults must remain with the youth until all youth have left the function or Church premises, including parking areas.

- If it is necessary for a young person to leave an activity/event early, it is preferred that contact between the Youth Ministry Leader and the parent/guardian regarding this need is made prior to dismissal of the youth. A note should be made on the attendance record for the activity/event as well.

6.10 Water Activities

6.10.1 Water Safety

6.10.1.1 Certified lifeguards must be present when swimming at a public or private pool, lake beach, or any other water venue.

6.10.1.2 Young people must use appropriate certified life preservers at all times when using any kind of water craft and be instructed on the proper use of the craft before using it. When possible, each water craft should have a supervising ministry team member on board.

6.10.1.3 Motorized craft must be driven by those at least age 21 and properly licensed and have been instructed on the use of the craft.

6.10.2 Swimwear/Water related attire

- ◆ *Best Practice*—establishing consistent parish policies around swim apparel for all participants that reinforce the values of modesty and chastity are strongly encouraged.



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- 6.10.2.1** Modest swimwear is required for all adult ministry team members at all water venues.
- For women: one-piece swimsuits, or two-piece suits that do not expose the midriff should be worn. A t-shirt may be worn over a two-piece suit with a bare midriff.
 - For men: shorts/boxer style swimsuits are to be worn.
- 6.10.2.2** Modest swimwear is encouraged for youth participants at water-related events.
- Young ladies should be encouraged to choose one-piece swimsuits or two-piece suits that do not expose the midriff. It is appropriate to encourage a t-shirt be worn over a two-piece suit with a bare midriff.
 - Young men should be encouraged to choose boxer-style swimsuits.

6.11 Crisis/Emergency/Inclement Weather Preparedness with Minors

6.11.1 Medical Emergencies

- 6.11.1.1** In life-threatening situations, always contact 911, local EMS to provide ambulance service.
- 6.11.1.2** Youth Ministry Leaders must be aware of directions to the nearest hospital or medical facility (both locally and when traveling off-site).

6.11.2 Inclement Weather

- 6.11.2.1** If outside at the onset of inclement weather, especially lightening, move all participants to an inside shelter and monitor the weather conditions.
- 6.11.2.2** In the case of a tornado warning, move participants to an interior hallway, closet or bathroom away from windows and assume the “duck and tuck” position. If unable to leave because of the conditions, notify local authorities of your situation.
- 6.11.2.3** Be familiar with your parish’s disaster preparedness plan and follow all evacuation warnings when facing various weather anomalies (hurricane, flooding, tornado, etc.)
- Keep a phone line clear for direct communication to Pastor, Diocese, and/or incoming calls from parents/guardians.
 - Verify weather conditions.
 - Notify parents/guardians regarding dismissal or end of program.
 - Do not allow youth to leave without notification of parents/guardians.
 - Supervising ministry team members remain on duty until all youth have been picked up.
 - Secure property prior to departure.
 - If local public school district cancels, youth ministry activities/events should be cancelled as well.
 - Be aware of the location of any emergency exits, note the nearest exits, & fire extinguishers in any setting.



7.0 Liability forms for Events within Youth, Young Adult, and Campus Ministries

7.1 Liability Form Requirements by Age Category

7.1.1 Forms needed for youth under the age of 18

7.1.1.1 A *Parental/Guardian Consent Form, Liability Waiver & Medical Consent* must be obtained for every youth under the age of 18 participating in parish events and be completed and signed by the parent/guardian of the young person.

7.1.2 Forms needed for youth age 18 or over and in high school

7.1.2.1 A *Parental/Guardian Consent Form, Liability Waiver & Medical Consent* must be obtained for every young person age 18 or over and still in high school and signed by the parent/guardian of the young person.

7.1.2.2 Additionally, a *Ministry Leader, Chaperone, & Adult Medical Release and Liability Waiver* must be completed and signed by the young person.

7.1.3 Forms needed for Adults

7.1.3.1 A *Ministry Leader, Chaperone, & Adult Medical Release and Liability Waiver* must be signed by each adult participant and adult ministry team member for events as outlined in 7.2.3.

7.2 Liability Form Requirements by Event Type

7.2.1 Youth Ministry activities/events with a planned pattern of gathering throughout the year.

7.2.1.1 A *Parental/Guardian Consent Form, Liability Waiver & Medical Consent* should be kept on file for all youth attending a youth event/activity with a planned pattern of gathering (be this weekly, bi-weekly or monthly gatherings) at a consistent location and time.

7.2.2 Youth Ministry activities/events outside a planned pattern of gathering.

7.2.2.1 Each youth ministry event outside a planned pattern of gathering, or at an alternate location, requires a separate *Parental/Guardian Consent Form, Liability Waiver & Medical Consent*. This includes events of the following type: a service project, retreat, rally, pilgrimage, or a sport/activity.



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7.2.3 Youth Ministry, Campus Ministry and Young Adult Ministry activities/events that will

- provide transportation,
- and/or take place as an overnight event (e.g. retreats, mission trips),
- and/or day events with a higher risk (e.g. whitewater rafting, service experiences with strenuous activity)

need to have adult participants complete a *Ministry Leader, Chaperone, & Adult Medical Release and Liability Waiver*. This includes ministry team members and chaperones at a youth or young adult event, as well as adult participants in a young adult or campus ministry event.

7.3 Liability Form Guidelines

7.3.1 The Ministry Leader must have received the appropriate consent forms and liability waivers for all participants in ministry events, prior to the event taking place.

7.3.2 *Parental/Guardian Consent Form, Liability Waiver & Medical Consent forms and Ministry Leader, Chaperone, & Adult Medical Release and Liability Waiver forms* are specific with regard to transportation. The youth ministry should use the appropriate form for each type of event.

- There is a specific consent and liability waiver form for events where there is transportation provided by the parish.
- There is a separate form for events where transportation is not provided by the parish.

7.3.3 *Parental /Guardian Consent Form, Liability Waiver & Medical Consent forms and Ministry Leader, Chaperone, & Adult Medical Release and Liability Waiver forms* must be kept on file at parish for four (4) years.

7.3.4 Youth Ministry Leaders must review *Parental/Guardian Consent Form, Liability Waiver & Medical Consent forms* to be aware of any serious medical conditions and allergies to medications, foods and insect bites.

7.3.5 When off parish property, emergency contact and medical information must be carried with the Ministry Leader or the young people's supervising ministry team member at all times. In addition, another copy should be held at the parish.

- It is strongly recommended that a third copy is kept on the person for events where constant-presence supervision is not anticipated.

7.3.6 Youth Ministry Leaders will take reasonable care to see that the information provided under 'Medical Conditions Information' on the *Parental/Guardian Consent Form, Liability Waiver & Medical Consent* is held in confidence, disclosing such information only when medically appropriate.



8.0 Transportation

The Office of Youth & Young Adult Ministry strongly encourages the use of commercial transportation provided by licensed and bonded carriers for all youth and young adult ministry events.

When this is not feasible, and transportation is to be provided by a non-commercial carrier/vehicle, whether privately-owned or rented, the following policies and procedures apply:

8.1 Driver & Transport Guidelines

- 8.1.1 Youth & young adult groups may not travel more than 500 miles/day. Breaks should be taken at a minimum of every 250 miles, at which point the driver must rest for a minimum of 30 minutes.
 - Additional approved drivers should be scheduled such that drivers can rotate to provide such breaks and/or in the case of driver incapacity.
- 8.1.2 A completed and signed *Adult Driver Information Sheet* on each vehicle used must be submitted to the Ministry Leader annually and kept on file for four (4) years. This form is to be renewed annually.
 - The Ministry Leader should offer a new form to each driver upon any change in vehicle registration, driving record, or vehicle.
- 8.1.3 The use of 12 and/or 15-passenger vans is prohibited. Cars, vans and buses must not exceed the passenger load. All passengers must have a seat; seat belt laws are to be observed at all times. All minors must wear a seatbelt at all times unless they are a passenger in a commercial carrier without seat belts.
- 8.1.4 No fireworks and/or weapons are to be stored, carried, or transported in a vehicle at any time.
- 8.1.5 The use of alcoholic or other illegal substances is prohibited. Drivers are prohibited from the use of alcohol, illegal substances, and legally prescribed substances that may cause impairment before, during, and after providing transportation for a parish/diocesan ministry event.
- 8.1.6 Smoking is not allowed in the presence of a minor or in any vehicle.
- 8.1.7 Drivers should be focused on driving. Any activity which could be considered a distraction is to be avoided while the vehicle is in motion. This includes, but is not limited to, electronic communication.
- 8.1.8 Conduct a head count upon arrival and before departing from any activity when transporting youth. Also do a visual check upon unloading to be sure that no young person has been left in a vehicle.
 - ◆ *Best Practice*—It is recommended that for events where larger capacity forms of transportation are used (e.g. bus, larger capacity vans), consideration is given to making arrangements for a cleared driver to follow in an additional vehicle so that he/she and the vehicle can be available in the event of an emergency. This is a greater consideration when the destination is more distant from emergency services and public transportation.



8.2 Driver Requirements

- 8.2.1** Persons serving as drivers for a diocesan/campus/parish youth or young adult event must have a valid, non-probationary, State of Florida driver's license with no physical limitation that could in any way impair his/her ability to operate and drive the vehicle safely. Additionally, all drivers must allow the Diocese/parish to obtain current driving record information from the FL Department of Motor Vehicles to ensure that they have an excellent driving record.
- 8.2.2** Drivers must have met all Diocesan clearance requirements. The Policies and Procedures set forth under *Serving as a Ministry Team Member* apply to all drivers.
- 8.2.3** No one under the age of 21 may drive minors as a part of a parish/campus/diocesan event. When choosing drivers for any ministry program, it is important to consider the personal maturity of the individuals that you entrust to the ministry of driving.
- 8.2.4** In cases of extreme extenuating circumstances, minors may drive themselves to and from an event that has transportation provided by the parish but this should be an exception and is strongly discouraged. In order to do so, the driver must have the permission of the Pastor and explicit written permission from parent/guardian releasing the Diocese and parish from any liability, using the *Parental/Guardian Consent to Waive Transportation & Liability Release*. Youth drivers may not drive other youth (other than immediate family).
- 8.2.5** All drivers for parish/campus/diocesan events must be cleared through the Diocese/parish.
- 8.2.6** Unless in accordance with that which is outlined above, Ministry Leaders are not to arrange carpools for youth or young adults attending parish/campus ministry activities and events.

8.3 Driver Insurance & Registration Information

- 8.3.1** In all cases, the Ministry Leader is obligated to verify that all drivers have the proper insurance and to insure that a recent DMV report has been obtained through the Diocese. Once the *Drivers License Information* form has been completed, please follow the information for faxing it to our insurance provider, located on the bottom of the form.
- 8.3.2** No additional insurance is required on rental vehicles. This is, however, left up to the driver's discretion and paid by the driver.
- 8.3.3** When a personal vehicle is used to transport for a Diocesan/parish/campus event, the person to whom the vehicle is registered becomes liable for any passengers. The minimal acceptable liability limit for PIP coverage is 100/300.
- 8.3.4** The vehicle must have a valid and current registration and insurance (copies should be obtained) and valid and current license plates.



9.0 Communications and Media Use

“The new digital technologies are, indeed, bringing about fundamental shifts in patterns of communication and human relationships. The desire for connectedness and the instinct for communication that are so obvious in contemporary culture are best understood as modern manifestations of the basic and enduring propensity of humans to reach beyond themselves and to seek communion with others. In reality, when we open ourselves to others, we are fulfilling our deepest need and becoming more fully human. Loving is, in fact, what we are designed for by our Creator.”

Pope Benedict XVI – Message for the 43rd World Day of Communications

With the words of Pope Benedict in mind, it is necessary that we acknowledge the importance of utilizing the new technologies and the internet as a communications tool within our ministries. We must also ensure that we do so in a way which is faithful to modeling authentic discipleship and relationships founded in integrity.

9.1 Transparency

- 9.1.1 It is essential to the nature of our ministry that parents/guardians are fully aware of all mediums being used to keep in contact with their young person for ministerial purposes.
- 9.1.2 The intent of communication policy is that we give witness to the Good News in such a way that we create a safe environment for all young people, which is open, transparent and involves the parents/guardians of the young people as partners.
- 9.1.3 It is important that ministry is not used to establish private one-on-one relationships with youth and our methods of communication must reflect this.
 - ◆ *Best Practice*—Maintain copies of communication with youth.
- 9.1.4 Unusual circumstances of a pastoral nature should be documented and shared with the pastor or one’s supervisor as soon as feasible. The documentation of any such circumstance should involve a copy of any applicable communication from all types of communication medium.

9.2 Phone Calls

- 9.2.1 Calls should be made to a young person’s home rather than to their personal cell phone in order to further transparency, you may then speak with the young person without further explicit permission of the parent/guardian. If you speak with a parent/guardian, and in hearing the information you wish to share the parent/guardian asks that you contact the young person directly by the young person’s cell phone, you may feel free to do so.
 - Calls may provide an opportunity to connect with the parents/guardians as well, and this is a helpful point of connection for family and the ministry.



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- 9.2.2** Phone calls to a young person should be connected to the ministry setting, and again follow the principles of transparency.
- 9.2.3** When you are contacted by a young person be sure to observe the principles of transparency and conduct the conversation as an aspect of the ministry and be present to the conversation as a minister.
- For trips off of church property it is appropriate that youth be given the cell phone numbers of the adult leaders to have in case of emergency, e.g. on an excursion to a theme park. It is also appropriate that, after parents/guardians have been informed, youth cell phone numbers are collected for use that day to ensure safety, following the guidelines of transparency.

9.3 Cards and letters

- 9.3.1** A consistent practice of acknowledging and affirming achievements in the lives of those within ministry is certainly appropriate, e.g. sending a note to all graduating seniors or to each young person on their birthday. Communication of this type should be completely transparent and appropriate to a ministry setting. In signing your name it is appropriate to include your title and the name of the ministry you serve.
- 9.3.2** Within ministry other occasions may arise in which all youth attending an event receive a short note of affirmation in the context of our faith. This might include *palanca* notes on retreat or an affirmation activity within a program or event. Use good judgment in integrating the outlined aspects of transparency into all of your communications with youth.

9.4 Social Networking Applications

The policies contained herein do not supersede the Diocesan Social Networking Opportunities Policy (DSNOP) and/or the Diocesan Network Acceptable Use Policy (DNAUP), they simply identify particular applications of those policies. Youth and Young Adult Ministry Operates with strict adherence to Orlando's DSNOP and DNAUP. All Youth Ministry Leaders and assisting volunteers are expected to be familiar with and adhere to these policies.

9.4.1 Personal Social Networking Sites of Ministers

- 9.4.1.1** If a minister or ministry team member chooses to have a personal social networking site, e.g. Facebook, it must be seen as an extension of the person of the minister. All content on the personal site must reflect a life of discipleship and all content must be in keeping with the teaching role undertaken by those ministering with youth.
- 9.4.1.2** The site should not be used to conduct the business of parish ministry; this includes the posting of parish/ministry events.
- 9.4.1.3** All friends/contacts on the personal site must be individuals who are out of high school and at least 18 years of age, with the exception of immediate relatives.



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9.4.2 Parish/Ministry Social Networking Sites

9.4.2.1 All network activity must be in keeping with the Diocesan Networking Acceptable Use Policy (DNAUP).

9.4.2.2 No chat or blog features of any software may be utilized or created on a parish web page. It is essential that all posted content be first evaluated in terms of content and appropriateness – this is not possible with a widespread ability for individuals to add content.

9.4.2.3 Posting of links, photos, and events must be limited to authorized administrators.

9.4.2.4 All friends/fans/followers of a social networking site must be 18 years of age, out of high school and known to the administrator of the social network.

9.4.2.5 Educational Software does exist which can be utilized in an educational/ministry environment that provides a closed community for those still in high school or middle school. Parents/guardians are copied on all posts to the site and everything posted is done so through the ministry leader/administrator.

◆ *Best Practice*—If there will be information shared via a social networking site for both a parish youth ministry and a parish young adult ministry it is strongly recommended that the information on each page apply directly to the specific ministry.

◆ *Best Practice*—Given that youth may not be friends/fans/followers of a social networking site, youth ministry pages might well be designed with parents/guardians in mind as the primary audience. Of course, parent/guardian oriented content should also have a place on the parish youth ministry page of a website. In keeping with DSNOP, material posted to any social networking site must also be available through other communication mediums.

9.5 E-mail to minors

9.5.1 Youth Ministry Leaders should not use their personal e-mail account for their ministry work. The parish should provide each minister with an e-mail account for ministry work.

9.5.2 All e-mail correspondence to a minor must be accompanied by a corresponding copy to the parent/guardian.

- This will require collecting e-mail information from both parents/guardians and teens at the time of registration for a program/event.

9.6 Text Messaging to minors

9.6.1 Text messaging should follow the guidelines applicable to other forms of communication, including integrating the principles of transparency



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- 9.6.2** Youth Ministry Leaders and ministry team members should avoid private text communication with any youth.
- 9.6.3** Communicating with youth regarding a ministry event should include copying a text message to the parent/guardian or forwarding the text message to the parent/guardian of the youth through e-mail.
- 9.6.4** Communicating with a group of youth through text messaging may be done as long as parents/guardians are included in the text recipients or are sent an e-mail with the content of the text message, e.g. sending out a reflection or scripture of the day to all youth or providing information on an upcoming event

9.7 Instant Messaging

- 9.7.1** The Diocesan Networking Acceptable Use Policy does not allow the use of instant messaging.

9.8 Website Link Requirements

(taken directly from the Diocesan Network Acceptable Use Policy)

Any website of a Diocesan entity links sites that are not in conflict with the teaching and the magisterium of the Roman Catholic Church. The links fall into these three main areas:

- 9.8.1** Official Church sites, such as the Vatican, US Conference of Catholic Bishops, state conferences, archdioceses and dioceses;
- 9.8.2** Parts of the Diocese such as parishes, schools and ministries operated by the Diocese or approved resources associated with those ministries; and
- 9.8.3** Under the oversight of a bishop or religious congregation, or listed in the Official Catholic Directory. Church leaders should use prudence in evaluating links to other commercial opportunities on its site. It is the entity's responsibility to evaluate its hosts' advertisers and sponsors on a regular basis.
- 9.8.4** Use of photos on websites should be group photos. Where children are involved, first names only should be used. Parents/guardians must sign permission slips each year for use of children's photos; therefore, all photos, particularly those which include children, should be refreshed regularly.
- 9.8.5** Parents/guardians must sign permission slips each year for the use of video where children are present. Use of videos on websites should be refreshed regularly when images of children are present.



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9.8.6 All Diocesan parishes, school, and entities should have a link for the Diocese of Orlando website, www.orlandodiocese.org, on its own website.

9.9 Use of Media within Ministry

9.9.1 Showing movies/clips

9.9.1.1 Parental/guardian consent forms must be completed before showing any portion of a film rated “R” on the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) rating scale to high school age students. This impacts film use within all high school youth ministry programs. The title of the film that will be shown, in whole or part, may be included on the overall parental/guardian consent form for a specific event. If this is a specific evening within a youth ministry planned pattern of gathering a specific parental/guardian consent form should be completed.

9.9.1.2 No portion of a film rated “R” on the MPAA rating scale may be shown to students under high school age. This impacts film use within all middle school youth ministry programs.

9.9.1.3 Parental/guardian consent forms must be completed before showing any portion of a film rated “PG-13” on the Motion Picture Association of America rating scale to those under the age of 14. This impacts film use within all middle school youth ministry programs. The title of the film that will be shown, in whole or part, may be included on the overall parental/guardian consent form for a specific event. If this is a specific evening within a youth ministry planned pattern of gathering a specific parental/guardian consent form should be completed.

◆ *Best Practice*—Consult the USCCB movie rating guide, found at www.usccb.org before deciding whether or not any clip is appropriate for use within a ministry setting. The USCCB rating system will make note of where a film reinforces or detracts from Gospel values. This system will also indicate films which the MPAA finds age appropriate, that are contrary to the faith. It will also point out films with a high level of resonance with moral and spiritual values of our faith.

◆ *Best Practice*—Use clips only from films that you would be comfortable having the young person recommend to their parents/guardian for viewing the complete film.

9.9.2 Using Music within Ministry

9.9.2.1 Using music from the popular culture must include a pre-screening of lyrics. Lyrics with obscenities, or that are demeaning to people of a specific gender, race, creed or sexual orientation, are not to be played/broadcast within the ministry setting.

◆ *Best Practice*—Providing young people with tools to assess media within a Gospel framework is an excellent practice. In this context it may be appropriate to examine the printed lyrics of songs within popular culture, first deleting any obscenities from the printed copy, with the purpose of enabling young people to apply a Gospel filter to media.



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9.10 Speakers for Ministry Events

9.10.1 All individuals, both lay and ordained that will be offering presentations within the ministry setting must be approved by the Office of the Chancellor of the Diocese of Orlando. Please contact the Chancellor's Office of the Diocese of Orlando for particulars on this process.

9.10.2 Lay and ordained individuals employed by the Diocese of Orlando or a parish within the Diocese of Orlando are not required to receive authorization from the Office of the Chancellor.



10.0 Diocesan Policy References

10.1 Diocese of Orlando Policies on Child Sexual Abuse

http://www.orlandodiocese.org/who_we_are/child_youth/policies.php

10.2 Diocese of Orlando Standards of Conduct for Church Personnel

http://www.orlandodiocese.org/who_we_are/child_youth/conduct.php

10.3 Diocese of Orlando Safe Environment Program

10.3.1 Protecting Our Children

Brochure - http://www.orlandodiocese.org/who_we_are/child_youth/brochure.php

Video - http://www.orlandodiocese.org/who_we_are/child_youth/video.php

Online Training - (note: username & password required to complete online training)

http://www.orlandodiocese.org/chancery/Youth_Protection_08/index.php

10.3.2 Fingerprint Submission Registration Site

https://www.priderockholdings.com/SafeSupport/instructions.php?comp_id=214

10.4 Diocesan Social Networking Opportunities Policy

<http://www.orlandodiocese.org/media/communication/socialnet.php>

10.5 Diocesan Network Acceptable Use Policy (DNAUP)

(note: username & password required to access Diocesan intranet)

<http://www.orlandodiocese.org/intranet/accion.php?PHPSESSID=4ef5b3813c9427f685926b6889c29635&dir=.&cal=DIOCESAN%20POLICY%20Network%20Acceptable%20Use%2008-09.pdf&accion=descargar>

10.6 USCCB Charter for Protection of Children and Youth

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

10.7 National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry Code of Ethics for Youth Ministry Leaders

<http://www.nfcym.org/profdev/resources/COEforYML.pdf>