



Catholic Diocese of Phoenix Youth Volunteer Acknowledgement

October 4, 2009

Dear Parents / Guardians of students:

Your teenager has chosen to volunteer with a Catholic parish or school program.

As a youth volunteer your teenager will be asked to complete safe environment lesson through the religious education program or in a Catholic school, he/she will be asked to review the Diocese of Phoenix Policy and Procedure for the Protection of Minors and sign a Diocesan Code of Ethics. The reverse side of this letter provides an abbreviated portion of Appendix 3, Interactions and Behaviors from the Policy and Procedures for the Protection of Minors, which we ask that you review with your teenager.

As a youth volunteer, your teenager will work in conjunction with adult supervisors. The youth volunteers are required to abide by the rules and requests established by the program supervisor.

The following information is from the Diocese of Phoenix Policy and Procedures for the Protection of minors:

E. Minors Serving In Programs

Peer leaders and minors serving other minors are an important part of service within the Diocese.

Following are standards for their service:

1. Peer leaders 12-18 years old must attend a Safe Environment Educational session annually, sign the Diocesan Code of Ethics, be familiar with the *Policy and Procedures for the Protection of Minors* and have submitted signed parental consent.
2. Programs for minors shall be sponsored or administered by at least two adults.
3. Must always serve with Safe Environment trained adults.
4. Children under the age of 11 are not to be considered peer leaders.

By signing this document you are providing permission for your child to volunteer in the parish and/or school program and you will assist your child in ensuring a Safe Environment is maintained for all children and youth in the Diocese of Phoenix.

St. Helen Parish

Parish Name

Date

Parent's Name

Parent's Signature

Youth Name

Age

Youth's Signature

Date

Interactions & Behaviors

From the Policy and Procedure for the Protection of Minors

The lists provided below are not intended to be exhaustive.

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Appropriate Interactions</i></p> <p>Appropriate affection between Church employees/volunteers and minors constitutes a positive part of Church life, ministry, and healthy child development.</p> <p>Depending on the circumstances, the following forms of interaction are customarily (but not always) regarded as appropriate.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Inappropriate Interactions</i></p> <p>Some forms of behavior and physical affection have been used by adults to initiate inappropriate contact with minors. In order to maintain the safest possible environment for minors, the following are examples of affection that are not to be used:</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Appropriate Physical Interactions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Side hugs • Shoulder-to-shoulder or “temple” hugs • Handshakes • “High-fives” and hand slapping • Pats on the head or back when culturally appropriate • Touching hands, shoulders, or arm around shoulders • Holding hands (with smaller children in escorting situations) • Holding hands during prayer 	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Inappropriate Physical Interactions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any form of affection that is unwanted by the child • Showing affection in isolated areas • Physical contact insisted on or requested by the adult • Inappropriate or lengthy embraces • Full frontal hugs, Kisses on the mouth • Touching knees or legs, Touching buttocks, chest or genital areas • Wrestling, Piggyback rides, Tickling • Touch, pull, push or strike a child in anger • Allowing a child to cling to a staff person’s leg • Any type of massage given by minor to adult • Any type of massage given by adult to minor
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Appropriate Behavior</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistently abiding by the Code of Ethics and the Policy for the Protection of Minors • Providing a Safe Environment where the dignity of every individual is ensured • Maintaining a professional relationship when dealing with minors, avoiding emotional attachment and /or vulnerable situations • Maintaining an awareness of the powerful attraction of minors to adults in positions of authority and trust. If a personal or physical dependency begins to develop, the minor is to be referred to another qualified adult. 	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Inappropriate Behavior</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giving personal email, phone number, cell phone number, or pager number to a minor • Allowing minors to have, or assist minors in gaining, access to alcohol, drugs, pornographic material, or any illegal substance. • Allowing minors to have, or assist minors in gaining, access to inappropriate websites, movie audiotapes, DVDs, or compact discs.
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Appropriate Verbal Interactions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive reinforcement • Appropriate jokes • Encouragement • Verbal Praise 	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Inappropriate Verbal Interactions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name calling, Cursing, Shaming, Belittling • Telling off-color or sexual jokes • Compliments that relate to physique or body development. • Using harsh language that may frighten, threaten or humiliate a minor • Racial insults or ethnic slurs or making derogatory remarks about the child or his/her family