



## Archdiocese of Regina

### **Protocol for Responsible Parish Ministry— Children and Youth Ministry**

All individuals who are working with children or youth of the parish are required to be screened at the High Security level. The level of risk for activities chosen for the children or youth should be considered. As the risk level increases, the level of supervision should also increase. It is important to remember that the level of risk increases as isolation occurs, accountability decreases and where there is an imbalance of power, authority or influence of one individual over another. Planning should occur that minimizes the level of risk.

When determining the level of risk four factors should be examined.

1. Participant
  - Age (preschool, elementary school age or high school age)
  - Mental and physical health of the individual.
  - Language and communication skills
  - Maturity
  - Isolation
  - History of abuse
  - Disability
  - Current crisis/trauma
2. Setting
  - Isolated place (including tents, cabins, private homes, hotel rooms etc....)
  - A room without any windows through which the room can be entirely viewed.
  - Motor vehicle
  - One-on-one setting
3. Activity
  - Visits in a home, daycare, hospital
  - Overnight activity
  - Activity that is of high physical or emotional intensity
4. Supervision
  - Little or no supervision
  - No documentation of events

## **GUIDELINES WHEN WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

(These guidelines have been extracted from Section Two Page 1 of the Archdiocese of Regina Protocol for Responsible Parish Ministry)

The guidelines are intended to provide a general overview of how to appropriately conduct interactions with children and youth, recognizing that any position of service requires a standard of good practice that safeguards both the one being served and the one serving. Openness, transparency and good planning are the keys to due diligence and safeguarding the dignity and wellbeing of all involved. The volunteer must:

- Accept the responsibility to set reasonable boundaries in all relationships.
- Whenever possible, conduct activities with children and youth in groups that have easy access by parent(s) and guardians(s) and supervisor(s) of programs.
- Let other people know where you are with activity you are conducting and who is with you.
- Never engage in physical discipline for behavior management of children and youth.
- Never conduct any activities with children or youth while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Never provide alcohol, tobacco or any other drug to a child or youth in your care.
- Never interact with a child or youth in any way that can be viewed as sexual or emotionally intimate or expose them to sexually explicit materials in media, etc.
- Limit communication with children and youth via electronic media to work or ministry related matters.
- Volunteers should not spend extended time or exclusive time alone with children or youth, without consent of the parent(s), guardians(s) and the foreknowledge of the Pastor.
- Ensure that all activities you are conducting with children and youth are pre-approved by the Pastor, Ministry Coordinator and parents of the children and youth.
- Ensure there are sufficient adults present for group activities to safe guard all involved and that the parent(s) or guardians(s) have given their signed, written permission for the child to participate in the activity.
- Release children and minors only to their parent(s) or guardians(s) or someone designated by the parent(s) or guardian(s) through a written and signed document that you have verified before the event or activity begins.
- Use discretion when accepting gifts as a result of your parish service. Any such gifts must be brought to the attention of the Ministry Coordinator.
- When activities require a volunteer to be alone with a child or youth, every effort must be made to ensure the vulnerable person's dignity and privacy.
- The door to the room must remain open at all times unless two or more unrelated adults are present for youth gatherings or instruction or unless the classroom or meeting room has a window through which the activity may be observed.