

Archdiocese of Milwaukee

Safeguarding All of God's Family

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Safeguarding All of God's Family?

All efforts and programs in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee that relate to protecting God's children and creating a safe environment come under the umbrella of *Safeguarding All of God's Family*.

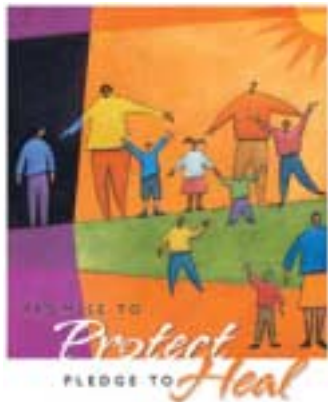
As a faith-filled people, we respect and value each and every individual, as we are created in the image and likeness of God. This is why the *Safeguarding All of God's Family* program has been established. The Archdiocese of Milwaukee is committed to creating a safe environment where all of God's family – children, their parents and relatives, parish and school personnel, volunteers, clergy and archdiocesan central office personnel – will be able to work, live, and play in an environment where healthy and responsible relationships prevail.

Why do I have to participate in this program?

The *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* requires that dioceses/eparchies establish "safe environment" programs. Article 12 of the Charter states:

"Dioceses/eparchies will establish "safe environment" programs. They will cooperate with parents, civil authorities, educators and community organizations to provide education and training for children, youth, parents, ministers, educators and others about ways to make and maintain a safe environment for children. Dioceses/eparchies will make clear to clergy and members of the community the standards of conduct for clergy and other persons in positions of trust with regard to sexual abuse."

Our children are precious, and all adults need to better understand the injustice of sexual abuse in society. There is a need for creating a greater awareness about this problem. *Safeguarding All of God's Family* is the program of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee dedicated to creating awareness and understanding of abuse of children and youth.



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What is the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*?

The *Charter* is a comprehensive set of norms established by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) in June 2002 that addresses allegations of sexual abuse of minors by Catholic clergy. The *Charter* also includes guidelines for reconciliation, healing, accountability and prevention of future acts of abuse.

Do you really think this program will make a difference?

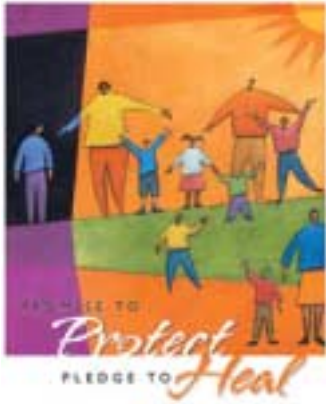
Absolutely. This program offers an opportunity for all of God's family to increase our awareness and knowledge of child sexual abuse in order to prevent any child from suffering this trauma, whether from school or Church personnel, family member or other person. Statistics show that most abuse occurs by a person known to the victim. Participating in this program will help all who work with children be more attuned to the warning signs of abuse and identify ways to respond. Awareness is the first step in understanding our responsibilities as members of God's family to our children and young people.

Who must participate?

All those who share their many talents and treasures within the Church atmosphere, paying particular attention to those whose ministry calls them to demonstrate their gifts through work with children and youth.

The following must join the Archdiocese of Milwaukee's mission to *Safeguard All of God's Family*:

- All diocesan priests and deacons (active or retired) in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.
- All priests who are members of religious communities and extern priests (priests from other dioceses) who minister within the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.
- Women religious and religious brothers working in the Archdiocese, its parishes or schools.
- Seminarians and those enrolled in the Diaconate Formation Program or Lay Formation Program.
- All paid personnel, whether employed in areas of ministry or other kinds of services provided by the Archdiocese, its parishes, schools or other agencies.
- All volunteers who enter into ministry involving regular contact with children and young people.



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What determines “regular contact” with children?

“Regular contact” can be defined as follows:

1. Any individual who works, volunteers, or has contact with minors within the Archdiocese of Milwaukee’s parishes, schools or institutions **more than once a year.**
2. Any individual who goes on a field trip (or any outing away from the parish, school or institution) with minors from any parish, school or institution within the Archdiocese of Milwaukee **even once a year.**

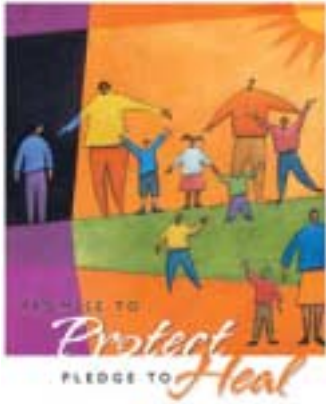
What must I do to Safeguard All of God’s Family?

Priests, parish directors, deacons, DREs, DYMs, school and parish staff, archdiocesan central office staff, and other paid and unpaid Church employees who have any contact with children or youth:

- You will and sign the Code of Ethical Standards and the Mandatory Reporting Statement.
- A criminal background check will be completed.
(If you are a diocesan priest or deacon, these documents will be filed with the Chancery Office; for all others, they will be filed at your parish or school.)
- You will participate in a three-hour training session.
- You will receive continued training regarding Safeguarding All of God’s Family.

Catechists, athletic team coaches, Girl Scout leaders, chaperones for overnight activities, and other Church volunteers who have regular contact with children or youth:

- You will read and sign the Code of Ethical Standards and the Mandatory Reporting Statement.
- A criminal background check will be completed.
(If you are a diocesan priest or deacon, these documents will be filed with the Chancery Office; for all others, they will be filed at your parish or school.)
- You will participate in a three-hour training session.



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Boy Scout leaders are exempt because they are held accountable through a similar program required by the Boy Scouts. They will need to submit to the pastor, administrator or parish director verification that they have completed the program.

How long will a new hire or new volunteer have to complete this program?

Individuals will complete the program within 90 days of being hired or becoming a volunteer.

When and how do I register for this program?

Training sessions for *Protecting God's Children* Safe Environment Education are offered throughout the year all around the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.

To register for a Safe Environment Education session go to the Archdiocese of Milwaukee website (www.archmil.org) and register through the Events page.

Why is a criminal background check conducted?

The Archdiocese of Milwaukee is following the requirements of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*:

“Dioceses/eparchies will evaluate the background of all diocesan/eparchial and parish personnel who have regular contact with minors. Specifically, they will utilize the resources of law enforcement and other community agencies.”

What if someone refuses to participate?

All Church personnel, as well as volunteers who work with children, are required to participate in *Safeguarding All of God's Family* for continued employment or to be considered a volunteer. If a person feels he or she has a grave reason for not participating, the person may write Archbishop Dolan to explain the situation. A reasonable alternative to the requirement will be considered on an individual basis.