

## What is Child Abuse?

Child abuse includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Engaging in sexual activity with a child;
- Endangering a child;
- Denying to a child proper or necessary subsistence, education, medical care or other care necessary for the child's health;
- Using restraint that causes a child pain or injury;
- Administering prescription drugs or psychotropic medication to a child without the written approval and ongoing supervision of a licensed physician;
- Providing alcoholic beverages or controlled substances to a child;
- Committing of any act, other than by accidental means or by actions taken in self-defense or under similar justifiable circumstances, that results in any injury or death to a child;
- Inflicting of physical or mental injury that threatens to harm a child's health or welfare.

## Contact Numbers to Report Allegations of Child Abuse Resources: County Children's Protective Services

Adams County	Children's Services	937.544.2511
Auglaize County	Children's Services	419.739.6505
	Sheriff's Office (After Hours)	419.739.6565
Brown County	Dept. of Jobs & Family Services	937.378.6104
	Children's Services (After Hours)	937.378.4435
Butler County	Children's Services	513.887.4055
Champaign County	Children's Services (Day)	800.837.4290
	Sheriff's Office (After Hours)	937.652.1311
Clark County	Dept. of Jobs and Family Services (intake) (After Hours)	937.327.1748 937.324.8687
Clermont County	Children's Protective Services (After Hours)	513.732.7173 513.732.2231
Clinton County	Children's Services (After Hours)	937.382.5935 937.382.2449
Darke County	Children's Services Sheriff's Office (After Hours)	937.548.4132 937.548.2020
Greene County	Children's Services From Dayton (After Hours)	937.562.6600 937.427.2883
	From Fairborn (After Hours)	937.879.4357 937.878.1415
	(After Hours)	937.372.4357
Hamilton County	Children's Protective Services (Hotline)	513.241.KIDS
Highland County	Children's Services Sheriff's Office (After Hours)	937.393.3111 937.393.1421
Logan County	Children's Services	937.599.7290
Mercer County	Children's Services Sheriff's Office (After Hours)	419.586.5106 419.586.7724
Miami County	Children's Services (After Hours-Goes to 911 Center)	937.335.4103 937.440.9911
Montgomery County	Children's Services	937.224.5437
Preble County	Children's Services	937.456.1135
Shelby County	Dept. of Jobs & Family Services Sheriff's Office (After Hours)	937.498.4981 937.498.1111
Warren County	Children's Protective Services (After Hours)	513.695.1546 513.695.1600



100 East Eighth Street  
Cincinnati, OH 45202

513.421.3131

ARCHDIOCESE OF CINCINNATI

# DECREE ON CHILD PROTECTION

## SUMMARY BROCHURE

EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2008

### Introduction

Although the abuse of children and adolescents is a reality in our society, such abuse, whether physical, sexual, verbal or emotional, whether inflicted by lay or ordained, professionals or volunteers, cannot be tolerated in the Church.

### Purpose

The purpose of the *Decree on Child Protection* is two-fold: to prevent the abuse of children and adolescents and to provide a system for handling incidents of abuse after they occur.

*This is only a summary of the Decree on Child Protection. The complete document is available by calling the Chancellor's Office at 513.421.3131, or online at [www.CatholicCincinnati.org](http://www.CatholicCincinnati.org).*

# Types of Child Abuse

**Physical abuse** is any non-accidental physical injury to a child caused by an adult which results in or threatens serious injury. Often adults who physically abuse children do not intend to seriously injure the children but get carried away by anger and frustration in their own lives.

Signs of physical abuse include:

- A child has unexplained burns, bruises, broken bones, black eyes.
- A child has fading bruises after an absence from class or regularly scheduled activity.
- A child shrinks from touch of adults or appears unusually fearful.
- A child reports injury from adult.

**Sexual abuse** is any physical contact with a child by an adult or older child in a position of power over the child for the sexual gratification of the adult or older child. Other terms for sexual abuse include child molestation, incest (if the abuser is a member of the child's family) or child pornography. Often the child knows the abuser.

Signs of sexual abuse include:

- A child exhibits change in behavior such as loss of appetite, nightmares, inability to sleep or withdrawal from usual activities and peer relationships.
- A child returns to bedwetting or thumb sucking.
- A child has genital pain, itching, swelling or bleeding.

- A child indicates fear of a person or an intense dislike of being left somewhere or with a particular person.
- A child shows unusual interest in or knowledge of sexual matters, expressing affection in ways inappropriate for a child of his or her age.

**Neglect** is the failure of a parent or guardian to provide a child with adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care, education or supervision. Neglect is a chronic problem often resulting, not from poverty, but from lack of knowledge as to the proper care required by children.

Signs of neglect include:

- A child is frequently absent.
- A child begs or steals food or money.
- A child lacks medical or dental care, glasses (if needed) and immunizations.
- A child lacks sufficient clothing.
- A child is consistently dirty and has severe body odor.
- A child abuses alcohol or drugs.
- A child states that no one provides care.

**Emotional abuse** is an important factor in all forms of child abuse. To be hurt so much by someone who should care and protect is very damaging to the emotional development of a child. Adults who do not

physically harm a child may cause emotional harm by using words that threaten, harshly criticize, ridicule or harass.

Signs of emotional abuse include:

- A child shows extremes in behavior.
- A child is either inappropriately adult or infantile.
- A child is delayed in physical or emotional development.
- A child has attempted suicide.
- A child reports lack of attachment to parents.
- A child is exhibiting extremes of behavior, overly anxious to please, to assume blame or extremely passive or aggressive, demanding or undemanding.

## Behavior Expectations

These are behavior expectations of adults who are priests, deacons, auxiliary services personnel, personnel furnished by a third party contractor, employees and volunteers of the Archdiocese and its subdivisions.

**Prohibited physical contact:** Some forms of physical contact have been used by adults to initiate inappropriate contact with children. In order to maintain the safest possible environment for children, the following are examples of physical contact prohibited from use by priests, deacons, auxiliary services personnel, personnel furnished by a third party contractor, employees and volunteers:

- Any form of unwanted affection;
- Inappropriate, forceful or lengthy embraces, and/or “bear hugs;”
- Kisses;
- Lap-sitting;
- Touching buttocks, chest, knees, thighs or genital areas;
- Placing hands in the pockets of a child;
- Showing affection in isolated areas such as bedrooms, closets, adult-only or staff-only areas, or other private rooms;
- Laying down, cuddling or sleeping near a child;
- Being in bed with a child;
- Wrestling;
- Tickling;
- Piggyback rides;
- Massage given by an adult to a child;
- Massage given by a child to an adult.

**Prohibited behaviors:** Priests, deacons, auxiliary services personnel, personnel furnished by a third party contractor, employees and volunteers are prohibited from the following:

- Using, possessing or being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drugs while working with children;

- Offering a child cigarettes, other smoking materials, alcohol or illegal drugs, or allowing a child to use or consume these items;
- Allowing a child to visit inappropriate websites;
- Providing a child with gifts or money without the permission of parents or guardians unless when distributed equitably to all children (for example, buying inexpensive gifts for all the altar servers);
- Ridiculing beliefs held by a child’s parents or guardians;
- Asking a child to keep secrets from the child’s parents or guardians;
- Speaking to a child in a way that is or could be construed by any observer as harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning or humiliating;
- Using bad language, swearing and cursing in the presence of a child;
- Behaving rudely in the presence of a child;
- Possessing any sexually-oriented or morally inappropriate materials (magazines, cards, videos, films, clothing, etc.) in the presence of children;
- Being nude in the presence of a child;
- Engaging in sexual contact with a child. Sexual contact is defined as vaginal intercourse, anal intercourse, oral intercourse or the touching of an erogenous zone of another (including, but not limited to the thighs, genitals, buttocks, pubic region or chest) for the purposes of sexually arousing or gratifying either person.

**Emotional boundaries:** Emotional boundaries must be created between children and priests, deacons, auxiliary services personnel, personnel furnished by a third party contractor, employees and volunteers. Examples of emotional boundary violations include:

- Compliments that relate to physique or body development;
- Meeting alone in locations away from a parish, school, agency or institution;
- Calling or e-mailing a child for purposes other than those directly related to academics or ministry;
- Displaying and/or taking excessive photographs of a child;
- Engaging in sexually-oriented conversations not related to education or ministry.

### **Matters related to transporting children:**

In the event it becomes necessary for a priest, deacon, auxiliary services personnel, personnel furnished by a third party contractor, employee or volunteer to provide transport for children, the following guidelines must be strictly observed:

- Children must never be transported without written permission from the parent or guardian;
- Children must be transported directly to their destination. No unauthorized stops may be made;
- Priests, deacons, auxiliary services personnel, personnel furnished by a third party contractor, employees or volunteers must avoid unnecessary physical contact with children while in the vehicle;
- Priests, deacons, auxiliary services personnel, personnel furnished by a third party contractor, employees or volunteers must never transport children alone.

## Policies Aimed at Preventing Child Abuse

- A child may receive scheduled, individual instruction or counseling from a cleric, employee or regular volunteer only with the written consent of the child's parent or guardian.
- A child may participate in an organized program sponsored by a parish, school, agency or institution of the Archdiocese only with the written consent of the child's parent or guardian on a permission and release of liability form. Such written consent should provide for emergency care of the child, as warranted by the program or activity.
- At least two adults must be present for any activity for children sponsored by a parish, school, agency or institution of the Archdiocese. Moreover, the number and gender of the adults is to be in proportion to the age, number and gender of the participants, and the duration and difficulty of the activity. Whenever possible, one of the adults should be a parent or guardian of a participant. For purposes of this C.3 Policy, "adult" excludes eighteen- and nineteen-year-olds not yet graduated from high school.
- No child may be disciplined corporally or corrected with abusive language.
- A cleric, employee or regular volunteer must obtain the consent of the child's parent or guardian before inviting or allowing a child to visit in the adult's home. In the event that the adult has little or no advance notice of the visit and another adult is present, such consent is not required.
- Clerics, employees and regular volunteers will use prudence when communicating with a child with written, e-mail, online services, instant messaging, cell phones and all other forms of communications.

## Proper Response to Actual or Suspected Child Abuse

### Reporting to civil authorities

The Archdiocese will comply with all applicable civil laws with respect to reporting allegations of known or suspected abuse of children to civil authorities. Ohio law *requires* all individuals acting in an official or professional capacity to immediately report any actual or suspected act of child abuse to the public children's service agency or to local law enforcement where the child resides or where the abuse is occurring.

The Archdiocese encourages all persons to immediately report any actual or suspected acts of child abuse to civil authorities.

An allegation of child abuse which is made by someone who chooses to remain anonymous must be reported to the civil authorities in the same way as an allegation made by someone who chooses not to remain anonymous.

### Signs of abuse or neglect

If you observe that a child is exhibiting any one of the signs of child abuse or neglect, be aware that the presence of any one of the signs does not confirm abuse or neglect. However, the presence of these signs is reason to discuss concerns or observations with the staff person to whom the volunteer or employee is responsible.

### Acts of abuse perpetrated by a cleric, employee or volunteer of the Archdiocese

Any cleric, employee or regular volunteer, whether obligated by state law to report to

the civil authorities or not, who witnesses an act of child abuse perpetrated by another cleric, employee or volunteer or suspects that such an act has occurred or receives a report of such an act, must immediately report the incident to the Chancellor at 513.421.3131.

Other persons who know or suspect that a child has been abused by an agent of the Archdiocese are encouraged to report the incident to the Chancellor at 513.421.3131.

### Potentially abusive behavior

Any cleric, employee or regular volunteer who observes another cleric, employee or volunteer behaving in a manner which may pose a potential risk to a child is to report the matter in confidence to the proper superior or supervisor without delay.

## Who is a Regular Volunteer?

A "regular volunteer" is an adult who is not a cleric or employee (for example, a catechist, scout leader, coach, server coordinator, etc.) who functions in a regular relationship with children. This includes interns, student teachers and others in similar capacities.

A regular volunteer is one who has contact with children more than three (3) hours a month, or has contact with children more frequently than once a month, or participates in an overnight event with children. It does not include the occasional volunteer, such as a driver or chaperone for individual activities that are not overnight.