



# Existing Policies, Guidelines & Resources To Assist in the Event of Child Sexual Abuse Disclosure During or as a Result of Touching Safety Instruction

The Diocese of Joliet has in place policies and resources to assist teachers, catechists, directors of religious education, principals and parents to deal with the possible disclosure by a child of prior sexual abuse during or as a result of touching safety instruction. Here is a summary.



## Protecting God's Children Bulletins

For a description of behaviors that can indicate that a child is a victim of sexual abuse, look at the training bulleting for Protecting God's children posted at:

[https://www.virtusonline.org/mytraining/display\\_mtb.cfm?mtb\\_id=328&mtb\\_type\\_id=2&theme=pf](https://www.virtusonline.org/mytraining/display_mtb.cfm?mtb_id=328&mtb_type_id=2&theme=pf)

or

[https://www.virtusonline.org/mytraining/display\\_mtb.cfm?mtb\\_id=102&mtb\\_type\\_id=2&theme=pf](https://www.virtusonline.org/mytraining/display_mtb.cfm?mtb_id=102&mtb_type_id=2&theme=pf)

## Talking About Touching, Grades 1-3 Teacher's Guide



See pp. 29-33 – “Child Abuse Disclosure” ([click HERE to view](#)) for very specific guidelines on teacher recognition and response to disclosure. These guidelines cover how to recognize both verbal and non-verbal indications of disclosure, immediate response and long-term response. (We recommend that these pages be reproduced and given to each teacher or catechist in your school or program, even if they are not directly involved in touching safety instruction.)

### From the “Talking About Touching” video handout for parents

RESPOND TO DISCLOSURE:

Remain calm.

Reassure your child by saying:

- I'm glad you told me.
- It's not your fault.
- I am always here for you.

Seek help for your child and yourself. Possible resources include the following:

- Law enforcement personnel
- Child Protection Services
- Crisis hotline
- Supportive friends and relatives
- Professional counselors

Remember, healing takes time.

## Diocese of Joliet Policies



DIOCESE OF JOLIET SAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR CHILDREN INSTRUCTIONAL  
COMPONENT – MAY, 2005 ([click HERE to view policies and instructions](#))

**From: Diocese of Joliet Pastoral Policy Regarding Sexual Abuse of Minors  
June 1, 2003**

**VI. REPORTING**

All personnel of the Diocese, parishes and schools, who have reasonable cause to suspect an incident of sexual abuse involving diocesan, parish or school personnel have a serious moral obligation to report the incident or allegation to civil officials (*USCCB Charter 4*).

Under Illinois law, certain personnel (including school and child care personnel, medical personnel, social workers, psychologists, professional counselors, and recreational program personnel) are considered mandated reporters. They must report to the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) any situation in which they have a reasonable belief that a child is being physically or sexually abused. Clergy are mandated reporters to child sexual abuse....

Reports of abuse should also be made to the Victim Assistance Coordinator. Complaints against members of religious orders are to be reported to the Victim Assistance Coordinator as well as to the respective superior.

Procedures for making a complaint are available on the diocesan website or at any parish or diocesan office, and are the subject of periodic public announcements. Victims are advised of and supported in their right to report abuse to civil authorities. (*USCCB Charter 4*).

When a person reports an allegation of sexual abuse, the person will be received with utmost respect and pastoral sensitivity. The Victim Assistance Coordinator informs the person making the allegation that he/she has a right to make a report of such allegations to civil authorities and will support this right. (*USCCB Charter 4*).

**The Posted Diocesan Website Procedures For Making A Complaint**

**Reporting Incidents of Sexual Abuse:**

Sexual abuse is a sin and a crime. Victims of sexual abuse, in addition to contacting civil authorities, are asked to come forward in order to receive pastoral assistance. The Church has a responsibility to help victims of sexual abuse and to ensure that offenders are brought to justice. Reports may be made to any pastor or to Sister Mary Frances Seeley at 815-263-6467.

**Excerpt from *Faith Formation in the Diocese of Joliet***

**5. Reporting of Abuse and Neglect of Minors**

All catechetical ministers to minors, including parish leadership and parish catechists, are "mandated", or required, by state law to report evidence of reasonable suspicion of abuse and/or neglect of a minor to the Illinois Department of Child and Family Services. Catechists and classroom aides shall be required annually to sign the state form acknowledging they are aware of their status as mandated reporters. (*Appendix 6 - D.C.F.S. Acknowledgment of Mandated Reporter Status*) The signed copy is to be kept on file in the parish.

If such a reasonable suspicion of abuse or neglect arises, one must immediately report such suspicion to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. (1-800-252-2873) (*Appendix 23 – D.C.F.S. Written Confirmation of Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect Report*) An individual reporting suspected abuse and/or neglect is, as soon as possible, to work with the appropriate catechetical leader to document the incident. Such documentation is to be retained in secure and confidential files. All such documentation and the circumstances

surrounding any such report to D.C.F.S. are confidential under Illinois Statute and shall not be disclosed, except as provided by Illinois law.

In the event that a parish catechetical minister, either paid or volunteer, is reported for suspected abuse of a minor, the director of the diocesan Religious Education Office is also to be notified immediately.

## **HOW TO REPORT CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE IN THE DIOCESE OF JOLIET**

([click HERE to view flowchart](#))



### **Illinois State Guidelines for Reporting**

See also the Illinois DCFS web page: [http://www.state.il.us/dcfs/FAQ/faq\\_faq\\_can.shtml](http://www.state.il.us/dcfs/FAQ/faq_faq_can.shtml)  
For guidelines on how and what to report, and when not to report.