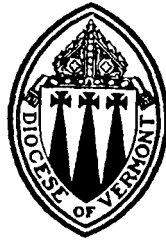


*“for the preservation of the safest possible
environments in the church...”*

Education for a Safer Church

Contents: Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Harassment
in Church Environments
and
Prevention of Sexual Abuse of Children and Youth



Diocese of Vermont

The Rt. Rev. Thomas Clark Ely, Bishop

*“Will you strive for justice and peace among all people,
and respect the dignity of every human being?” “I will.”*

(the Baptismal Covenant, Book of Common Prayer 1979, page 305)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Preventing Sexual Harassment and Exploitation	7
Definitions	8
Sexual Misconduct	12
Sexual Harassment	13
Preventing Sexual Misconduct	16
Diocese of Vermont Policies and Procedures Relating to Sexual Misconduct	18
Preventing Sexual Abuse of Children and Youth	23
What is Child Abuse?	24
Why do Abusers Abuse Children?	25
Reporting Suspected Child Abuse	25
Physical and Behavioral Indicators of Child Abuse	26
Handling a Disclosure of Abuse	27
Preventing Child Abuse	28
Diocese of Vermont Policy for the Protection of Children and Youth	30
Diocese of Vermont Standards and Practical Applications for Anyone Volunteering or Working with Children and Youth	31
Resources for a Safer Church	
Vermont Statutes, Title 33 § 4913. Suspected child abuse and neglect; remedial action	38
Vermont Statutes, Title 33 § 4913. Reporting suspected child abuse and neglect; remedial action	39
Why Doesn't God Protect Children? (Group exercise)	41
Notes about Touch for Adolescents	41
<i>Suggested</i> General Prevention Guidelines for All Ages Regarding Pastoral Care By Lay And Ordained Ministers	42
Prevention Practices – Children and Youth	43
Sample Information and Release Form: Transporting Children and Youth in a Motor Vehicle	47
Sample Permission Form and Liability Release Agreement	49
Sample Reporting and Information Form	50
Sample Information Form	51
Sample Reference Reporting Form	54
Compliance Assurance Statement	56

SEXUAL CONDUCT EDUCATION FOR A SAFER CHURCH

*"...for the preservation of the safest possible environments within the church..." **

Since May 1994, education in sexual conduct has been required of Vermont Episcopal clergy, lay employees and certain categories of volunteers. This education is presented in two modules: (1) preventing sexual harassment and exploitation in the workplace and in pastoral relationships, and (2) Safeguarding God's Children: preventing sexual abuse of children and youth in church settings.

INTRODUCTION

The Book of Common Prayer reminds us, "The ministers of the Church are lay persons, bishops, priests and deacons" (BCP, page 855). All ministers of the Church are called to represent Christ and to proclaim by word and deed the Good News of God's tender love for all of humanity. The quality of our relationships is one of the most important ways in which this vocation is carried out, particularly where power and authority are disproportionate. Any pastoral relationship, whether with clergy or lay ministers, is a relationship of authority and trust. When authority is misused to deny others their God-given dignity and human stature, a sacred obligation is broken. Being Christian is not by itself sufficient to keep persons from misusing power and authority, especially if they are not aware that their role in a relationship may give them that power and authority. When misuse of authority and power occur, the church is obliged to act with sensitivity and compassion toward all, making justice and restoring right relationships.

Sexual conduct education in the Diocese of Vermont, and throughout the wider church, is intended to help all of us who serve the church to be aware of the issues of power and authority involved in church leadership. The church is meant to be a place of safety, sanctuary, respect and Christian love for all people. "Sexual Misconduct", the broad term covering the ways in which power, authority and trust are misused in a sexual way, is a violation of the Baptismal Covenant, through which we promise to:

seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving our neighbor as ourselves.

strive for justice and peace among all people, and

respect the dignity of every human being (BCP, page 305).

The purpose of this manual and of the Diocesan program of sexual conduct education is to help to inform and provide resources for the faith community to prevent abuse of all of God's children, whether that abuse be expressed sexually or in other misuses of power and authority. All of us have responsibility for making our church (congregations, institutions and programs) a safe haven for all of God's people. This is why sexual conduct education in the Diocese of Vermont includes information which helps us learn to recognize signs that a child or young person may be suffering abuse or neglect, and gives the steps to take to get help for such a person and the family. Church leaders, especially teachers and youth leaders, are often in a good position to recognize and get help for troubled young people.

EDUCATION FOR A SAFER CHURCH

Issues of sexual misconduct are emotionally charged. It is natural that when these issues are discussed, people often find that some of their responses are rooted in fear, though they also desire to do what is right. It can be uncomfortable for us to deal with what we need to learn about these matters so that the church can be a beacon for society rather than a mirror of it, as it speaks pastorally and prophetically to this difficult topic.

Because we believe in Jesus Christ and the Gospel, we are called to create an environment which affirms the dignity and worth of every person as lovingly created in the image of God. It is our responsibility to denounce oppression in all forms, including sexual abuse, exploitation or harassment. It must be our intention to take whatever action may be needed to prevent and correct behavior which is contrary to this commitment. We want the church to be a place where parents can leave a child and expect the child to come home whole and not broken...where vulnerable people can go for counseling and prayer, and come away intact, better than they were when they went, not crawling away wounded from an attack on their integrity.

The wider community expects the church to be a safe place...safe physically (from fire, accident, and decay) and safe spiritually and emotionally. When that trust is broken, many victims are created throughout the entire community, the wider community is hurt and the church has done damage to the cause of the Gospel.

Every Anglican diocese in this country, Canada, Great Britain, New Zealand and Australia is now carrying out a program of prevention of sexual misconduct in church environments. The program of education currently being offered by the dioceses of Province One is widely respected by social services agencies, and other church bodies are using it as a model. The church is in difficulty because it has not dealt with misconduct in a healthy way in the past, but the days of cover-up are over. Silence about these matters does not serve justice. Prayer, though surely we must pray, should not simply be a way to avoid dealing with the pain of victims and with the spiritual illness of perpetrators.

All of us desire to be a part of restoring the trust the community must have in the church in order for the church to be an agent of ministry. The community needs to know that the church is not a "cover-up" institution, and that misconduct will be dealt with quickly, decisively, fairly and redemptively. The community also needs to know that the church is continuing to educate clergy and lay leaders for responsible and caring ministry.

If you are in one of the following groups:

canonically resident active clergy (including interim pastors and supply clergy),
licensed clergy, or any clergy desiring to exercise ordained ministry in the Diocese of
Vermont

lay interim pastors

Lay Eucharistic Visitors

lay spiritual directors functioning for the Diocese

all employees of a congregation, such as

secretary

sexton

organist

Director of Religious Education

EDUCATION FOR A SAFER CHURCH

employees and office volunteers of the Diocese, such as
secretary administrator Rock Point Summer Conference staff
clerical maintenance paid and volunteer

anyone who regularly supervises youth activities (whether **paid or volunteer**),
including:
youth group advisors, youth choir leaders,
day care providers, Vacation Church School workers
acolyte trainers, etc. camp counselors and program leaders,
teachers in a church school program which meets at any other time than
Sunday morning,

***you must attend**, within the first six months of employment or volunteer placement, or as soon as an opportunity to attend the workshop becomes available to you:*

a six-hour workshop on **Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Harassment and Prevention of Sexual Abuse of Children and Youth** in the Diocese of Vermont or another Province of New England diocese.

The following are strongly encouraged, by Provincial and Diocesan Policy, to attend both modules because of their pastoral relationships with individuals:

Volunteers in a congregation who have been authorized by resolution of the Vestry and Rector to exercise the following ministries on behalf of the congregation:

those who visit in homes, hospitals and nursing homes

those who do spiritual direction or counseling within the congregation

Wardens and Treasurers of congregations are also encouraged to attend, because as officials of their churches they need to know about prevention practices and about how to deal with any possible allegation of misconduct or abuse directed against their clergy or lay leadership.

All church school teachers and all vestry members would benefit from attending both modules of training to increase their awareness of the issues involved.

“Why do I have to take this training when I have already received similar training for my job or volunteer work?”

This question arises over and over again when people are informed that attending sexual conduct education is one of the conditions of their positions or ministries.

A number of church workers, paid and volunteer, clergy and lay, have had extensive professional training in these areas because they are teachers, psychologists, or hold other positions that require it. Many have also had experience dealing with the painful consequences of sexual misconduct in the lives of those they care for. Why, then, are such people asked to attend these workshops?

1. There are **special circumstances in church settings** that are not found in other environments. Church-related sexual conduct education covers those circumstances, which include the relationships between clergy or lay leaders with groups and individuals in counseling, educational and worship situations. Leadership roles in

church settings have a particular kind of power and authority that is not always obvious, either to the people exercising those roles or to others around them. Unawareness of these dynamics may result in overlooking situations in which precautions need to be taken against sexual misconduct (and false charges of misconduct).

2. There is value to **participating in this education with other members of one's congregation** and with other people in the Diocese whose position in a congregation may be similar to one's own. As together we deepen our awareness of the need to work toward safer church environments, we also pray together for God's church. We pray for the healing of individuals, families, congregations and communities which have been hurt by misconduct in the past or by the church's inability to deal with it in a way which leads to justice, mercy, and wholeness. This strengthens our whole faith community.

3. **All participants in workshops benefit** when people are present who are keenly aware of issues of sexual misconduct and who are experienced in helping those affected. This sharing of gifts and experience builds up the caring church. We are grateful to the many generous-spirited and wise professionals - nurses, teachers, counselors, priests - who have already attended Sexual Conduct workshops in Vermont. And to you, for your participation.

About the Curriculum

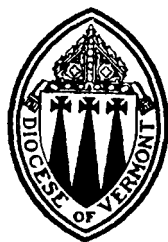
Human sexuality is a precious, powerful, and mysterious creative gift of God, and one for which we give thanks. Historic Christianity celebrates the loving and creative use of all human endowments. Of necessity, the workshop curriculum deals with abuses related to sexuality. However, it is important to keep in mind that these abuses are overwhelmingly **abuses of power**, in which the perpetrator uses sex as a weapon or manipulative device.

Although the material concentrates heavily on prevention of misconduct for clergy, lay leaders can also represent the power and authority of the church and divine power for those with whom they do ministry. This means that lay leaders need to keep in mind that this material is just as relevant for them as it is for clergy, although they may need to do some interpretative work as they listen to it and view it.

In the "Prevention of Abuse of Children and Youth" module, much of the material applies equally to elderly, disabled, ill and developmentally delayed persons. These persons are also at risk for abuse, and those ministering to them can be on the front line of identifying possible situations of abuse and neglect.

“for the preservation of the safest possible environments in the church...”

Preventing Sexual Harassment and Exploitation



Diocese of Vermont

The Rt. Rev. Thomas Clark Ely, Bishop

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and respect the dignity of every human being?” “I will.”*

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WHAT IS SEXUAL MISCONDUCT?

SOME DEFINITIONS

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT INCLUDES:

- a. abuse
- b. coercion
- c. exploitation
- d. harassment

Sexual misconduct is *wrong* and is not to be engaged in by any church worker, lay or ordained.

SEXUAL ABUSE

is sexual molestation of any person, including any sexual involvement or sexual contact with a person who is a minor or who is legally incompetent.

SEXUAL COERCION

is the use of force - physical, emotional or supervisory - to gain sexual gratification.

SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

is the development of, or the attempt to develop, a sexual relationship between a clergy person, employee, or volunteer and a person with whom he or she has a pastoral relationship, **whether or not there is apparent consent from the individual.**

In addition to any physical expression, exploitation includes any verbal suggestion of sexual involvement or sexually demeaning comments.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

applies to a situation where there is an employment, mentor or colleague relationship between the persons involved.

Sexual harassment includes any sexually-oriented humor or language; questions or comments about sexual behavior or preference unrelated to employment qualifications; undesired physical contact; inappropriate comments about clothing or physical appearance; repeated requests for social engagements.

PASTORAL RELATIONSHIP:

a relationship between a clergy person, employee or volunteer and any person (child, youth or adult) to whom such clergy person, employee or volunteer provides counseling, pastoral care, spiritual direction or spiritual guidance or from whom such clergy person, employee, or volunteer has received confession or confidential or privileged information.

SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE:

general and specific, may be seen as teaching, preaching, liturgical, or other activity between a member of the clergy and every member of the parish at large, individually and collectively.

However, lay members of the church who hold leadership positions, paid and volunteer, may also be considered to exercise the power of spiritual guidance (e.g., Lay Eucharistic Ministers, youth group leaders, church school teachers, prayer and study group leaders)

People in these roles establish a **fiduciary relationship** with the person who is the object of their ministry.

A fiduciary relationship is a relationship of **TRUST** and **FAITHFULNESS**.

In the pastoral relationship, a clergy person or lay leader has a **Fiduciary Duty**.

This is an implied contract/covenant. It is a duty of **TRUST**. It is a charge to place the needs of others above one's own needs.

POWER begins when a position of authority and responsibility has been established and accepted. **POWER** can arise from a number of sources and can be cumulative: occupation; experience or expertise; physical size, attractiveness, and/or ability; gender, age, race; wealth; charisma.

POWER can be negative: a top-down control mechanism, primarily benefiting the one who holds it.

or

POWER can be positive: a *service* to benefit *others*.

CONSENT:

is full agreement in sentiment, opinion, etc. Consent must be achieved through mutual agreement without coercion or manipulation. When there is a power relationship or when there is a relationship of fiduciary responsibility, this is especially problematic.

The **ability** to give consent is affected by: age (being old enough to consent), the influence of alcohol or drugs, mental impairment, physical impairment, or other reasons for vulnerability. For example:

IN CRISIS

When you (or anyone else) are in crisis, whether it is emotional, spiritual, or physical, you are at the most vulnerable point in your life. All you want is for the pain to stop. You are in the perfect position to be victimized by someone who can seemingly stop the pain.

AFTER CRISIS

When the immediate crisis is past, you may be in a vulnerable position because of past history or other ongoing, less acute problems and / or relationships.

WITHOUT CRISIS

Any of us, whether or not we are involved in any emotional trauma past or present, can be vulnerable to exploitation when we are in relationship with someone we trust.

++++++

Counselors (lay and ordained) are subject to the same feelings and attitudes as the people they counsel.

TRANSFERENCE is the client's unconscious attachment to the counselor, positively or negatively, as the client connects to feelings and attitudes related to important relationships in early life.

COUNTER-TRANSFERENCE is the counselor's unconscious response or attachment to a client, positive or negative, which connects to the counselor's feelings and attitudes outside of the professional role and serves to gratify the counselor's own physical and / or emotional needs.

CLERGY and LAY LEADER RELATIONSHIPS

(Counseling and Non-Counseling)

Clergy and other Christian leaders have a "special charge" in both counseling and non-counseling relationships.

There is an **imbalance of power** between clergy and members of congregations or others in their care, as well as between lay leaders and those they lead.

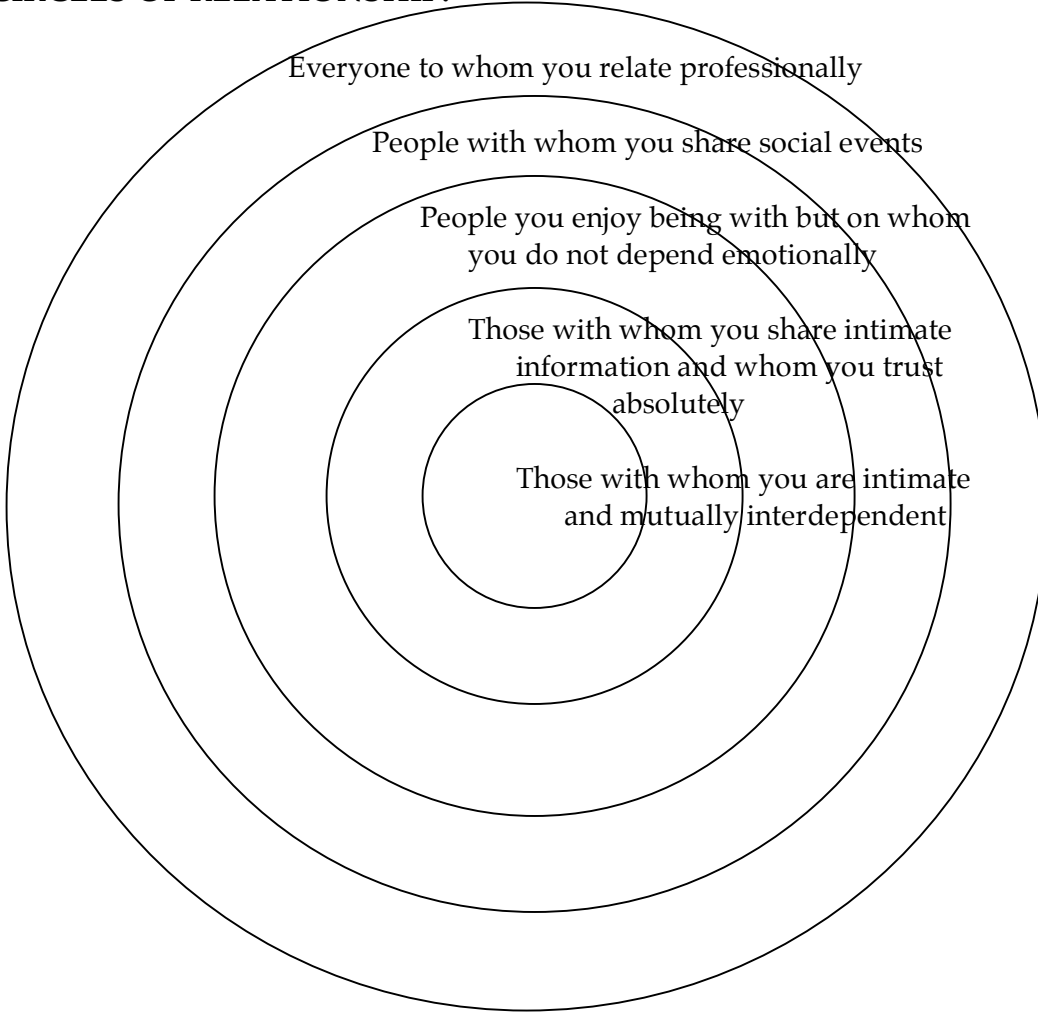
Because of this imbalance of power, it is important for Church leaders to know and understand their own power and authority, as well as how others perceive it.

Therefore, it is important to **AVOID DUAL RELATIONSHIPS!**

It is not possible to be an intimate friend with a person for whom you have pastoral responsibilities.

The diagram on the next page may be helpful in understanding levels of relationship.

CIRCLES OF RELATIONSHIP:



SEXUAL MISCONDUCT INCLUDES ANY:

Sexual abuse or sexual molestation of any person, any sexual involvement or sexual contact with a person who is a minor or who is legally incompetent;

or

Sexual harassment in a situation where there is an employment, mentor or colleague relationship between the persons involved:

Sexually-oriented humor or language:

Questions or comments about sexual behavior or preference unrelated to employment qualifications;

Undesired physical contact;

Inappropriate comments about clothing or physical appearance;

Repeated requests for social engagements;

or

Sexual exploitation: the development of or the attempt to develop a sexual relationship between a clergy person, employee, or volunteer and a person with whom he or she has a pastoral relationship, **whether or not there is apparent consent from the individual.**

THE EXTENT OF THE PROBLEM: Sexual Contact in the Ministerial Relationship

It is difficult for us to have to recognize that abuses of power do take place in the church. Here are some statistics that give an idea of the prevalence of sexual misconduct in recent decades:

Survey of ministers

Sexual contact with church member	38.6%
Sexual intercourse with church member	12.7%
Know of a minister who had sexual intercourse with a church member	76.5%
(Survey of Therapists: sexual intercourse with a client)	5.5%

Survey of church workers who experienced sexual harassment in church:

Clergywomen	77.0%
Laity	20.0%
Students	48.0%
Employees	37.0%

Survey of Female Clergy

Experienced sexual harassment by male clergy in the church workplace	48.0%
----------------------------------------------------------------------	-------

(Sources: Survey of ministers: 1984 Ph.D. Dissertation, "The Hazards of the Ministry", Fuller Theological Seminary. Therapist Survey: Holroyd and Brodsky, 1977, cited in Blackmon. Churchworker survey: Sexual Harassment in the United Methodist Church, the Office of Research, General Council on Ministries 1990. Female Clergy: United Church of Christ Coordinating Center for Women study, 1986)

SEXUAL HARASSMENT IS A SERIOUS AND COSTLY ISSUE

that can cause reduced morale, reduced productivity, financial liability for the church and church officers, and financial liability for individuals.

Court-ordered awards include injunctions, economic losses, compensatory damages for pain and suffering, punitive damages, and attorney fees.

Settlements are currently averaging one million dollars or more in these cases, and increasingly involve misconduct by lay leaders who are employees or volunteers.

SOME OF THE PROBLEMS:

Comments and/or actions may communicate mixed messages. Complainants (especially women) are often accused of being overly sensitive.

Remember: the impact of the behavior on the person who *receives* it is more important than the *intent* of the pastoral caregiver.

MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT SEXUAL HARASSMENT:

- Victims “ask for it” through behavior or dress.
- Only women are sexually harassed.
- Sexual harassment takes place more often in blue collar than in white collar environments.
- Men and women agree on what type of behavior constitutes sexual harassment.
- If there are not complaints, it means that there are not problems.
- Most charges are false.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT charges

can stem from unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

EXAMPLES: sexual remarks and jokes, touching, grabbing, brushing against, repeatedly asking for dates, etc.

For these to constitute sexual harassment at work, they must meet one of the following criteria: SEX FOR JOB BENEFIT or HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT.

SEX FOR JOB BENEFIT (QUID PRO QUO HARASSMENT):

- sexual favors in return for tangible job benefit or
- punishment/retribution for refusal of sexual favors.

This can be:

Implicit - a change in attitude or performance following reaction to a sexual suggestion – or

Explicit - a specific request for sexual favors.

Both originate with DISPARITY OF POWER

HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT:

Repeated actions of a sexual nature that make the work environment hostile, offensive, or intimidating, and thus discriminatory to the victim.

Examples: Constant subjection to sexual jokes, suggestive comments, lewd remarks, offensive pictures.

Actions that are offensive may or may not be harassment, based on:

- Circumstances
- Pattern of Conduct
- Repetition

NON-PARTICIPANTS: Qualified persons who are denied jobs or promotions because of an employer's sexual advances and/or relationship toward another person in the workplace can also claim HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT FALLOUT:

OTHER POSSIBLE LIABILITY CLAIMS

- Defamation of character
- Invasion of privacy
- Negligence
- Misrepresentation
- Assault and battery
- Emotional distress (intentional and/or negligent)

WHEN IS IT SEXUAL HARASSMENT?

Determining YOUR behavior:

Would you say or do the same thing if your spouse or significant partner was nearby?

Would you feel comfortable if your comments or behavior were reported on the front page of the congregation's newsletter?

Would it be acceptable to you if the same behavior or comments were directed at you or someone you care about?

Determining ANOTHER'S behavior:

How would the alleged "harasser" respond to the previous questions?

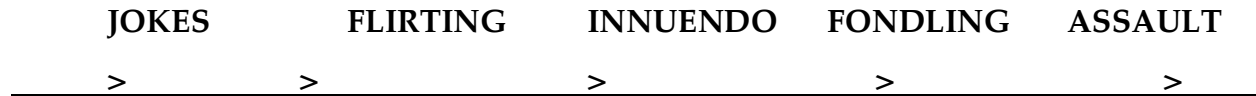
Is the behavior unwelcome and personally directed?

REMEMBER: Offensive, insulting, and/or hurtful behavior or comments may be considered harassment regardless of the intention of the actor, **AND even if the receiver seems to be "going along" with the behavior.**

NOTE: Courts are now using the "reasonable woman" guideline, as well as the more familiar "reasonable man" standard. That is, if the complainant is a woman, the court will judge the objectional behavior according to whether it would be considered offensive by a "reasonable woman", thus recognizing that men's and women's perceptions differ in these matters.

Sexual harassment can range in behaviors from less serious to more serious.

THE SEXUAL HARASSMENT CONTINUUM



MORE EXAMPLES OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Depending upon circumstances, the following may constitute sexual harassment. (This is only a partial list of possible examples.)

VERBAL HARASSMENT:

- Sexual language or comments - explicit or innuendo
- Using nicknames with sexual connotations (hunk, babe, doll, etc.)
- Telling sexual jokes or stories
- Spreading rumors, talking or asking questions about a person's sex life
- Sexual comments about a person's anatomy or clothing

NON-VERBAL HARASSMENT:

- Staring at someone
- Facial expressions (winking, throwing kisses, etc.)
- Displaying sexually suggestive visual materials such as calendars of nude, semi-nude, and/or provocatively posed females or males
- Making sexual gestures with hands or body movements

PHYSICAL HARASSMENT:

- An unwanted massage of shoulders, back or neck
- Touching hair, clothing, or body
- Brushing up against someone
- Prolonged hugs, especially with hands moving down the back or pelvic contact

SEXUAL HARASSMENT can be any verbal, non-verbal or physical activity of a sexual nature that makes the recipient feel uncomfortable or threatened.

PREVENTING SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

KNOW THE ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS:

No sexual relationships are acceptable between an ordained pastor and *any* parishioner or employee.

No sexual relationships are acceptable between a lay person and another person with whom he or she is ministering in a pastoral role.

PARTICIPATE IN ACCOUNTABILITY:

Create, develop and be part of a network of supervisors and peers.

ESTABLISH PRIORITIES:

Pay attention to yourself, the demands of your household and your ministry.

Pay attention to your personal devotional path.

RECOGNIZE AND OBEY WARNINGS:

Set and continually re-examine and, if necessary, re-define, your personal sexual boundaries.

SETTING HEALTHY PERSONAL BOUNDARIES

BEGIN WITH YOURSELF:

Examine your reactions, physical and emotional, to the subject of sex, sexuality, sexual relations—are you comfortable or uncomfortable and why?

How were you first educated about sex, sexuality and sexual relations?

What are your first recollections?

Acknowledge to yourself or to other professionals your own personal sexual responses to individuals or situations that are attractive or unattractive, boring or exciting, safe or dangerous.

EXTEND TO OTHERS:

How do you communicate your reactions, feelings, thoughts about sex and sexuality to others: casual acquaintances, close friends, children, spouse or intimate partner?

When are you comfortable or not comfortable doing so?

SOME CLUES TO BOUNDARY VIOLATIONS:

The relationship must be kept SECRET

“Special” attention to attire and/or appearance

Inappropriate gifts

Inappropriate expressions of affection

Recurring sense of discomfort or dread, or an inappropriate “rush” of excitement, anticipation

SOME SYMPTOMS OF BURNOUT THAT MAY ALERT A CAREGIVER TO BEING AT RISK FOR SEXUAL MISCONDUCT:

Sleep disorder; general fatigue; depression

Increase in family conflicts

Overwork to avoid going home

Not taking vacation days; not including spouse or family in plans

Dreaming/fantasizing about colleagues or parishioners

Substance abuse

Family history of abuse

Failure to maintain personal devotional life beyond sermon preparation or preparation for lay ministry

PASTORAL SEXUAL ETHICS

means, at the very least, the absence of sexual misconduct.

NOTE: Beginning on page 42, there is a set of Suggested Guidelines for Pastoral Caregivers (adapted from the guidelines which are recommended to churches in the Diocese of Connecticut). The Diocese of Vermont's Policy and Procedures Relating to Sexual Misconduct begins on the next page.

DIOCESE OF VERMONT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES RELATING TO SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

I. POLICY STATEMENT

The Diocese of Vermont strictly prohibits sexual misconduct of any type by any ordained person (deacon, transitional deacon, priest or bishop) canonically resident or functioning in the Diocese of Vermont, or any employee or volunteer authorized to perform work or provide services within the Church.

II. RATIONALE AND GOAL

The Church has long recognized the possibility of sexual misconduct on the part of her leaders, and has sought to address such matters to the best of her knowledge and ability in ways that are pastorally appropriate and humane for both accuser and accused. It is now deemed necessary to define and codify the Church's expectations and responsibilities concerning such matters. In part, this is a concomitant of a greater awareness in American society of the problems of sexual abuse, harassment and exploitation. In part, it is the result of recent federal legislation that makes sexual misconduct by persons in positions of authority—including church leaders—grounds for civil or criminal action. This document aims to communicate in clear and unequivocal language the expectations and responsibilities incumbent upon all members of the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Vermont that will help to assure that our community remains free from the personal pain and destructive influences that necessarily arise through the perpetration of sexual abuse, harassment and exploitation.

III. DEFINITIONS

The Diocese of Vermont adopts the 70th General Convention of the Episcopal Church definition of sexual misconduct:

Abuse

Sexual involvement or conduct by a cleric or other church employee or volunteer with a person who is a minor or is legally incompetent.

Harassment

Unwelcome or undesired sexually oriented humor or language, questions or comments about sexual behavior or preference, physical contact, inappropriate comments about clothing or physical appearance, or repeated requests for social engagements, in a situation where there is an employment, mentor, or colleague relationship between persons involved.

Exploitation

A betrayal of trust in a pastoral relationship by the development, or the attempted development, of a sexual or romantic relationship between the cleric or other church worker and a person with whom she or he has a pastoral or fiduciary relationship, whether or not there is apparent consent from the individual.

IV. PROCEDURES TO AID THE PREVENTION OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

Preservation of the safest possible environments within the church requires clear expectations, openness, and vigilant and sensitive cooperation on the part of aware and informed workers. Of particular importance are environments which present a high degree of risk or opportunity for sexual misconduct. These procedures represent the minimum of preventative measures to be observed in all such environments.

At the Time of Recruitment

1. All clergy and lay employees of the church, and all volunteers authorized by the Vestry and clergy person in charge to work on behalf of the congregation in situations that are considered high risk for sexual misconduct (such as church school, individual counseling, youth programs, etc.) will be required to complete and sign an application form which specifically includes a request for personal references, information concerning any prior adjudication in regard to sexual misconduct, and acknowledgment of the church's right to conduct a confidential background check.

Compliance Assurance

2. Within the first thirty days of employment or assignment, newly elected vestry members and all persons engaged in high risk areas of service will be required to sign a statement indicating that they have read and understand, and intend to comply with, the Diocese of Vermont Policy and Procedures Relating to Sexual Misconduct (this document).

An Informed Workforce

3. Within the first six months of employment or assignment, all clergy and employees must receive a minimum of six hours of training on issues of sexual harassment and exploitation and on the prevention and detection of child sexual abuse in church settings. All persons engaged in high-risk areas of service must additionally participate in this training. All such training must be provided or approved by the Province of New England.

Risk Reduction

4. Whenever possible, persons engaged in high risk areas of service should arrange for a co-worker or chaperon to be present during the exercise of their duties. Activities that require one-on-one interactions should be conducted in an environment that provides for visibility by other adults.

Prohibition of Employment

5. Any clergy, lay employee, or volunteer person who refuses to complete and sign the required application form and assurances will not be admitted to the position or assignment in question.

Corrective Action

6. Any clergy, lay employee or volunteer engaged in high risk areas of service who fail to comply with the remainder of the above procedures should be immediately warned of the need for corrective action. Failure to correct a deficiency within a reasonable period of time will result in the prohibition of the person from further engagement in that area of service.

V. PROCEDURES FOR RESPONDING TO A COMPLAINT

The Bishop represents the principal authority of the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Vermont regarding all matters of sexual misconduct in which the alleged perpetrator is a member of the ordained clergy, a lay employee of the church, or a lay volunteer duly authorized to provide work or services within the church. The Canon on Ecclesiastical Discipline provides a process for dealing with such matters with regard to clergy.

Reporting Alleged Sexual Misconduct

1. Any person who believes her or himself to have been sexually abused, harassed or exploited by a member of the clergy canonically resident or functioning in the Diocese of Vermont, or by an employee or other person duly authorized to provide work or services, should report the matter directly to the Safe Church Officer. [The Safe Church Officer for the Diocese is: Lynn Bates, Canon to the Ordinary, 800-286-3437 (within Vermont) or 802-863-3431; lbates@dioceseofvermont.org.] The complainant must write down the details of the complaint within forty-eight hours of the report. This written record will be kept in the file.

Preliminary Investigation

2. When information concerning alleged sexual misconduct deriving from a creditable source is received by the Safe Church Officer, an investigation into the matter will be undertaken. The Safe Church Officer may, at her discretion, enlist the services of a team of persons specifically trained to assist and advise her in the conduct of the investigation. Such team will normally consist of a priest, a lay person, a person with standing as an expert in the field, and, when appropriate, an attorney.

Protection of Rights

3. Throughout the investigation and any subsequent action, reasonable care will be diligently exercised to assure the privacy and due process rights of all parties.

If the Alleged Victim is a Minor

4. If the alleged victim is a minor, the Safe Church Officer must, immediately upon receiving a complaint or other information which, in her judgment, signifies sufficient cause to warrant a complaint, ascertain whether a report of suspected child sexual abuse has been filed with an appropriate official of the Vermont Department of Children and Families. If a report has not been filed, the Safe Church Officer must take such action as may be necessary to cause said report to be filed immediately.

Response to the Alleged Victim

5. The Safe Church Officer will, either in person or by delegation to qualified officers of the diocese, attempt to arrange a meeting or other means of conducting an interview with the complainant (and alleged victim, if other than the complainant). At the time of initial contact, the person(s) will be advised of the right to be accompanied by a person of his, her or their choosing at the time and place of the interview. If appropriate, affected members of the alleged victim's family will be encouraged to participate.

Response to the Alleged Perpetrator

6. The Safe Church Officer will arrange a meeting with the alleged perpetrator at the earliest possible time. At the time of the initial contact, the accused person will be

informed in clear terms of the nature of the charges made against her or him, and advised of the right to be accompanied by a person of her or his choosing at the meeting. If appropriate, affected members of the alleged perpetrator's family will be encouraged to participate.

Pastoral Meeting

7. The Safe Church Officer and one other diocesan representative will meet with the accused person to discuss the charges made against her or him, and to receive further information concerning the alleged sexual misconduct. A written record will be made of this meeting, and will be signed by the participants.

Possible Actions

8. As a result of the preliminary investigation, the Bishop may:
- A. Determine that no further action is required, and
 - a. So notify in writing the person against whom the charges were brought, or
 - b. Notify the person that immediate further action is not contemplated pending the discovery of other information supportive of the charge which had been brought against her or him.
 - B. Determine that sexual misconduct requiring corrective action had taken place and elect one of the following actions, which are non-exclusive and cumulative, and may be modified by addition or deletion as the investigation proceeds:
 - a. If the accused is an ordained member of the clergy:
 - i. A godly admonition or pastoral direction, as described in Title VI of the Canons of the Episcopal Church:
 - ii. Inhibition of functioning as a clergy person or, if warranted by further investigation, suspension or deposition according to the Canons, Title VI.
 - b. If the accused is either a clergy or lay person:
 - i. Initiate any action as may be required pursuant to Vermont and federal laws.
 - c. Refer the accused person for evaluation by a person specializing in sexual misconduct by persons of authority within the Church to assess the prognosis for her or his treatment and restoration.
 - C. Continue the investigation using a variety of resources to determine the validity of the allegations.

The Affected Congregation

9. The Bishop may at any time during the course of the investigation consider and decide regarding notification of the accused's Wardens, Vestry and congregation, and any actions needed in regard to the healing of the congregation.

Notification of Action

10. Upon completion of the investigation and formulation of any actions to be taken, the Bishop will formally notify the accused of all decisions and intended actions, and the procedures for and anticipated dates of their implementation.

“for the preservation of the safest possible environments in the church...”

Preventing Sexual Abuse of Children and Youth



Diocese of Vermont

The Rt. Rev. Thomas Clarke Ely, Bishop

*“Will you strive for justice and peace among all people,
and respect the dignity of every human being?” “I will.”*

(the Baptismal Covenant, Book of Common Prayer 1979, page 305)

WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

Child abuse is purposeful or non-accidental mistreatment or neglect of a child resulting in injury or harm. Child abuse may take one of the following forms:

PHYSICAL: beating, shaking, burning, etc.

EMOTIONAL: verbal abuse, excessive punishment, withholding affection, etc.

NEGLECT: failure to provide necessities of life, such as food, shelter, clothing, etc.

SEXUAL: fondling, incest, rape, use of a young person in pornographic photos, films, etc.

THE CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE CONTINUUM:

A FEW BEHAVIORS					
NO TOUCH					FORCIBLE PENETRATION
>>	>>	>>	>>	>>	>>
Exposed to sexual language	secrecy/ threats	exhibitionism	fondling	oral sex	molestation (rape)

MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE:

Most perpetrators are strangers.

Only suspicious-looking men in raincoats sexually abuse children.

All men who molest boys are homosexual.

All homosexuals abuse children.

Women don't abuse children.

Only girls are molested.

All child sex offenders are pedophiles (adults who can find sexual gratification only with children).

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF CHILD SEX OFFENDERS:

Externally, they are: both males and females; from all walks of life; most are likely to be well known and trusted by their victims;

Internally, they may have these characteristics: loner, immature, self-centered; low self-esteem; identify themselves as victims; great with kids, charismatic and gregarious, creating opportunities to be with children

No one of these characteristics defines an offender, but may be part of a pattern.

THE CHILD SEX OFFENDER'S GENERAL SEDUCTION PATTERNS:

Friendly, often especially polite and courteous; offers "special" friendship and trust ("grooming" activities); plans and organizes activities; a source of "harmless" fun at first, or

Entices with "forbidden fruit"; isolates the victim to be alone; "plays" games that sexually gratify himself/herself

WHY DO ABUSERS ABUSE CHILDREN?

To get the answers, we must look at the questions:

How can anyone find emotional satisfaction in a sexual relationship with a child?

How can someone be sexually aroused by a child?

Why would a person be unable to have emotional and sexual satisfaction from a more “normal” relationship?

Why wouldn't someone be deterred by simply knowing the social conventions against such behavior?

NOTE! While most abusers were abused themselves, most who were abused do NOT become abusers!

PREVALENCE OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE:

1 in 3 girls by age 18

1 in 6 boys by age 1

(1997 estimates)

SOME POSSIBLE REASONS FOR CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE:

Disinhibition (inability to keep from acting on impulses)

Psychosis

Poor judgment

Psychological immaturity

Lack of conscience

Diminished intellect

Intoxication

Clinical pedophilia

Narcissism

REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

If you suspect that a child is being abused or neglected, call the **Child Abuse Hotline** at the State of Vermont Department of Children and Families (DCF), 1-800-649-5285.

See page 38 for the Vermont Statute on reporting child abuse.

For more information on the services of DCF and the reporting process, visit <http://dcf.vermont.gov>. The site includes information on the **Baby Safe Haven** program.

If you learn of the **abuse in a church setting**, or suspect abuse is occurring in a church setting, see page 45 for reporting procedures.

PHYSICAL AND BEHAVIORAL INDICATORS OF CHILD ABUSE

(From the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services)

What might indicate that a child or adolescent is suffering abuse?

Sexual Abuse

Physical Indicators

Difficulty walking or sitting
Torn, stained, bloody underclothing
Pain, swelling or itching in genital area
Pain on urination
Bruises, bleeding or lacerations in external genitalia, vaginal or anal areas
Vaginal/penile discharge
Venereal disease, especially in pre-teens
Poor sphincter tone
Pregnancy
Odor

Behavioral Indicators

Unwilling to change for gym or participate in phys. ed. class
Withdrawal, fantasy, or infantile behavior
Bizarre, sophisticated, or unusual sexual behavior or knowledge
Poor peer relationships
Delinquent or runaway behavior
Reports sexual assault by caretaker
Change in performance in school

Emotional Maltreatment

Physical Indicators

Speech disorders
Lag in physical development
Failure-to-thrive
Hyperactive/disruptive behavior

Behavioral Indicators

Habit disorders (sucking, biting, rocking, etc.)
Conduct/learning disorders (antisocial, destructive, etc.)
Neurotic traits (sleep disorders, inhibition of play, unusual fearfulness)
Psychoneurotic reactions (hysteria, obsession, compulsion, phobias, hypochondria)
Behavior extremes (Compliant/passive; Aggressive/demanding)
Overly adaptive behavior (Inappropriately adult; Inappropriately infant)
Developmental lags (Mental, emotional)
Attempted suicide

HANDLING A DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE

WHAT TO SAY TO CHILDREN WHO DISCLOSE ABUSE:

1. Thank you for telling me.
2. I'm sorry this happened to you.
3. It shouldn't have happened to a child.
4. I'll do my best to get help for you and your family.
5. How are you feeling right now?
6. What are you most worried about?
7. I think you are a very good, brave boy / girl, and it's OK to be upset.

THINGS *NOT* TO SAY TO CHILDREN WHO DISCLOSE ABUSE:

1. You can tell me anything, and I promise I won't tell anyone else.
2. I promise you I will never let this happen to you again.
3. Your father (mother, stepdad, etc.) is a terrible, sick person.
4. Your father (mother, stepdad, etc.) will (should) go to jail for this.

TO BE AVOIDED:

Any form of involved interrogation.

Any discussion of the abuse in front of other children.

REPORT THE ABUSE

If you are a mandated reporter (see Vermont Statute on page 38), report the disclosure to the Department of Children and Families' Child Abuse Hotline, 1-800-649-5285.

If the abuse is connected to a church member or activity, report the disclosure to the person in charge. See page 45 for diocesan procedures.

PREVENTING CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

HELP CHILDREN PROTECT THEMSELVES:

- Teach body ownership
- Teach the continuum of touch (“good”, “confusing”, “bad”)
- Help them learn to say NO!
- Help them use their intuition about people and situations.
- Teach the difference between good secrets and bad secrets—between a secret and a surprise
- Identify helping adults

Talking To Children About Body Ownership

First, think about your own answers to these questions:

- How do you feel about your body?
- What words do you use to name body parts?
- What would be a “scary” touch for you?

Second, help the child answer these questions:

- What makes people look or sound different from others?
- What are the names of the parts of our bodies?

Third, talk about touching and kinds of touch with the child:

Lack of Touch	Nurturing Touch	Confusing Touch	Exploitative Touch	Lack of Touch					
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
“Good touch” (Happy)					“Bad touch” (Sad)				

“Happy touches are . . .”

“Sad touches are . . .”

Help children learn:

- to say, “NO!” “I don’t like it!” “I don’t want to!”**
- to GET AWAY and**
- to TELL SOMEONE if someone tries to touch their private parts.**

(PRIVATE PARTS are the area of the body covered by a bathing suit that no one can touch without permission of the child.)
that **BAD SECRETS** are OK to tell.

PROVIDE GOOD ADULT SUPERVISION OF ALL ACTIVITIES INVOLVING CHILDREN

PROTECTING CHILDREN IN CHURCH SETTINGS

- No convicted sex offenders should EVER be involved with children. No person accused of being a sex offender should be involved with youth or children until the investigation is complete and the person has been cleared.
- Whenever possible, two adults should be present in groups of youth and children. Where there are both boys and girls, it is best if both a male and female leader are present. In an overnight situation, this is essential.
- If there are youth leaders under the age of 21, each should be partnered by an adult.
- If a situation should arise in which a child or adolescent must be alone with an adult, it is advisable to remain in the sight of another adult.
- Keep the doors open whenever possible. If not possible, consider installing windows *in* the doors, or replacing solid doors with Dutch doors.
- Encourage “drop-in” visits by parents and staff to youth and Christian Education classes and events.
- Avoid situations in which clergy, youth leaders, choir directors, etc., must drive children home. Call parents to pick them up if necessary.
- Do careful recruitment, supervision and training for all workers with children and youth.
- Be aware of any pattern of private meetings or activities which may be occurring between any youth or child worker and a particular young person, and discuss the situation with the leader of the activity or group.

(See also the Diocese of Vermont Policies and Procedures for the Protection of Children and Youth, which begins on the next page, and the suggested “Prevention Practices - Children/Youth” which begin on page 43 of this manual.)

The Episcopal Diocese of Vermont Policy for the Protection of Children and Youth

Draft 11/11/08

Statement of Intent

The aim of this policy is to make the Diocese of Vermont a safe place, safe for those who worship, safe for those who minister, safe for those who come in need, safe for children and safe for all who seek or serve Christ. We believe that this policy helps us live out our Baptismal Covenant to respect the dignity of every human being. A set of expected standards provides the Diocese, its institutions and congregations with practical guidance in achieving the goals of this policy.

Congregations and diocesan institutions shall adopt safe church policies that are at a minimum consistent with the requirements in this policy.

Screening and Selection for Ministry with Children and Youth

The Diocese will do background checks on all clergy who are deployed or licensed to officiate within the Diocese, on all diocesan employees and on those who have leadership responsibilities for youth or children at diocesan events.

Congregations shall do background checks on all employees and any volunteers who regularly work with children or youth.

Volunteers shall not be permitted to work with children or youth until they have been known to the clergy or congregation for at least six months.

Monitoring Programs and Interaction with Children and Youth

Monitoring is essential for keeping children and youth safe, in that it can allow detection of problems before they lead to an incident of abuse.

The current “Standards and Practical Applications for Anyone Volunteering with Children and Youth” shall be followed at diocesan events and activities for children and youth.

At the congregational level, the responsibility for seeing that appropriate monitoring standards are in place rests with the rector or clergy person in charge, the vestry and the congregation’s safe church minister.

Education and Training

Congregational policies for the protection of children and youth shall be posted in areas where activities for children and youth usually take place and shall be given to all adults who regularly work with children or youth and to parents.

Congregations shall direct clergy and lay employees, as well as volunteers who work with children or youth, to attend the diocesan Training for a Safer Church on how to prevent child abuse and promote healthy boundaries in church settings. Each congregation shall maintain a record of those who have attended such training. Individuals will attend re-certification training every three years.

The Diocese shall require all clergy and employees and volunteers who work with children or youth at diocesan events to attend Training for a Safer Church on how to prevent child abuse and

promote healthy boundaries in church settings and will maintain records of those who have attended the training.

The Bishop's Office will approve curriculum and trainers for the requisite training. Current training should be available for those who screen, train or supervise those who regularly work with children or youth.

Responding to Concerns

Anyone who knows of a violation of these policies in a parish environment shall immediately report the violation to the Rector and Senior Warden. Anyone who knows of a violation of these policies in a diocesan environment or by a clergy person shall immediately report the violation to the Safe Church Officer.

Anyone who has reason to suspect that child abuse has taken place at church or in another setting, is strongly encouraged to tell the parish priest or another member of ordained clergy. Any individual mandated by state law to report who has reason to suspect that child abuse has taken place shall report it to the appropriate civil authority.

Contact Information

The Safe Church Officer for the Diocese is: Lynn Bates, Canon to the Ordinary, 800-286-3437 (within Vermont) or 802-863-3431; lbates@dioceseofvermont.org.

Vermont's Child Protection Line for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect is 1-800-649-5285, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The Web site of the Vermont Department of Children and Families is www.dcf.vermont.gov.

The Episcopal Diocese of Vermont Standards and Practical Applications for Anyone Volunteering or Working with Children and Youth

Draft 11/11/08

Relationships among people are at the foundation of Christian ministry and are central to the life of the church. Relationships in ministry should always be experienced as caring and without intention to do harm or allow harm to occur. These standards and practical applications have been approved by Diocesan Council to help those who minister with children or youth create and maintain safe environments. Policies, standards and codes of conduct are meant to assist in defining healthy and safe relationships as well as behaviors and practices that allow the church to demonstrate love and compassion to children and youth in sincere and genuine relationships.

All adults ministering with children or youth at diocesan events and activities are asked to review carefully each statement within these Standards before agreeing to adhere to the statements and serving the diocese in ministry with children or youth.

Standards for Screening and Selection for Ministry with Children and Youth

Screening is an essential element in keeping children and youth safe. It is an opportunity to prevent a molester from having contact with children and youth in church programs.

All those working with children or youth must complete and sign an application form [see sample, Appendix A], which specifically includes a request for personal references, information concerning any prior adjudication in regard to sexual misconduct and acknowledgement of the church's right to conduct a confidential background check.

Background checks shall include the following:

- a. the written application
- b. a public records check
- c. an interview
- d. reference checks.

The more access an individual has to children or youth, the more detailed a background check should be.

Adults with leadership responsibilities at an overnight camp or on an extended trip must have a background and reference screening prior to beginning the activity.

Any adult attending an overnight event must have a current safe church certificate filed with their rector or clergy person in charge, and the clergy person must sign off on the adult's registration form.

Adults are defined as 18 years of age or older and at least one full year past high school graduation. Whenever possible, an older person should be placed in a group with older youth participants.

No convicted sex offender should **ever** be involved with children. No person accused of being a sex offender should be involved with youth or children until the investigation is complete and the person has been cleared.

Standards for Monitoring Programs for Children and Youth

Monitoring is essential for keeping children and youth safe in that it can allow detection of problems before they turn into an incident of abuse.

Plans for all events and ministries for children and youth should include at least two unrelated adults present at all times. If unanticipated circumstances result in an adult being alone with children or youth, that adult shall immediately report those circumstances to the Bishop's Office in the case of diocesan events or to the Rector or Senior Warden for congregational events, as appropriate.

Parents should be given appropriate details for all events or activities.

The following are standard ratios of adults to children and youth throughout every event and/or gathering:

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Infant to 5 years of age: | 1 adult for every 4 children |
| 6-18 years of age: | 1 adult for every 5 children or youth |

When there are both boys and girls, it is best if both male and female leaders are present; in an overnight event, where there are male and female participants, this is mandatory.

If a situation should arise in which a child or youth must be alone with an adult, they should remain in the sight of another adult.

EDUCATION FOR A SAFER CHURCH

A media release must be signed for pictures to be displayed on the diocesan Web site, in the diocesan newspaper, or any flyer or publication for the Diocese of Vermont. Names of minors are never used with photographs.

Use rooms that are visible through glass doors or leave doors open.

Show only age appropriate videos and movies. Appropriate means the movie or video is reviewed and screened for sexual content, language, violence and overall message.

G rated films may be shown.

PG videos and movies should not be shown to anyone under the age of 13.

PG13 movies and videos should not be shown to anyone under the age of 13. In addition, parents should be made aware of and approve any PG 13 videos or movies prior to showing it.

If a youth comes to any diocesan activity or event intoxicated (from either drugs or alcohol), arrange to have the person taken home and consult with the event coordinator as to further intervention.

Firearms and concealed weapons are prohibited at any child or youth event or activity. Clergy may make special exceptions for off-duty police officers or others required to carry firearms.

All adults attending diocesan youth events or activities are mandatory reporters and are required to report abuse or suspected abuse immediately as outlined in diocesan policy.

Additional Standards for Programs in Congregations

It may be appropriate for a Sunday School class to have only one teacher as long as at least one other adult can maintain visual contact with the teacher.

Any new programs, trips or events that involve children or youth must be given prior approval by the clergy, and the vestry should be notified in advance of the event.

All events for children or youth shall be made public and no event for children or youth shall take place in a private residence without prior approval by the clergy.

Adults who work with children or youth within a congregation are discouraged from having a separate and private relationship with any unrelated child from church away from sanctioned church youth activities, unless that relationship is known to the clergy.

Each congregation is encouraged to have a Safe Church Minister who is current on safe church issues and training and is not otherwise an employee of the congregation. The Safe Church Minister should be consulted by the clergy, vestry members or others on safe church matters, and should report all questionable or non-standard arrangements to the clergy or a Warden. It is recommended that the Safe Church Minister and the Vestry regularly conduct a "safe church audit" to review practices and policies within the congregation.

A congregation's policies should include the names and phone numbers of the clergy, senior warden, parish Safe Church Minister, and contact person in the Bishop's Office.

A congregation's computers should have adequate password protection.

Congregations should have clear guidelines and adequate supervision (by parish staff or authorized persons) of anyone using a computer to access the Internet. Any activity on a

congregation's computer *should not be* considered private and may be accessed by authorized persons.

Maintain an "open door policy," that parents or clergy always have the right to visit and observe a class or program at any time unannounced.

Standards for Overnight Activities and Events

Each participant must submit a completed and signed permission form to the event coordinator to attend an event or activity [see sample, Appendix B]. Parents and guardians should be given information about the event and be provided emergency contact information in advance.

Prior to an off-site event, a list of participants with parental contact information should be given to the diocesan office for diocesan events or to the church office for congregational events.

All medications, including prescription and over the counter, must be in the original container with clear instructions and the participant's name. Medications are collected upon arrival and returned at the end of the event. Medications will be locked in a lock box and administered by a designated adult.

Sleeping and Rooming Arrangements for Overnight Activities or Events:

- If sleeping in parish hall, gym floor, or large room: males and females must have separate areas to sleep in.
- In a hotel or conference center or tent/camper setting:
 - Ideally, there should be no fewer than 3 same gender youth per room.
 - Choose hotels that have rooms open to the interior of the building rather than to the outside.
 - If possible make arrangements so that an adult room is between two youth rooms (no sharing adjoining bathrooms).
 - Each youth must have a separate bed, bedding and/or sleeping bag.
 - Adults should sleep in modest attire in order to be able to respond quickly to emergency needs.
 - Schedule hall monitoring periodically throughout the night.
 - Create a rooming list that provides the location where each child, youth, and adult is rooming. Post it in ways that are accessible to everyone at the event, but not to the general public.
 - Males may not enter a room where females are sleeping and females may not enter a room where males are sleeping.

Transportation

Anyone transporting children or youth must complete a "Transporting Children and Youth in a Motor Vehicle" form [Appendix C] and be screened by a Motor Vehicle Records search for Driving While Intoxicated or any reckless citation prior to transporting children or youth. The form and screening records are then filed in the diocesan office.

Parents must give written permission for any transportation of children or youth.

If children or youth are to be picked up by someone other than a parent or guardian, or dropped off somewhere other than their home, the parent or guardian should indicate that person's name and phone number on the permission form.

At the conclusion of an event, two adult leaders should stay with children and youth until every child and youth has been picked-up. Never leave a child or youth alone waiting for a ride home.

Standards for Adult Leaders and Sponsors

Adults model appropriate behaviors to children and youth. Therefore, adults abide by the same covenant as youth [see application form, Appendix A]. Adults are expected to model positive nurturing relationships that include no profane language and no practical jokes that would be physically or emotionally harmful.

Adults will use the "Standards for Appropriate Affection" [below] to talk about touch and boundaries at all events and gatherings, establishing principles of respectful behavior while at the same time teaching appropriate touch and boundaries.

It is inappropriate for a leader or any adult to be alone with a child if out of sight of another adult.

Secret meetings and activities with a child, children or youth are inappropriate.

Physical punishment or discipline, harsh language, degrading punishment, hazing or bullying should never be used or allowed.

Adult leaders and sponsors shall never, under any circumstances:

- provide children or youth with non-sacramental alcohol, illegal drugs pornography,
- consume non-sacramental alcohol or illegal drugs or misuse legal drugs at any event at which children or youth are present,
- be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs or the misuse of legal drugs at any children's or youth event or activity,
- engage in illegal behavior or allow other adults or children or youth to engage in illegal behavior,
- engage in any sexual, romantic, illicit or secretive relationship or conduct with any child or youth,
- discuss their own sexual activities or fantasies with children or youth.

Standards for Interacting with Children and Youth

The following standards of positive and appropriate forms of affection and inappropriate forms of affection are to be carefully followed by all adults working around or with children and youth:

Positive and appropriate forms of interaction include:

- Brief hugs
- Pats on the shoulder or back
- Handshakes
- "High-fives"
- Verbal praise
- Touching hands, faces, shoulders and arms of children or youth
- Arms around shoulders
- Holding hands while walking with small children
- Sitting beside small children
- Kneeling or bending down for brief hugs with small children
- Holding hands during prayer

Inappropriate forms of interaction include:

Lengthy embraces

Kisses

Holding children other than infants or toddlers on the lap

Touching bottoms, chests or genital areas other than for appropriate diapering or toileting of infants and toddlers

Showing affection in isolated areas such as bedrooms, closets, staff only areas or other private rooms

Occupying a bed with a child or youth

Touching knees or legs of children or youth

Wrestling with children or youth

Tickling children or youth

Piggyback rides

Any type of massage given by a child or youth to an adult

Any type of massage given by an adult to a child or youth

Any form of unwanted affection

Comments or compliments, spoken, written, or electronic, that relate to physique or body development, i.e. "You sure are developing," or "You look hot in those jeans."

Snapping bras or giving wedgies or similar touch, whether or not it is covered by other clothing

Giving gifts or money that show favoritism to individual children or youth

Private meals alone with individual children or youth

Adults should not dress, undress, bathe or shower in the presence of youth and adults should not be in the room where youth dress, undress, bath or shower.

If a child or youth needs to undress (for example, to get into a costume or for first aid) call another adult of the same gender as the child to be nearby. Be intentional about safe church practices for trips to the bathroom for those who need assistance.

Additional Contact Information

Specific details about how to do background checks, norms for various types of youth events and how to supervise compliance with this policy can be obtained at training events offered by the Diocese, your congregation's Safe Church Minister or the diocesan Safe Church Officer.

Resources for Safer Churches



Diocese of Vermont

VERMONT STATUTES

Title 33, § 4913. Suspected child abuse and neglect; remedial action

(a) Any physician, surgeon, osteopath, chiropractor, or physician's assistant licensed, certified, or registered under the provisions of Title 26, any resident physician, intern, or any hospital administrator in any hospital in this state, whether or not so registered, and any registered nurse, licensed practical nurse, medical examiner, dentist, psychologist, pharmacist, any other health care provider, school superintendent, school teacher, school librarian, child care worker, school principal, school guidance counselor, mental health professional, social worker, probation officer, police officer, camp owner, camp administrator, camp counselor, or member of the clergy who has reasonable cause to believe that any child has been abused or neglected shall report or cause a report to be made in accordance with the provisions of section 4914 of this title within 24 hours. As used in this subsection, "camp" includes any residential or nonresidential recreational program.

(b) Any other concerned person not listed in subsection (a) of this section who has reasonable cause to believe that any child has been abused or neglected may report or cause a report to be made in accordance with the provisions of section 4914 of this title.

(c) Any person enumerated in subsection (a) or (b) of this section, other than a person suspected of child abuse, who in good faith makes a report to the department of social and rehabilitation services shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability which might otherwise be incurred or imposed as a result of making a report.

(d) The name of and any identifying information about either the person making the report or any person mentioned in the report shall be confidential unless the person making the report specifically allows disclosure or unless a judicial proceeding results therefrom or unless a court, after a hearing, finds probable cause to believe that the report was not made in good faith and orders the department to make the name of the reporter available.

(e) (1) A person who violates subsection (a) of this section shall be fined not more than \$500.00.

(2) A person who violates subsection (a) of this section with the intent to conceal abuse or neglect of a child shall be imprisoned not more than six months or fined not more than \$1,000.00, or both.

(3) This section shall not be construed to prohibit a prosecution under any other provision of law.

(f) Except as provided in subsection (g) of this section, a person may not refuse to make a report required by this section on the grounds that making the report would violate a privilege or disclose a confidential communication.

(g) A member of the clergy shall not be required to make a report under this section if the report would be based upon information received in a communication which is:

- (1) made to a member of the clergy acting in his or her capacity as spiritual advisor;
- (2) intended by the parties to be confidential at the time the communication is made;
- (3) intended by the communicant to be an act of contrition or a matter of conscience;

and (4) required to be confidential by religious law, doctrine, or tenet.

(h) When a member of the clergy receives information about abuse or neglect of a child in a manner other than as described in subsection (g) of this section, he or she is required to report on the basis of that information even though he or she may have also received a report of abuse or neglect about the same person or incident in the manner described in subsection (g) of this section. (Added 1981, No. 207 (Adj. Sess.), § 1, eff. April 25, 1982; amended 1983, No. 169 (Adj. Sess.), § 1; 1985, No. 208 (Adj. Sess.), § 19, eff. June 30, 1986; 1989, No. 295 (Adj. Sess.), § 3; 1993, No. 156 (Adj. Sess.), § 1; 2003, No. 43, § 3, eff. May 27, 2003; 2005, No. 101 (Adj. Sess.), § 2; 2007, No. 77, § 1, eff. June 7, 2007; 2007, No. 172 (Adj. Sess.), § 19.)

§ 4913. Reporting suspected child abuse and neglect; remedial action

(a) Any physician, surgeon, osteopath, chiropractor, or physician's assistant licensed, certified, or registered under the provisions of Title 26, any resident physician, intern, or any hospital administrator in any hospital in this state, whether or not so registered, and any registered nurse, licensed practical nurse, medical examiner, emergency medical personnel as defined in subdivision 2651(6) of Title 24, dentist, psychologist, pharmacist, any other health care provider, child care worker, school superintendent, school teacher, school librarian, school principal, school guidance counselor, and any other individual who is regularly employed by a school district, or who is contracted and paid by a school district to provide student services for five or more hours per week during the school year, mental health professional, social worker, probation officer, police officer, camp owner, camp administrator, camp counselor, or member of the clergy who has reasonable cause to believe that any child has been abused or neglected shall report or cause a report to be made in accordance with the provisions of section 4914 of this title within 24 hours. As used in this subsection, "camp" includes any residential or nonresidential recreational program.

(b) The commissioner shall inform the person who made the report under subsection (a) of this section:

- (1) whether the report was accepted as a valid allegation of abuse or neglect;
- (2) whether an assessment was conducted and, if so, whether a need for services was found; and
- (3) whether an investigation was conducted and, if so, whether it resulted in a substantiation.

(c) Any other concerned person not listed in subsection (a) of this section who has reasonable cause to believe that any child has been abused or neglected may report or cause a report to be made in accordance with the provisions of section 4914 of this title.

(d) (1) Any person other than a person suspected of child abuse, who in good faith makes a report to the department shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability which might otherwise be incurred or imposed as a result of making a report.

- (2) An employer or supervisor shall not discharge; demote; transfer; reduce pay, benefits, or work privileges; prepare a negative work performance evaluation; or

take any other action detrimental to any employee because that employee filed a good faith report in accordance with the provisions of this subchapter. Any person making a report under this subchapter shall have a civil cause of action for appropriate compensatory and punitive damages against any person who causes detrimental changes in the employment status of the reporting party by reason of his or her making a report.

(e) The name of and any identifying information about either the person making the report or any person mentioned in the report shall be confidential unless:

- (1) the person making the report specifically allows disclosure;
- (2) a human services board proceeding or a judicial proceeding results therefrom;
- (3) a court, after a hearing, finds probable cause to believe that the report was not made in good faith and orders the department to make the name of the reporter available; or
- (4) a review has been requested pursuant to section 4916a of this title, and the department has determined that identifying information can be provided without compromising the safety of the reporter or the persons mentioned in the report.

(f) (1) A person who violates subsection (a) of this section shall be fined not more than \$500.00.

(2) A person who violates subsection (a) of this section with the intent to conceal abuse or neglect of a child shall be imprisoned not more than six months or fined not more than \$1,000.00, or both.

(3) This section shall not be construed to prohibit a prosecution under any other provision of law.

(g) Except as provided in subsection (h) of this section, a person may not refuse to make a report required by this section on the grounds that making the report would violate a privilege or disclose a confidential communication.

(h) A member of the clergy shall not be required to make a report under this section if the report would be based upon information received in a communication which is:

- (1) made to a member of the clergy acting in his or her capacity as spiritual advisor;
- (2) intended by the parties to be confidential at the time the communication is made;
- (3) intended by the communicant to be an act of contrition or a matter of conscience; and
- (4) required to be confidential by religious law, doctrine, or tenet.

(i) When a member of the clergy receives information about abuse or neglect of a child in a manner other than as described in subsection (h) of this section, he or she is required to report on the basis of that information even though he or she may have also received a report of abuse or neglect about the same person or incident in the manner described in subsection (h) of this section. (Added 1981, No. 207 (Adj. Sess.), § 1, eff. April 25, 1982; amended 1983, No. 169 (Adj. Sess.), § 1; 1985, No. 208 (Adj. Sess.), § 19, eff. June 30, 1986; 1989, No. 295 (Adj. Sess.), § 3; 1993, No. 156 (Adj. Sess.), § 1; 2003, No. 43, § 3, eff. May 27, 2003; 2005, No. 101 (Adj. Sess.), § 2; 2007, No. 77, § 1, eff. June 7, 2007; 2007, No. 168 (Adj. Sess.), § 3, eff. Jan. 1, 2009; No. 172 (Adj. Sess.), § 19.)

WHY DOESN'T GOD PROTECT CHILDREN?

(a group exercise from "Preventing Child Sexual Abuse", a curriculum for children ages 9 - 12, by Reid and Fortune: United Church Press. Curricula are available for younger children and for adolescents as well).

Read Psalm 13 together.

Think about how people throughout the centuries have experienced suffering. It often helps us when we have suffered to hear the words written by someone else who has suffered too.

God is a compassionate God who is concerned and involved with people. Even though God does not want people to suffer, some people do bad things to others. Child sexual abuse is an example of some of the bad things that happen to children. Even though we know that God cares about children and their safety, sometimes child sexual abuse takes place.

It is hard for us to understand why God doesn't stop the abuse. But the only way for abuse to stop is for people to stop the abuse. God uses people, their minds, hearts and wills to help each other.

When abuse does happen:

Although God can't magically stop the abuse, God is able to help children.

Other people are able to stop the abuse.

What are some ways that God can help?

God gives us the courage to say "No!"

God gives us the strength to tell someone.

God gives us information to help us protect ourselves and others.

God gives us comfort when we hurt.

NOTES ABOUT TOUCH for ADOLESCENTS

(adapted from "SEXUAL ABUSE PREVENTION, a Study for Teenagers", by Fortune, United Church Press)

It is wrong to touch someone else in a way that takes advantage of another person or is abusive. It is wrong for someone to touch you if you don't want to be touched that way or at that time.

You do not have to tolerate being touched in any way that makes you feel bad or confused. You can and should decide who touches you and how they can touch you.

In getting to know yourself in relationship to another person, either in a friendship or love relationship, it can be frustrating to explore what kinds of touch are good, bad, or confusing. It is important to talk about this, to be clear about what are the limits and the preferences you each have.

For example, you may feel good about a pat on the back from your boss for a job well done; a pat on your buttocks may feel bad or confusing. In that case tell the person so. A kiss may be fine from your boyfriend. But being held down by him while he unbuttons your blouse may make you feel upset and powerless. Speak up.

Remember, "no" means **no** and "yes" means **yes**. Don't get into the "if she says 'no' she means 'yes'" game. Everyone loses that game. Be as clear and straightforward as you can.

**SUGGESTED GENERAL PREVENTION GUIDELINES FOR ALL AGES
REGARDING PASTORAL CARE BY LAY AND ORDAINED MINISTERS
(Adapted from the Episcopal Diocese of Connecticut)**

1. Carefully assess the person you are caring for. If that person might misinterpret (or misrepresent) your behavior, use consultation (work with a partner), and/or arrange to meet them when other people are around (out of hearing range, or in an office with a window in the door, for example). Obviously, there will always be a risk - that is the nature of ministry - but the risks can be minimized with some thought.
2. Think proactively about ways in which you can have private meetings with people while still minimizing risks. One seasoned priest has a corner in a local restaurant to meet certain people for coffee. The waitresses know to make themselves scarce so a private conversation can happen.
3. If you have an encounter you think might be misunderstood, write down what happened, when and with whom, especially if the person "came on" to you in some way, or if you yourself feel some element of attraction. Then consult with a supervisor or trusted colleague about this encounter, using your written notes.
4. Avoid the use of sexual humor, innuendo and flirtation. It is entirely inappropriate for the pastoral relationship.
5. Do not offer alcoholic beverages to underage people.
6. Be prudent about self-disclosure. Do not disclose sexual or highly personal matters. It is easy for people to misinterpret unless you know one another very well and there is a solid history of trust between you. If you simply need to "unload", use consultation, trusted colleagues, or a trained professional resource.
7. Touching can be a vital part of ministry, appropriately used. There are ways that we can assure that our gestures are understood in the spirit we intend. For example, use "mirroring"; i.e.,
 - if you are in doubt, offer choices non-coercively; shall we have a hug or a handshake? shall we hold hands while we pray, or sit where we are? would you like to meet in my office or shall we take a walk (go for coffee, get a bite of lunch? etc.)
 - if a person extends a hand, shake their hand (but do not hug them).
 - if a person presents a cheek to be kissed, do not kiss them except on the proffered cheek, or do not kiss at all.
 - if a person puts a hand on your shoulder, either return the gesture (mirror the gesture) as is, or do nothing.
 - use care when exchanging "the Peace". Not everyone likes to be hugged, and to offer hugs to some but not to others may look like favoritism (and could cause some to feel excluded).

The above practices may feel cumbersome at first, but will readily become comfortable and natural.

8. Develop understandings with your Vestry (or other parish leaders) on pastoral practices in possible situations of danger or compromise; for example, calling on people alone in their homes, meeting with people at night or when no one else is around the church, meeting with people in your home if you live alone, etc. Keep written notes about your pastoral meetings.
9. **Romantic involvements with a parishioner by a cleric, employee or volunteer who is in a pastoral relationship with that parishioner are inappropriate.**

Remember these helpful tools:

- consult with colleagues or trusted others,
- document incidents which you think may be problematic,
- have clear understandings with vestry / parish leadership and
- **be in appropriate supervision.**
- above all, take very good care of yourself

Without being reactive or going to self-protective extremes, we can foster a sense of safety and protection for ourselves and the people we care for, while still ministering in delicate situations.

PREVENTION PRACTICES - CHILDREN/YOUTH

Note: Obviously, it may not be possible to implement all of these suggestions. Some suggestions may not be relevant for your ministry setting. Nonetheless, whatever you can incorporate into your program will strengthen the climate of care for those involved.

While most of these guidelines seem like common sense, it is surprising how often they are not applied consistently. These Prevention Practices cover issues of **Sexual Misconduct** as well as some general safety concerns.

For the purpose of these Prevention Practices, “adult” means someone 21 years of age or older. An older teenager may be involved with these ministries, but only with direct adult supervision. It is unwise to have older teenagers (18-19 years) working with Youth Groups (ages 10-18) without a mature adult present at all times.

For Church School/Youth Groups/Child Care Programs/ Schools

1. It is a good policy to require that all people who wish to participate in ministries with children/ youth to have been active members of the congregation for at least six months, preferably a year, and to be well known to some of the members of the church leadership.
2. The Diocesan Policy on Sexual Conduct states that all those working with children/youth must “complete and sign an application form which specifically includes a request for personal references, information concerning any prior adjudication in regard to sexual misconduct, and acknowledgment of the church’s right to conduct a confidential background check”. A sample application form, is on page 51 of this manual.
3. If children/youth are to be taken off church premises at any time, or are meeting off premises, two or more adults should accompany them, preferably both men and women. It is advisable in any group situation to have at least two leaders present. For church school classes, this could be the teacher and an aide.
4. Permission slips with details (including names of adults who will go along) are vital for all trips off church premises, whether during or outside of regular church school hours. If children/youth are to be picked up by someone other than a parent or known baby-sitter, or dropped off somewhere other than their home, the parent(s) or guardian should indicate that person’s name and phone number (see page 49 for a sample form). An adult leader should stay with all children/youth at the conclusion of an activity until every child/youth has been picked up. Never leave a child/youth alone waiting for a ride home.

EDUCATION FOR A SAFER CHURCH

5. When a church program or activity calls for someone to drive children/youth anywhere, keep a form (see page 47) on file with important information about the vehicle operator and the vehicle to be used. Attach to the form a copy of the driver's license, the Proof of Insurance and the vehicle registration.
6. Be sure to screen potential drivers for previous record of Driving While Intoxicated or any reckless citation. This manual includes a form to be filled out and signed by those who may transport young people (pages 47-48).
7. If possible, have half-doors installed for church school classrooms. Alternatively, put plexiglass in the doors so someone can see into classrooms at all times.
8. Offer children touch choices; for example: "Would you like a hug or a hand shake?" Touch is important to children, but DON'T ASSUME that all children want to be touched at all times. Give them options.
9. Establish touch boundaries within the classroom - students can learn some simple principles of respectful behavior, while at the same time learning the goodness of appropriate touching.
10. It is inappropriate to be alone (and out of sight of anyone else) with a child. If it does seem necessary, ask another adult to stand by. Or file a short memo with the church school coordinator (or other person designated) noting that the private conference took place. Should a question ever arise, a dated memo would be more useful than your memory of the incident. Of course, such memo would not betray the privacy of the conversation itself.
11. If a child needs to undress (for example, to get into a costume or for first aid), do call another adult of the same gender as the child to at least hover nearby (this is another good reason for adult teachers to work in teams). Work out policies for trips to the bathroom for those who need adult assistance.
12. Even playfully, even if a child or young person asks you to do so, do not touch him/her on any part of the body that would be covered by a modest swimsuit, or on clothing that covers those parts.
13. Learn to do regular consultation with a trained person, especially if you deal with sexual topics in discussion or classwork. Document those consultations with a memo.
14. If you have an encounter with a child or youth where you think there might be a possibility of misunderstanding or misinterpreting your behavior, debrief the encounter with a consultant, church school director, or clergy. Document with a dated memo. Where possible discuss the matter with the child's parent or guardian.
15. For overnights (lock-ins, camp, trips, etc.) always have at least two adults present (more if the size of the group requires). If the group is made up of both boys and girls, there should be both a man and woman present.

Make parents/guardians aware of the ground rules which will govern all such events, and whenever possible have the participants sign an agreement to abide by those rules in advance of the event itself. Be clear about specifying the consequences of any infraction.

For overnights, whether on church property or elsewhere, be sure that separate sleeping areas are provided for boys and girls, and that privacy is assured for use of bathroom facilities and for changing clothes. Adults should bathe at separate times from children.

EDUCATION FOR A SAFER CHURCH

16. Use caution about any movies or videotapes. Many PG-13 rated films contain material that is inappropriate. Many congregations have a policy that R-rated films are never shown to youth/teens. If you question the appropriateness of a film, think about showing it to parents first. Even if parents do not take up your offer, it is important to have made the offer.
18. A further protection is to have an "open door policy"; that parents, clergy, church staff always have the right to visit and observe a class or program at any time unannounced.
19. Never meet a child or youth in secret or in an unplanned way (for example, meeting them at the end of a school day) without clearing it with parents and/or appropriate supervising people.
20. Never show youth any material that displays nudity or could by any standard be called pornographic. If such material is brought by youth, confiscate it at once and consult with clergy/supervisor/trusted adult to establish the fact that it was brought to the event by a participant (and not by any adult leader/teacher).
21. Never allow alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs to be brought to, or consumed during, any church-related activity for children/youth.
22. If a young person comes to any church program intoxicated (from either drugs or alcohol), arrange to have the person taken home and consult with the clergy or other authority as to further intervention.
23. At group events involving children or youth when an overnight stay is part of the program, designate one adult to serve as a confidential contact person for anyone who has concerns to report about the sexual behavior of those attending.

If you wonder about abuse:

1. contact the clergyperson or youth ministries chairperson in your church or agency and express your concerns in order to explore options.
2. look for signs of abuse as detailed above.
3. seek professional consultation from the Diocesan Office (Canon Bates) and/or the local Social Services worker at the Vermont Department of Children and Families (DCF). Local DCF numbers may be found in your local directory, or at <http://dcf.vermont.gov>.
4. find gentle ways to let children/youth know that you are someone they could talk to if there are things that are bothering them.
5. be attentive to ways in which a child/youth may be trying *indirectly* to tell you about abuse (reluctance to attend various events, sudden disappearance from activities, or obsession by child/youth upon whether a particular adult will be present at activities, etc.).
6. BELIEVE a child or young person if they talk - even hesitantly - with you about upsetting things which are happening to them. NEVER blame a child or show doubt about what they might say. It is certainly true that false reports may be given. These, however, are very rare.

If you have reasonable grounds to believe abuse by a church worker is happening:

1. Contact the clergyperson, youth ministries chairperson or another trusted individual for consultation immediately. The suspected person should be suspended from contact with minors while an investigation proceeds.
2. Contact the Bishop or Canon Bates at 802-863-3431 to report what has happened. Within 48 hours, document your actions with a memo and send a copy to the Bishop at Diocesan Center, Five Rock Point Road, Burlington, VT 05408-2735.

EDUCATION FOR A SAFER CHURCH

3. Clergy should REPORT the suspected abuse to the Department of Children and Families Child Abuse Hotline, 800-649-5285. DCF keeps identity of callers confidential.
4. Protect the child - remain in contact however you can. If necessary, contact the local police. They have the authority to respond and take temporary custody of a child.

If an incident of abuse (confirmed or unconfirmed) is reported:

If a member of the clergy, including Postulants or Candidates for Ordination, is accused of child abuse in a congregation, the Wardens and Vestry shall:

- a) Inform the Bishop at once so that a confidential preliminary investigation can begin. The Bishop will follow stated procedures in assuring due process. See Section IV of the Diocesan Handbook for the "Policies and Procedures Relating to Sexual Conduct". The "Policies" are also contained in this manual, beginning on page 18.
- b) Cause prompt reports of the accusation (or arrest) and subsequent disposition of criminal charges to be made by contacting the Bishop, who will notify the diocesan liability insurance carrier. Reports to insurers either verbally or in writing, are generally non-privileged. They may be divulged in subsequent criminal prosecutions and/or civil suits.
- d) A report will be made to DCF and to police, if necessary.
- e) Do not admit liability and do not attempt to hinder prosecution.
- f) Do not seek to negotiate a settlement or attempt to inhibit anyone from making a report. To do so will void the liability coverage. Similarly, do not make any financial offers (for example, for counseling fees) without clearing this with the Diocesan Office.

If a lay volunteer or lay employee is accused of sexual abuse, the following procedures should be followed:

- a) The clergy and/or wardens should immediately suspend the person from performing his/her duties and from all contact with children.
- b) Report to the Diocesan Office. Clergy should notify the Department of Children and Families.

Regardless of the circumstances, do not disclose the identity of the reporting person, the accused, or the victim except to those who are professionally involved in the case. Do not allow details of the situation to be disclosed to anyone other than the professionals mentioned in the directions above or persons they instruct you to contact.

EDUCATION FOR A SAFER CHURCH

A sample information and release form

TRANSPORTING CHILDREN & YOUTH IN A MOTOR VEHICLE

(Name of Church)

All people who will transport children/youth within the scope of a church program are asked to complete this form. Completed forms are kept on file in a secure place and should be updated regularly.

Attached to this form should be copies of:
Current Drivers License
Proof of Insurance ("Vermont Insurance Card").
Current Vehicle Registration

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: Home: _____ Work: _____

Your Vehicle: _____

Make and Model: _____

Year: _____

Is your vehicle in good repair, and equipped with safety restraints (including those for infants and young children if you will be transporting them)?

If there is another vehicle you might use in the course of transporting children/youth, please describe it in the same way:

Have you ever had a Driver's License revoked or suspended? _____
If so, give details.

Have you ever been arrested for a DWI (driving while intoxicated)? _____

If yes, give details as to where and when each such charge was made, and describe the outcome:

(continued on next page)
Driver Information Form, page 2

EDUCATION FOR A SAFER CHURCH

In transporting children/youth, I agree to:

- Obey all traffic regulations including speed limits and safety restraint requirements.
- Transport only the number of persons my vehicle is equipped to carry.
- Drive only when I am not under the influence of alcohol or other intoxicating drugs.

Signed: _____

Attest Statement

Under penalty of perjury, I swear or affirm that the information given above is true, complete and correct. I understand and agree that a complete background investigation may be conducted with respect to me, and that this information may be verified by contacting persons and organizations with whom I have had contact or which may have information concerning me.

I hereby release and agree to hold harmless from liability any person or organization that provides such information. I also agree to release and hold harmless the Diocese of Vermont and (*Parish Name*), their officers, employees, agents, and volunteers.

Applicant's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Witness: _____

Person receiving / reviewing this form: _____

**SAMPLE PERMISSION FORM AND LIABILITY RELEASE
AGREEMENT**

Name of church

Address

Telephone

Permission Form: My daughter/son/ward _____ has my permission to participate in the event/outing (*described below*) of _____ Church on (date). In case of emergency, if I cannot be contacted, I authorize the leaders listed below to arrange for emergency medical treatment if needed.

If someone other than parents or guardian is to pick up a young person at the conclusion of an event, or if the young person is to delivered to a home other than his or her own, please give the name, address and telephone number of the person who will be responsible.

Liability Release Agreement: I (We) accept and clearly understand that there are inherent and other risks involved in the event/outing with _____ Church, that accidents and injuries do occur, and I (we) freely assume those risks. I understand that this event will be led by the following adults:

I (We), for myself and for my heirs and assigns, hereby release _____ Church, its officers, agents and employees from any and all liability for damage and injury to myself (my child/children) and I (we) accept full responsibility for any and all such injury of any kind which may result.

I (We), the undersigned, have read and understand the above and sign this of my (our) own free will and desire.

Signature: _____ Date: _____
(If you are under the age of 18, your parent or legal guardian must also sign.)

Parent: _____ Date: _____

PLEASE PRINT

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

TELEPHONE: _____

Please add any information, such as special needs, allergies or medical conditions (with your doctor's name and telephone number) which the leaders of this event may need to know about.

EDUCATION FOR A SAFER CHURCH

SAMPLE REPORTING AND INFORMATION FORM

Name of Employee or Volunteer: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ (home) _____ (work)

E-mail: _____ Fax: _____

Social Security Number: _____

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that I have read the Diocese of Vermont's **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES RELATING TO SEXUAL MISCONDUCT**, including the definition of sexual misconduct (a copy of this Policy is enclosed), provided by the Diocese of Vermont.

On the basis of my review, I certify the following: (please circle the answers which apply)

Yes No I have been charged with engaging in sexual misconduct as defined in the Diocese of Vermont's Definition of Sexual Misconduct. If "yes", please explain.

Yes No I have been convicted of a criminal offense other than parking violations. If "yes", please explain.

Yes No I have been charged with child abuse or neglect. If "yes", please explain.

Yes No My driver's license is now, or has been in the past, suspended or revoked. If "yes", please explain.

If the answer to any of the above questions is "yes", further explanation is needed below.

(Attach additional pages if necessary)

(Signed): _____

(Dated): _____

Please return this form in the enclosed postage-paid envelope or in an envelope marked "Confidential" to:

(church name)

EDUCATION FOR A SAFER CHURCH

10. Name and address of the church of which you are a member

11. List name and address of other churches you have attended regularly during the past ten years. If you did volunteer work in those churches, please include the name of your supervisor or of the priest in charge at the time, and a description of your work.

Name: _____
Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Contact: _____
Volunteer work: _____ Supervisor: _____

Name: _____
Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Contact: _____
Volunteer work: _____ Supervisor: _____

FOR YOUTH WORKERS:

12. List all previous work involving youth: organization, address, supervisor or person in charge, dates and type of work. (Use another piece of paper if necessary.)

Name: _____
Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Contact: _____

Name: _____
Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Contact: _____
Type of work: _____ Supervisor: _____

13. List any gifts, callings, training, education or other factors that have prepared you for work with children and/or youth.

EDUCATION FOR A SAFER CHURCH

14. List, by name, street address, telephone number and contact person, your position and supervisors/employers for the last ten years. (Use the back of this page if necessary.)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Contact: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Contact: _____

15. Please furnish the names of two persons, other than relatives or present or former employers, to serve as personal references.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Authorization/Release

I understand and agree that a background review may be conducted with respect to me at the above positions, and that the information I have provided may be verified by contacting persons and organizations with whom I have had contact or which may have information concerning me. I agree to release from liability and damages the entities or agent who conduct and participate in any such review and those individuals, organizations and their agent who provide information about me during this review, only to the extent that such information is released without malicious intent. I authorize all such persons to treat a photocopy of this Authorization/Release as though it were an original, executed Authorization.

Dated this ____ day of _____, 19____, at _____

(Signature)

(Please print your name)

Thank you for your cooperation.

SAMPLE REFERENCE REPORTING FORM

Name of Employee or Volunteer: _____

Social Security Number: _____

Name and Address of School/Employer/Congregation or personal reference completing this form:

Number of years this person attended school/dates employed/served congregation:

From: _____ To: _____

Position(s) or Title(s) held: _____

CERTIFICATION

My name is: _____.

_____ I served as the above-named person's employer.

or

_____ I hold the following position with the above-named school/employer/congregation:

or

_____ I am a personal acquaintance and have known this person since _____

I hereby certify that I have read the Diocese of Vermont's "Definition of Sexual Misconduct" (copy enclosed) and a copy of the signed "Authorization/Release" provided by the Diocese of Vermont. I further certify that I have reviewed the academic/employment/service history which is available to me of the above-named person.

On the basis of my review, I certify following: (please check all that apply).

_____ I do not know, nor do I have reason to believe that this person has been charged with sexual misconduct as defined in the Diocese of Vermont's "Definition of Sexual Misconduct".

_____ To my knowledge this person has not been convicted of any criminal offense (other than parking violations)

EDUCATION FOR A SAFER CHURCH

Please add below any other information which you think might be helpful for the Rector/Vicar to know.

(Attach additional pages as necessary)

Signed: _____

Dated: _____

Please return this form in an envelope marked "Confidential" to:

Insert Name and Address of Church

*(For use in accordance with Vermont Policies Section IV.2, on page 38 of this manual .
This form can be copied on diocesan, institution, or church letterhead)*

Compliance Assurance Statement

I, _____ , have read, understand
and intend to comply with the Diocese of Vermont
Policies and Procedures Relating to Sexual Misconduct.

_____ Date _____
(Please sign your name)

Witnessed by _____

Date _____