



Training Program for High School Students

The Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend created a safe environment educational program for all children enrolled in Catholic schools and parish religious education programs. The diocese established this important program to fulfill one of the mandates of the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*. Article 12 of the *Charter* reads, "Dioceses ...are to maintain "safe environment" programs...to provide education and training for children, youth, parents, ministers, educators, volunteers and others about ways to make and maintain a safe environment for children and young people." In our diocese, young people receive this educational program every year. Repetition is a good thing. It helps the children remember what is safe and what is not. The presenter also identifies herself/himself as a safe trusted adult with whom the children can share their needs whenever necessary. More information about the program for preschool to grade 8 students is found in a separate document.

Getting Ready to Teach

1. Inform parents prior to training

School and parishes are to give parents notice that the safe environment teaching will take place with enough time for them to find out more about it if desired. Enough time would be at least one week but may be longer. Also, let the parents know that the material is available for their review. One way to provide notice of training would be in a regular newsletter or a special message sent home either electronically or on paper. The notice can be accomplished in a few sentences. Often, the clause that this educational material is "important personal safety information that every young person should have" is included. This is not sex education nor chastity training. Those topics are covered in other programs.

2. Parents may refuse to have their child participate

The USCCB refers to these students as opt outs. The parents must sign a **PARENT REFUSAL FORM** each year for their children who they opt out of training. The parish/school is to keep the forms on file and to provide copies of the teaching material to the parents and request that they instruct their child (ren) at home. The diocese does not recommend sending this form to every parent with the information. Before a parent signs the form, please ensure that they understand what the training is and is not. The goal is to train every child every year. Often a conversation about what the training is and is not can ally misunderstandings about the program and help a parent decide to include their child.



3. Absent Students

These students should attend a make-up session or have the training material sent to them and their parents for review on their own. A note should accompany the material stating that the presentation was offered at school and missed by the student. *"Due to the important nature of the material, we are sending it home for review and discussion."* Absent students are not counted as "trained" on the reporting form even if they tell you that they reviewed the material on their own.

Training Resources

The Safe Environment Program prepared PowerPoint presentations with presenter's notes, handouts, and a quiz for each grade in high school. The lessons are titled as follows:

Grade 9 – **Using the Internet and Social Media**

Grade 10 – **Your Personal Safety: Grooming**

Grade 11- **Your Personal Safety: Relationships and Dating**

Grade 12 – **You're Legal, Now What?**

The lessons have been reviewed and approved by the bishop of the diocese. They are the required training material for each grade. School and parishes may not replace these lessons with other materials. However, a school/parish may supplement this training material with other resources if they are reviewed and approved by the pastor and principal.

Who Does the Teaching?

The school/parish can choose whomever it feels is the best instructor(s) for the training. Some obvious choices are: classroom teachers, catechists, school counselor, DRE, principals or pastoral ministers. Others could be a volunteer with a counseling, social work or similar background. The most important criterion is to choose presenters who can present the material well but who are very approachable. Students need to identify with these adults as safe and trusted persons with whom they can talk about these important issues. Choosing the best presenters is often the most important decision that a parish or school will make.

Recording All Teaching

The principal or DRE will complete **SAFE ENVIRONMENT FORM 3** after the teaching has taken place. The form is available on the safe environment website.

<http://www.diocesefwsb.org/Safe-Environment-Training-Children-and-Youth>



DIOCESE OF
FORT WAYNE-SOUTH BEND
SAFE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM

The school/parish should complete the training lessons by December 15th each year.

The school/parish must keep all opt out forms and copies of FORM 3 on file.



Summary of Requirements for High School Program

GRADE	MATERIAL TO TEACH	ASSESSMENT	RESOURCES
Grade 9	Using the Internet and Social Media	Quiz	Two handouts: Social Media Safety for Teens; Tips for Teens
Grade 10	Your Personal Safety: Grooming	Quiz	Handout: Grooming Summary
Grade 11	Your Personal Safety: Relationships and Dating	Quiz	Handout: Healthy Relationships
Grade 12	You're Legal, Now What?	Quiz	Group Exercise