

1.0 ABUSE PREVENTION

The diocese is currently working collaboratively with other dioceses of the province to update and strengthen our sexual abuse prevention training processes. The Bishop is in active discussions with the Chancellor of the Diocese to put together a robust policy and training process to be implemented in 2016.

It is the congregation's responsibility to make the ministry environment safe for the most vulnerable among us, and maintain records of those who have been trained. In the bylaws of every congregation and church plant, a policy statement should be included regarding the protection of children and other vulnerable people from abuse. During this time of updating our materials, the Rector and Vestry must ensure that Basic Safety Practices are in place and that all lay and clergy ministers are trained in their use.

Below are the Basic Safety Practices:

DO's:

1. Interview lay ministers before assigning them a ministry position
2. Fingerprint and background check all children's and youth paid and unpaid lay and clergy ministers (each congregation will be responsible for maintain and forwarding copies of their records to the Diocese)
3. Train all lay ministers in Safe Touch Guidelines (DO's # 4 & 5, DON'T's # 1-5)
4. Require that two adults be present for all childcare and youth events
5. Insist that two adults be present for diaper changes or toilet needs of children

DON'T's:

1. Allow a child or young person to be alone with an adult
2. Allow a child or young person to be transported by car with just one other person in the car
3. Allow a child to sit in your lap
4. Offer full frontal hugs to people of the opposite sex
5. Allow anyone to strike another person of any age (spanking, hitting, etc.)

When the materials for training and accompanying resource documents have been prepared, they will be distributed and then take the place of this page.

Sexual Misconduct Prevention

Sexual abuse and harassment in the workplace is a subject of great interest and calls for a disciplined response by the church to keep all of our relational and working environments safe for people so that they may focus on the Lord and His work. The ACNA is currently reviewing the various approaches to sexual abuse prevention in order to bring a more coherent approach to this vital subject. This section will outline the basic minimum

standards of sexual prevention policies and practices, as well as, offer resources for sexual abuse prevention training.

ADULTS

Freedom in the working environment from sexual harassment is of paramount importance. How much more so is this true of a church setting where God is worshiped and Christian fellowship abounds! It is mandatory that all persons (whether employees or volunteers) having any working role, however supposedly minor, in a parish, congregation or church plant of this Diocese must have appropriate training in sexual misconduct prevention and the safety precautions that must be taken to prevent sexual abuse. Awareness and prevention training is to be repeated by such persons within five years thereafter.

In very general terms sexual abuse is any sexual advance, request for sexual favor, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, and can include physical touching, verbal abuse or any other emotional abuse of a sexual nature.

CHILDREN

The safety of children is of paramount importance. How much more so is this true in a church setting where children are being taught about God! It is mandatory that all persons (whether employees or volunteers) having any role, however supposedly minor, in the care and nurture of children in this Diocese must have appropriate training in the prevention of child abuse. Sexual Misconduct Prevention Training is to be repeated every five years or sooner by such persons thereafter.

Child abuse is defined as any mistreatment or neglect of a child that results in non-accidental harm or injury. Child abuse can include: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, or mere neglect.

The Diocese has implemented a Safe Ministry Program and the specifics of this program are defined in The Safe Ministry Program Implementation Manual in Appendix J and The Safe Ministry Program Children and Family Manual in Appendix T. It is necessary for the clergy and wardens to fully understand and comply with these efforts to protect vulnerable people.