



Catholic Church of Eastern Montana
DIOCESE OF GREAT FALLS-BILLINGS

Founded 1904

MEMORANDUM

DATE: August, 2010
TO: All Pastors, Parish Life Coordinators, Principals
SUBJECT: Safe Environment Training for Children

NEW DEADLINE: DECEMBER 15, 2010

Bishop Warfel's letter of September 3, 2009, (see diocesan Web site) mandated safe environment training for all children in accord with the USCCB Charter and Norms for the Protection of Children and Young People. This packet contains necessary items and outlines the options available to pastors and principals.

Step 1. Annual Parent Orientation Letter Required

Enclosed is a **sample letter** to be applied to your parish or school letterhead. It makes it clear what the program's purpose and content will be; that programming is necessary annually for children of all ages; when and where this year's trainings will be held; and that they as parents have an opportunity to opt-out for their children for the scheduled programming and can easily obtain training materials to use at home. This mailing to all parents must also *enclose a copy of the opt-out form*. Complete the deadline notice at the bottom before enclosing it.

Step 2. Run the Children's Programming

There should be a designated time and place as well as a make-up session.

Enclosed are four pages of diocesan approved programming materials. **Options.**

- I. **Borrow** materials from the Diocese of Great Falls-Billings Media Center.
- II. **Purchase** materials for parish or school use. Web site information provides opportunities for schools or parishes to purchase the programs.
- III. **Create your own lesson plan.** Two "Key Discussion Components" pages for two age-levels are included in this packet. Catechists should use these as talking points and discussion starters for the children they have in class. Catechists and/or pastors could collaborate in putting together a class dedicated to safe environment training. *Should your parish or school choose this option, the proposed instructional materials for these presentations must be sent to Anthony Allen or Patrick Haggarty prior to their use for review and approval.*

Step 3. Report to the Diocese Phase One

Enclosed are two forms:

- Children's Safe Environment Form. This is basically self-explanatory. After the parish or school programming is completed, a responsible person is to fill it out and mail it to Anthony Allen or, for schools, to Patrick Haggarty.
- Parent Opt-Out Form. This form was previously sent to each family in the initial parental letter, but duplicates may need to be available. All of these completed and signed opt-out forms need to be returned as well, but see also Step 4 in these cases.

