

For the Sake of God's Children: Diocesan Guidelines

For the Sake of God's Children, the response of Diocese of Wilmington to the Charter for the Protection of Young People, published by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, outlines what is required of youth ministry leaders.

5.2 All youth ministry leaders must be familiar with this section in its entirety and to comply with the mandates contained therein.

The commentary that follows provides an explanation of checklists found in Appendix Four of this manual and in Section Three of the *For the Sake of God's Children* Manual.

Supervision and Supervisors

The following are Diocese of Wilmington policies and are to be followed in all activities that involve young people.

5.3 Maintain the appropriate ratio of cleared adults to youth participants:

- 5.3.1 Two cleared adults per the initial 7 youth for 8th grade and below**
- 5.3.2 Two cleared adults per the initial 10 high school youth**
- 5.3.3 One cleared adult per each additional 10 youth in all age groups**
- 5.3.4 Never one cleared adult working alone with youth**
- 5.3.5 Cleared adults should be in proportion to the gender breakdown of the youth participants attending the event**
- 5.3.6 Reasonable consideration should be given to the number of cleared adults required for events with greater number of participants**

Chaperons may include young adults who are a **minimum** of 21 years of age.

5.4 Young adults who are 18 (and out of high school) to 20 years of age, who assist with youth ministry, are not considered chaperones.

5.5 All chaperones must have received clearance for service (acceptable background check) from the Diocese of Wilmington, and every chaperone must have a Volunteer Covenant on file with his or her respective parish office.

Supervision of youth ministry includes the following:

- Ensuring the safety of the young people while at a program or activity
- Assisting the Coordinator with the implementation of a program or activity
- Seeing that the guidelines for behavior and safety are followed

Chaperons should be apprised of their role and responsibilities for each distinct youth ministry program or activity, as it may be different depending on the situation.

Many times young people arrive early and stay late after youth ministry events. Parishes are responsible for providing adult supervision while they are on parish grounds, both before and after programs. Parishes can be found responsible for accidents and injuries occurring on parish grounds.

Because of the requirements of the For Sake of God's Children program, adult leaders are reminded that they must plan earlier and better.

Cleared Adults

For an adult leader in ministry to be considered cleared, he or she must have completed a background check and received clearance through the diocese or, in the case of private Catholic institutions, their respective parish or school. In addition, the adult leader must have a signed copy of the Volunteer Covenant on file with their parish or school. Finally, some training about Safe Environments must have taken place either through one on one conversation or via CYM's annual coaches training.

Volunteer Covenant

The Volunteer Covenant present adult leaders in ministry with general guidelines of acceptable and unacceptable behaviors. It is not exhaustive in nature. To be cleared for service, every adult leader must have completed a Volunteer Covenant each year. These signed documents must be kept on file with the FSGC compliance officer for your parish or school and must be available upon request to the diocesan auditor. After a new covenant is signed, the previous year's covenants should be shredded.

Visiting Instructors/Camps

The guidelines outlined the FSGC do not provide for every situation in ministry. Hosting a sports camp or inviting someone to give a presentation to young people in your parish or school is one such area.

If a parish or school is hosting a sports camp and the person directing the camp is not cleared through the Diocese of Wilmington FSGC program, that adult must never be left alone with young people. As long as the parish or school is operating within the guidelines of FSGC regarding the number of cleared adults required, the camp director does not have to be cleared for service, though it is reasonable to make sure a request.

In the case where a guest speaker attends a parish or diocesan event for a one time performance or presentation, that person is not required to be cleared through the Diocese of Wilmington FSGC program so long as no opportunity exists for him/her to be alone with young people.

For the protection of young people, it is reasonable to ask a visiting presenter or camp counselor to be cleared through the Diocese of Wilmington FSGC program.