



Decree

Promulgating the Safe Environment Training Programs of the Diocese of Erie

The protection of children and youth is a sacred trust given to us all by God, and is of utmost importance to the clergy, religious, and laity of the Diocese of Erie. The Diocese of Erie is committed to providing safe environments for our youth through the mandatory training of all adults, whether employees or volunteers, who have direct contact and/or routine interaction with minors and the training of all youth in Catholic schools and Parish Religious Education/Formation programs

The diocesan training, which is in accord with Article 12 in the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, encompasses ways to sustain and foster safe environments for minors and includes information on recognizing and reporting suspected child abuse. In observance of those Essential Norms, I hereby promulgate the following as normative for the Diocese of Erie, which all parishes, agencies, primary and secondary schools, and other Catholic entities or groups in the Diocese are obligated to observe:

The Diocese of Erie will accept the following training programs:

For Adults: the program, "Creating a Safe Environment" is the diocesan approved training that all clergy, employees and regular volunteers must complete before beginning work with children. The program is online and available 24/7. The training program must be repeated every five years.

Due to the sensitive nature of the subject matter, some adult victims of child sexual abuse may not feel comfortable completing safe environment training. Any adult in this situation may confidentially request to receive the materials in an alternate way. The request for alternative training is made through the Office of Child and Youth Protection by the Parish, School, Agency or Institution.

For Children: All children and youth enrolled in Catholic schools and Parish Religious Education/Formation programs will receive annual safe environment training using one of the two methods listed below.

- Diocesan approved videos. Videos are provided by the Office for the Protection of Children and Youth. Videos are used at age appropriate levels.
- Diocesan approved Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape Agencies. All participating agencies have curriculum on file in the Office for the Protection of Children and Youth. A list of the approved agencies can be found on the Protection of Children webpage.

Each year the Pastor/Principal will certify on the annual compliance report that safe environment training, for both adults and youth, was completed.

With this letter I again emphasize the importance to remain vigilant in our efforts to protect our children and young people. I remain committed to the safe environment training programs for adults, children and young people, as well as all diocesan policies, practices and protocols for working with children and youth.

Given at the Chancery
of the Diocese of Erie
on this 23rd day of March, 2020


The Most Reverend Lawrence T. Persico, JCL
Bishop of Erie

The Reverend Christopher J. Singer, JCL
Chancellor