



Archdiocese of Seattle

## SAFE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM

Protecting the Young and Vulnerable

### SAFE ENVIRONMENT UPDATE

January 2011

#### SAFE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM DEADLINES

Spring is right around the corner which means so are the deadlines for the Safe Environment Program. Please remember that all parishes and schools must complete all Safe Environment requirements by May 31, 2011. Please take this opportunity to review your all employees and volunteers, *including CYO Athletics*, to ensure that they have fulfilled all requirements for the Safe Environment Program: they have signed-off on the policies, there is a current Background Check and they are up-to-date with their annual training. Please contact the Safe Environment Program if you have any questions or you would like to schedule a class at (206) 274-3188 or [sep@seattlearch.org](mailto:sep@seattlearch.org).

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#### SEP RECORD KEEPING

The Safe Environment Database (SETA Net) is a wonderful tool to help you track all three required elements of the Safe Environment Program, which will simplify your annual compliance verification.

**BACKGROUND CHECKS**—To link background checks to your employee or volunteer's record, ***please be sure to include the individual's SETA Net Participant ID when submitting your background check to CICS.***

**ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**—To track if an individual has signed-off on the abuse prevention policies, simply enter the date the policy is signed on the participant's profile in the "Policy Acknowledged" field. You will find a box for this information on the Basic Info page under "Application Info."

#### DO YOU HAVE A TRAINER???

If you do not have a certified *Called to Protect* trainer in your community, or your trainer is no longer available, please identify one or two people who will be able to attend a *Train-the-trainer* class.

After completing the class, your trainer will be able to teach any of the *Called to Protect* classes: *Called to Protect for Ministries*, *Called to Protect for Parents & Families* and *Called to Protect for Youth*.

There are two more *Called to Protect: Train-the-Trainer* class scheduled this year; **the next one will be February 8th & 15th**. Please call the Safe Environment Program for an application at (206) 274-3188 or email us at [sep@seattlearch.org](mailto:sep@seattlearch.org).

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#### SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

A friendly reminder that according to the *Code of Professional Conduct for Church Personnel* (October 2007), "Social networking sites should not be used in connection with any official parish or archdiocesan program."

However, in light of the fact that social media is the fastest growing form of communication, it can be a very valuable tool in your programs. Currently, there is an archdiocesan steering committee looking at the use of social networking as a tool for communication in archdiocesan programs. They are considering a wide variety of issues that ensures we engage social media in a manner that is safe, responsible and civil.

Some of the issues being considered are:

- ◆ That there be adequate monitoring and administration of program pages (ideally by two or more administrators) to ensure all content posted is appropriate and consistent with Church teaching.
- ◆ That appropriate ministerial boundaries must be maintained online at all times.
- ◆ That there is no individual communication with minors and communication is only allowed on official program pages with prior permission from the parent/guardian.
- ◆ That no pictures of minors be posted without parent/guardian permission and that absolutely no pictures of minors are "tagged" with any identifiers (i.e., name, location).
- ◆ That parents/guardians must have access to anything provided to their children.
- ◆ That the main purpose in participating on a social networking site is for general communication about ministry, programs and events rather than chatting or socializing.

As you can see, there are many issues to take into consideration which make it extremely important that we are thoughtful and intentional about the policies that we develop. Stay tuned for developments!!