

Code of Ethical Conduct for Minors Volunteering or Working with Younger Children

Diocese of Kansas City ~ St. Joseph

You are about to begin what could be a lifelong commitment to working or volunteering for the Catholic Church. It is a privilege to help carry on the mission of Jesus Christ, one that no one takes lightly. It is important you follow certain rules and guidelines, both for your protection and for the protection of those to whom you minister. The church takes the issue of misconduct very seriously. Certainly any instance of your misconduct will be evaluated carefully, and you are urged to report any instances of misconduct that you see to the adult in charge.

General Conduct for Volunteers or Workers Who Are Minors

Conduct that is permissible – the following forms of affection are customarily regarded as appropriate:

- verbal praise
- handshakes
- high-fives or knuckle bumps
- pats on the shoulder or back
- side hugs
- holding hands while walking with small children
- sitting beside small children
- kneeling or bending down for hugs with small children
- holding hands during prayer

Conduct that is not permissible – in order to maintain the safest possible environment for minors, the following are examples of affection that are **not** to be used:

- inappropriate or lengthy embraces
- kisses on the mouth
- holding children over four years old on the lap
- touching private areas of any child's body
- showing affection in isolated areas such as bedrooms, closets, staff-only areas or other private rooms
- wrestling with minors
- piggyback rides
- any type of massage
- any form of unwanted affection
- comments about a child's body or their development

The Diocese of Kansas City- St. Joseph is grateful for the service you provide. Whenever you have questions or whenever you are uncertain about what is required, ask the adults with whom you work.

Commitment to Ethical Conduct for Minors Volunteering or Working with Younger Children

Diocese of Kansas City ~ St. Joseph

I promise to follow faithfully the rules and guidelines in the *Diocese of Kansas City- St. Joseph Code of Ethical Conduct for Minors Volunteering or Working with Younger Children*.

I understand that I may be removed from my position of working with children if I don't follow this code.

I further understand that I may be required to participate in education and training provided by the school or parish I attend.

Printed Name of Minor Volunteer or Worker _____

Address _____

Telephone Number(s) _____

Signature of Minor Volunteer or Worker

Today's Date _____ Minor Volunteer/Worker's Date of Birth _____

(High School Students Only) Expected High School Graduation Month and Year _____

We are the parents/legal guardians of _____ ("Minor"). We have received and support the *Diocese of Kansas City- St. Joseph Code of Ethical Conduct for Minors Volunteering or Working with Younger Children* and we have reviewed it with our child.

We understand that the Diocese has a responsibility to provide a safe environment for all of its young people and we know of nothing in our child's background that would make him/her unsuitable to work with minor age children.

Printed Name of Parent/Legal Guardian

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian

Date _____

This signed Commitment to Ethical Conduct Form shall be kept in employee personnel files at the agency/parish/school or in a general volunteer file at the agency/parish/school.

Please return this completed form to the Safe Environment Coordinator (SEC) at the location where you are an employee or volunteer.