

JOB DESCRIPTION
SAFEGUARD THE CHILDREN PARISH COMMITTEE

Revised August 20, 2007

“Each parish must have a Safeguard the Children Parish Committee. The program is not optional, and we must proceed by inviting key parents to take the leadership in this effort. The Safeguard the Children Parish Committee includes representatives from both the parish and school working together to provide a safe environment for children.” (Implemented by Cardinal Roger Mahony, September 13, 2002)

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

The chairperson of the Safeguard the Children Parish Committee should be a volunteer who is a member of the parish or school community and not an employee of the parish. This is important for two reasons: (1) it brings in a new perspective and energy from the parish community, and (2) it does not overburden staff members.

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Each committee should represent the different facets of the parish community. For instance, some parishes may have a school, some may not. Some may have a youth ministry program and others may not, etc. A well-rounded Safeguard the Children Parish Committee that represents the site is critical to its success.

Volunteer members from the parish or school might include:

- Parent representatives from the school, religious education program, youth group, etc.
- Representatives from various cultural groups in the parish
- A representative from the Parish Council
- Interested adults from the parish community
- Experts in the area, such as a therapist, law enforcement, nurse, social worker, etc.
- VIRTUS® Facilitator(s)

Volunteers bring an important and sometimes new perspective to the table when addressing child sexual abuse. They often have children in the parish/school and therefore look at things from a parent’s point of view. They may have concerns or ideas that might not otherwise be voiced.

Staff members should include:

- The Pastor and/or Associate Pastor and/or Pastoral Associate
- The Principal and/or Vice Principal
- The Director of Religious Education
- The Youth Minister
- The Confirmation Coordinator
- Member of the Parish Council and/or Finance Committee

The staff of the parish/school are the ones who are in authority and therefore responsible for implementing the Archdiocesan policies and guidelines of the Safeguard the Children Program. Most of them already have some expertise in the area of child sexual abuse. Their cooperation and support are necessary in order to implement the ideas of the committee, e.g., implementation of programs and procedures, site evaluations and resource development.