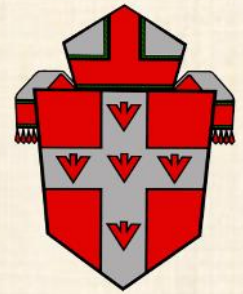


Safe Environment of the Archdiocese



November, 2017

Office of Safe Environment

Archdiocese of OKC

Go Make Disciples

Dear Facilitators,

Just recently I sent out an email to all facilitators, school principals, DRE's and Youth Ministers. This email contains a link to a "Survey Monkey". Looking ahead to our on-site visit in the Fall, 2018, the Safe Environment Committee of the Archdiocese is seeking your feedback and suggestions on our current protocol. You will note in the email that I am asking you to respond by **Monday, November 13th, the latest**. The Committee is meeting on November 21st and, at that meeting, I will share with them the compilation of your responses.

This survey is only for those who are currently working with the Safe Environment Protocol of the Archdiocese. If you have others who assist you, please feel free to encourage them to respond to the survey. However, you will have to send them the link that you will find in the email dated October 30, 2017.

Completing the survey should only take about 5-7 minutes of your time. It is done on-line by simply clicking on the link. Please be assured that your responses will remain anonymous. Thank you for your help in completing this survey.

Sister Catherine Powers, C.N.D. (SE Coordinator)

"Pornography use hurts the user by potentially diminishing his or her capacity for healthy human intimacy and relationships. It presents a distorted view of human sexuality that is contrary to authentic love, and it harms a person's sense of self-worth. Occasional use can turn into more frequent use that can then lead to an addiction to pornography, which is a growing problem."

***(Create in Me a Clean Heart (A Pastoral Response to Pornography)
US Conference of Catholic Bishops
2015***

Use Technology in a Christian Way



In his Epistle to Timothy, St. Paul says, "Let no one have contempt for your youth, but set an example for those who believe, in speech, conduct, love, faith, and purity." Our actions, words, and lifestyle are all essential parts of living the true Christian life. The power of all these digital devices provides us with an almost unprecedented opportunity to follow St. Paul's words.

Our use of technology should be consistent with our Christian faith. Our digital communications and the content we create and share should all be positive examples to others. That isn't always the case. Sometimes, we may use the gift of technology—accidentally or on purpose—in inappropriate ways. As Christians, we need a guideline to help us determine if our intended actions are consistent with or run contrary to our faith.

Of course, thinking about technology in this way might seem a bit strange. We live, after all, in the nation of "why not?" We love the new and get excited about the many things that we stand to gain with each new gadget. Rarely do we stop to consider whether or not we really



need to check out that new web site or buy that new device. After all, "why not"?

Before engaging in any online behavior, we would do well to change our perspective by considering several questions:

1) Why am I engaging in this activity? Is it spiritually beneficial to me or another person?

2) Will my activities directly or indirectly hurt, harm, or embarrass another person?

3) Would Christ approve of my actions or activities?

If we cannot answer even one of these questions appropriately then we shouldn't engage in that activity or behavior. As St. Paul said, we should set an example for others. Therefore, let's prayerfully reflect on the power and capabilities gifted to us through these new technologies. May we always use those capabilities with wisdom and discernment for God's glory.

(Taken from www.faihandssafety.com)

a collaboration between The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America

SAVE THE DATE : APRIL 19, 2018

Our annual in-service sponsored by the Safe Environment Office will be on **Thursday, April 19th** from 9:00-12:00. Please put this important date on your calendar. Your presence is so important and, as always, we would love to have other key staff members from your parish attend. Keeping our children safe is the responsibility of all!



Once again, our topic will be on pornography and its effects on family and youth. This year it will be a joint effort among all of the offices of the Secretariat for Evangelization & Catechesis. As a result, the day may have several sessions during the day and evening. More information will follow as we secure a speaker.

Circle of Grace

The school year is moving along rapidly and before we know it, Christmas break will be upon us. Please remember that teaching the Circle of Grace curriculum is a requirement for all Catholic schools and religious education programs. If you have not already done so, please schedule time in your programs to see to this important obligation. A letter should be sent home to parents advising them of the dates that it is being taught and inviting them to review the materials being used. Parents DO have the right to "opt out" but if they do so, there is a form in the Manual that they must sign. (see Section IV, page 2).

For **Catholic schools**, the verification form is sent to the Superintendent **before Christmas break**.

For **Religious Education** programs, the form is sent to the Director of Religious Education by **February 2nd**. This is one page titled *Verification Form F*



Help Protect our Children & Youth

We are bound by law to report even the SUSPICION of abuse.

DHS Hotline:

1-800-522-3511

Archdiocesan Hotline

1-405-720-9878





Parents: Has your child accessed porn? How can you respond?

(taken from It's Time We Talked: www.itstimewetalked.com)

Pornography is now incredibly accessible. It's not so much a question of *if* your child will see it, as *when* they will.

If you discover that your child has accessed porn, you may feel a whole range of things—from fear to anger to amusement or wishing you didn't know!

You can't stop what's happened already, but you can help your child understand that what they've seen is not reality and support them to develop healthy, respectful expectations of sexuality.

Don't panic. Stay calm.

Young people learn a lot more from a parent's response than just what we say. Try to stay calm and talk reasonably with your child.

If the situation requires an immediate response, calmly intervene. If you're ready to talk, great! If you need some time to prepare before you talk about it further, tell your child you will talk about it with them more later.

Don't make assumptions

Don't make assumptions about what's going on. It may be the first time your child has seen porn, or they may have already seen a whole range of sexual imagery. They may have gone looking for it, or they may not have wanted to see it at all. Sometimes exposure can occur accidentally, or by someone else introducing them to it.

While boys are much more likely to use porn, and to use it more often, girls may also seek it out.

Whether your child wanted to see it or not, they may feel uncomfortable, worried or even distressed by the experience. Or they may have felt fascinated, excited or aroused. Or all of these things at once—which can be very confusing!

Remember that curiosity is normal and healthy, and sex is good (a gift given to us by God).

The problem with porn is not so much that it is sexual, it's the fact that it conveys misleading messages, about what it means to be a man or a woman, about bodies, sexual health, power, aggression, humiliation, performance, and more.

Don't confuse sex with pornography—or pornography with sex. Be positive about bodies and sexuality.



Keep the communication lines open.

Through the words and actions, let your teenager know that you care about them, you are approachable and you're happy to talk about anything.

Ask questions and listen. Invite your child to talk about their feelings and thoughts. For example, ask, 'How did you feel when you saw those images?' and 'What did you think of what you saw?'

Encourage your child to talk to you about anything they feel uncomfortable about. Reassure them that you won't stop them accessing technology if they report seeing something inappropriate or disturbing.

Use the teachable moment

Learning that your child has seen porn may raise a range of concerns for you, but it provides a great opportunity to open up important conversations about things such as bodies, sex, respect, peer-pressure, cyber safety, consent, pleasure, exploitation and values.

My (Sr. Kay) editorial comment on the above is that this teachable moment also provides an opportunity to talk to your child or teen about chastity, abstinence, purity, respect for themselves and others. In other words, reinforcing all of teachings of the Church on sexuality, love and marriage.