

## **VI. SUPERVISION OF YOUTH**

The responsibility for the care and custody of youth rests with the CYO coach, parish athletic director and ultimately with the pastor/al leader. These adults serve "in loco parentis" (in place of parents) and have the authority to reasonably discipline the youth.

### **A. Adult Behavior With Children**

1. Adults should use prudence in relating to children and should be aware of behavior which could be open to misinterpretation by others. Situations that may lend themselves to opportunities for abuse, or even to the perception of opportunity for abuse, should be avoided, such as:
  - a. spending the night with a child;
  - b. having a child as a sole companion on a trip,
  - c. or continually seeking out the companionship of a particular child.
2. Fraternalization between youth and those who work or volunteer with youth is prohibited. Non-permissible fraternalization includes any behavior (verbal or physical) of a sexual, illegal, or age-inappropriate nature; as deemed inappropriate for a particular child by the administration of the parish. This policy pertains not only to engaging in such behaviors, but also the suggestion, threat, or invitation toward such behaviors.
  - a. Employees, staff members and volunteers involved in improprieties with youth will not be supported by the Diocese, rather the offenders will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.
  - b. The Church must be a firm defender of child's rights regardless of who the alleged abuser is.
3. The relationship between the employee (volunteer) and youth must always be one of adult to child, governed by the moral standards of the Church, the legal standards of the State of Ohio and common sense. As such, the policy prohibits fraternalization not only during youth activities or practices, etc., but at any time or any place, unless some separate (family) relationship exists.

### **B. Child Abuse and/or Neglect**

1. It is a criminal offense for any person who has custody or control over youth, that is, a parent or one standing in the place of a parent, to create a substantial risk to the youth's health or safety by violating any duty of care, protection or support. Further, it is a criminal offense to punish discipline or restrain a youth maliciously, in an excessive or cruel manner or for a prolonged period so as to create a substantial risk of physical or mental harm to the youth. (Section 2919.22 Ohio Revised Code).
  - a. A "neglected" youth includes any person under 18 years of age who is abandoned by his/her parents or guardian, or who lacks proper parental support and care, such as necessary subsistence, education or medical care perhaps including an apparent lack of grooming.
  - b. An "abused" youth includes a victim of sexual contact or conduct, or one who exhibits evidence of intentional injury (Sections 2151.03 Ohio Revised Code).
2. Anyone who suspects that a youth is being abused or neglected must report the information to the pastor/al leader for report to an appropriate agency.

### **C. Gangs/Gang Related Activity**

1. The possession of weapons or other dangerous or illegal objects by players, coaches, officials or spectators at any CYO athletic contest is prohibited.
2. The presentation of gang "identifiers" at any CYO athletic contest is prohibited. Any participant, coach or referee who is wearing anything that has been labeled as a current gang "identifier" will be denied the opportunity to participate.
3. Coaches who suspect a player or official in the CYO program is involved in gang activity should report their suspicions to the CYO Office.

### **D. Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco, and Weapons**

1. The use and/or possession of non-prescribed drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or a weapon, by a player, coach, official or spectator at any CYO athletic contest or practice session is prohibited. CYO practice and game sites are drug, alcohol, tobacco and weapon-free zones.

2. Coaches who discover a player in violation of this rule should notify the athlete's parents as well as the parish pastor and/or parish athletic director. Please contact the CYO Office if a coach or official is found to be in violation of this rule.