

## Safe Environment Reminders

- Avoid being left alone with a minor. At least **2** adults must always be present when minors are around.
- The children/youth Safe Environment training must be offered **every year** for all age groups.
- The adult Safe Environment clearance for adult volunteers is to be renewed every **5 years**. This process includes renewing all Safe Environment policies, VIRTUS training, and undergoing a background screening.
- **All Volunteers** dealing with Children and Vulnerable Individuals must complete Safe Environment training and submit to a background screening. Examples of Volunteers NOT\* required to submit to a background screening:
  1. Sacristans
  2. Altar dressers (persons responsible for washing and maintaining altar linens)
  3. Lectors
  4. Adult choir member in an all adult choir. Choirs where minors are members
  5. Cantor
  6. Extraordinary Minister of Eucharist (if at Masses only)
  7. Bereavement Group Leader (if not involved with children)
  8. Parish Council members; Finance Council members
  9. Ladies' Guild, Council of Catholic Women, Bible Study Groups, Ministry groups that do not have unsupervised or regular contact with children
  10. Men's and Women's adult organizations that do not have unsupervised or regular contact with children

\* The person in charge of the facility (pastor or principal) can determine additional Safe Environment requirements to better fit his/her location's needs.



### CONTACT INFORMATION Office of Child and Youth Protection Archdiocese of Atlanta (OCYP)

2401 Lake Park Drive SE  
Smyrna, GA 30080  
Phone: 404-920-7550  
Fax: 404-920-7551

**Perla Freed** | pfreed@archatl.com  
Director Safe Environment  
**Sue Stubbs** | sstubbs@archatl.com  
Director Victims Assistance  
**Terry Moss** | tmoss@archatl.com  
Safe Environment Coordinator  
**Gina Garcia** | ggarcia@archatl.com  
Program Assistant, OCYP

What is **Child Abuse**?

- (A) Physical injury or death inflicted upon a child by a parent or caretaker thereof by other than accidental means;
- (B) Neglect or exploitation of a child by a parent or caretaker thereof;
- (C) Endangering a child (e.g. witnessing domestic violence);
- (D) Sexual abuse of a child; or
- (E) Sexual exploitation of a child.

**Archdiocese of  
Atlanta  
24 Hour Abuse  
Reporting Line  
1-888-437-0764**

### PLAN AHEAD!!

- \* Make sure if minors are attending parish sponsored events such as: Festivals / Vacation Bible School / Field trips / Retreats
- 1. Volunteers are Safe Environment cleared a month prior to event (including chaperones).
- 2. Volunteers drivers must also undergo a motor vehicle records search. Contact Catholic Mutual for Liability Insurance Information.

## ATTENTION MANDATORY REPORTERS!

- 1 • If the alleged/suspected victim of abuse is a **minor** (under 18 years old).
- 2 • Inform the person in charge of the facility (pastor/principal) of the allegation. Letting the pastor/principal know about the allegation does not take away the mandatory reporter's responsibility to notify DFCS.
- 3 • Call the **DFCS** immediately (no later than 24 hours) 1-855-GACHILD (1-855-422-4453). Be prepared to provide them with child's name, address, age, nature of the abuse, suspected perpetrator, and relationship with the child.
- 4 • Follow up with a letter to DFCS and communicate the incident to the Office of Child and Youth Protection.
- 5 • If alleged abuse involves Church Personnel (Clergy, Religious, Deacon, Employee, or Volunteer): 1) ALSO call the District Attorney's office and call the Archdiocesan 24 hour Abuse Reporting Line 1-888-437-0764 or the OCYP Office 404-920-7550.

**Division of Family and  
Children Services**  
To report any suspicion of  
child abuse, please call  
**DFCS** within **24 hours**  
1-855-GACHILD  
(1-855-422-4453)





**Archdiocese of Atlanta**  
**CHILDREN’S SAFE ENVIRONMENT**  
**TRAINING**  
**Office of Child and Youth Protection**



The Archdiocese of Atlanta selected the program **VIRTUS – Empowering God’s Children** as a replacement to the You Matter program effective Fall 2014. Please note that this program was formerly known as *Teaching Touching Safety*.

Please visit [www.virtus.org](http://www.virtus.org) or the Office of Child and Youth Protection under [www.archatl.com](http://www.archatl.com) for more information regarding VIRTUS – Empowering God’s Children program.

**How to access the new Safe Environment training in VIRTUS Online?**

- Log in to [www.virtus.org](http://www.virtus.org)
- If you do not have a login or an “Educator” tab at the top of the page once you log in, please contact [OCYP@archatl.com](mailto:OCYP@archatl.com) or call 404-920-7550. You need the “Educator” tab to access the lesson plans, the introductory videos (Power to Protect 2.0), and record your Safe Environment training classes.
- Once you log in, the Educator page will provide you with a Program Overview, The Guide for Parents and Guardians, and the Permission/Op-Out Form for Parents
- To access the introductory videos for the Children’s training, Power to Protect 2.0  
 VIRTUS Online: Locate the video links under the Educator Tab, on the left menu



Physical copy: Order DVDs (limit of 3) by email at [OCYP@archatl.com](mailto:OCYP@archatl.com) or by phone 404-920-7550.

- To access “**Lesson Plans**” click “continue” on the bottom of the page
  - Select your grade level and click “continue”
    - K-2                      3-5
    - 6-8                      9-12
  - Select the lesson you need to view and click “continue”
    - Lessons 1-4 have been updated for the school year 2019-2020

- Make sure to click on the green arrow to view or print the lesson plan you have selected.

**Recording your training classes in VIRTUS Online:**

- ✓ In the left-hand green column, click on “**Record Training**”



- ✓ Click on “Add a new training record”
- ✓ “Program name” is already populated
- ✓ “Where the training occurred” = Select your parish or school where the SE training took place
- ✓ “School Type” – Select “Religious Education” for parishes, select “Catholic School” for schools.
- ✓ Select the date when the training took place
- ✓ Enter the trainer’s name
- ✓ Select the Age group and Lesson number. If you select “Not Specified” for either of these, you must explain why in the comment box.
- ✓ Select the lesson language (English or Spanish)
- ✓ Fill in the number of children trained, opted out, and absent. Remember that sending the materials home for the children with the parents does not count as that child’s Safe Environment training, instead the child will be considered absent unless an opt out form was completed by the parents
- ✓ Click on “Record Training”
- ✓ A confirmation page will come up and you **MUST** click on “Record Training” again once you have verified the information you have entered is correct.
- ✓ If you notice an error in your recording, please contact the Safe Environment office at [OCYP@archatl.com](mailto:OCYP@archatl.com) or 404-920-7550.

*“Let there now be no doubt or confusion on anyone’s part: For us, your bishops, our obligation to protect children and young people and to prevent sexual abuse flows from the mission and example given to us by Jesus Christ himself, in whose name we serve.”*  
 USCCB Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People