



Interactions & Behaviors Chart

The lists provided below are not intended to be exhaustive. If you identify inappropriate behaviors/interactions, you must report them to the program supervisor. If you have a reasonable belief that abuse or neglect occurred call law enforcement and the Department of Child Safety.

<i>Appropriate Interactions & Behaviors</i>	<i>Inappropriate Interactions & Behaviors</i>
<p>Appropriate affection between diocesan personnel/volunteers and minors constitutes a positive part of Church life, ministry, and healthy child development.</p> <p>Depending on the circumstances, the following forms of interactions and behaviors are customarily (but not always) regarded as appropriate ways to maintain healthy boundaries:</p>	<p>Some forms of behavior and physical interactions have been used by adults to initiate inappropriate contact with minors. To maintain the safest possible environment for minors and to respect everyone's dignity, the following are examples of interactions and behaviors that are not appropriate and not to be used:</p>

Interactions – Physical & Verbal

<i>Appropriate Physical Interactions</i>	<i>Inappropriate Physical Interactions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Side hugs• Shoulder-to-shoulder hugs• “Temple” hugs• “A-Frame” hugs• Handshakes• “High-fives”• Pats on the head or back when culturally appropriate• Touching hands, shoulders, or arm around shoulders• Holding hands (with smaller children in escorting situations)• Holding hands during prayer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Any form of affection that is unwanted by the minor• Showing affection in isolated areas• Physical contact insisted on or requested by the adult• Inappropriate or lengthy embraces• Full frontal hugs• Kisses on the mouth• Touching covered areas of the body, such as the genitals• Unwanted touching of uncovered areas of the body• Wrestling, “rough housing”, tackle football or tickling• Piggyback rides• Touch, pull, push or strike a minor in anger• Allowing a minor to cling to an adult's leg• Any type of massage between adults and minors

Appropriate Verbal Interactions

- Positive affirmation
- Appropriate jokes
- Encouragement
- Verbal praise

Inappropriate Verbal Interactions

- Name calling
- Cursing
- Telling off-color or sexual jokes
- Racial insults or ethnic slurs
- Shaming or belittling
- Compliments that relate to physique or body development
- Telling secrets, asking minors to keep secrets
- Using harsh language that may frighten, threaten, intimidate or humiliate a minor
- Making derogatory remarks about the minor or his/her family
- Discussing sexual encounters with minor
- Involving minors in the personal problems or issues of adults

Behaviors

Appropriate Behavior

- Communicating with minors through PARISH, SCHOOL and/or DIOCESAN communications such as: websites, blogs, group social networking profiles (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, etc.), office phones, or email for parish, school and/or diocesan programs
- Consistently abiding by the *Code of Ethics* and the *Policy and Procedures for the Protection of Minors*
- Providing a safe environment where the dignity of every individual is ensured
- Knowing how and where to report inappropriate behavior
- Knowing how and where to report alleged/suspected abuse
- Maintaining a professional relationship when interacting with minors, avoiding emotional attachment and/or vulnerable situations
- Maintaining an awareness of the powerful attraction of minors to adults in positions of authority and trust. If a personal or physical dependency begins to develop, the minor is to be referred to another qualified adult
- Notifying parents when on-going pastoral care of a minor is necessary
- Giving a modest gift to a group of minors

Inappropriate Behavior

- Communicating with minors through **PERSONAL/PRIVATE** means including but not limited to: websites, blogs, social networking profiles, text messaging, home/cell phones, instant messaging, or e-mail
- Participating in online gaming with a minor
- Being alone with a minor(s), without another responsible adult present, in any closed area that is inappropriate while working in the scope of ministry program. Including but not limited to: a vehicle, restaurant, residence, sleeping facility, locker room, rest room, hot-tub or pool
- Allowing minors to have, or assist minors in gaining, access to alcohol, drugs, pornographic material, or any illegal substance
- Allowing minors to have, or assist minors in gaining, access to inappropriate media such as: websites, movies, videos, music, and online gaming
- Photographing and videotaping minors while at school or in catechetical programs without the proper parental/guardian consent
- Singling out a minor with a personal gift

Electronic Communications

Appropriate Behavior

Social networking:

- If these sites are used to connect minors to programs and activities, ministry leaders must set up a separate site for dedicated parish/school use and the site name must reflect this
- Utilize the dedicated organizational email account to create the website/page. The ministry program must be completely separate from any personal site. Make sure to check on the terms of use, age restrictions and privacy options/controls for each site you plan to use prior to establishing a page for your organization and ensuring it is set up securely and properly
- A minimum of two adults in a functioning official organizational capacity should have full access to all organizational accounts/sites
- Both adults should be registered to have email alerts of page activity sent to their official organizational email accounts
- Parents should be informed that a social networking site is being utilized as a standard part of the ministry and consent participation
- All information displayed on the social networking sites must reflect the values of the Catholic faith and should always follow the teaching of the church
- Personal social networking profiles and blogs must be private and inaccessible to minors. The intent of this policy is not to dictate what is on your personal site; however, minors should not be given access to your site
- Ensure that the “chat mode” is disabled on your church or organizational social website

Inappropriate Behavior

Social networking:

- “Tagging” a minor
- Communicating with minors using personal social networking unless it is from the organizational site and you are an administrator. This allows only the proper people to communicate exactly what is going on and eliminates any miscommunications for events/activities
- Minors should not be given access to your personal site
- Request to be social network “friends” with minors or approve “friend requests” from social media from minors. The minors should request to be friends of the organization. This allows us to maintain the appropriate boundaries and in keeping it a professional relationship

Text Messaging:

- Text messaging is only to be used when communicating about programs and activities
- Parents should be informed that text messaging is being used as a form of communication with the minors of your church/organization and that it is a standard part of the youth ministry and must consent allowing the minor to participate
- Text messages sent to minors must be copied to the Supervisor or his/her Church designee and/or parent
- If you receive a text message of an inappropriate personal nature from a minor, then you are prohibited from responding to the minor. In order to prevent any appearance of impropriety, you should notify your supervisor or pastor of this incident immediately and forward the text. The parent/guardian should be contacted by the supervisor or pastor
- If you receive a text message from a minor indicating an emergency situation, you must immediately contact the pastor, supervisor, and/or parent/guardian

Text Messaging:

- Messages of a personal nature sent to minors
- Encouraging minors to use texting for communicating personal messages to you
- Responding to a private text message from a minor

E-Mailing:

- All emails should only come through the designated organizational email account. This process maintains the appropriate boundaries and keeps the relationship professional
- Parents should be informed that emails are being used as a form of communication with the minors of your church or organization and that these are standards of the youth ministry and must consent to participation.
- Parents are to be copied on all emails
- If a minor attempts to communicate via your personal e-mail account, you shall respond to the youth with the instruction to use the organizational system and copy the parents in the message
- Whenever possible, use organizational email accounts and not personal accounts
- Communications should always be professional and relevant to the current activity/need.
- Maintain professionalism and keep appropriate boundaries in all communications. Do not overstep the boundaries of adult/child relationships
- Avoid communications that involve sexual overtones. Do not reply to any messages received from teens of this nature. Make and keep a copy of the inappropriate communication and notify your supervisor or pastor immediately.
- Be aware that what you write will more than likely be read by others. It is easy to share and forward messages
- Ask yourself if you would be embarrassed if a supervisor/pastor read your message. If the answer is yes, then don't send it
- Never send messages when you are in a hurry or when emotions are involved
- Remember that there is no such thing as a private email/instant message, social media post or text message
- Finally, emails can easily be misread or misunderstood. Always double check to see if anything could be "read" into what you have typed. If you think it can be misread, either retype it or don't send it

Emailing:

- Sending instant messages to minors and/or e-mailing minors using their personal e-mail accounts
- Overstepping boundaries of adult/child relationships
- Replying to any messages received that are sexual in nature

Parish and School Ministry Websites:

- One of the best ways to promote youth events and activities is through your parish or organizational websites. It is recommended that you create a secured youth or youth ministry page/website dedicated to their activities and calendar of events
- It is critical that someone is dedicated to keeping these sites updated on a regular basis
- All web content should consistently represent the views/teachings of the Catholic Church
- Written permission from parents or guardians must be obtained prior to posting pictures or identifying information of minors on any website. Be sure when posting pictures of minors to only provide a first name if you are going to provide captions. The use of the media release waiver is strongly recommended
- Moderators should make sure that sections that function as “comment boxes” or “feedback” sections, if available on the media, are properly moderated to prevent abuse and misuse of the media
- Minimum of two adults in a functioning official organizational capacity should have full access to all organizational accounts/sites
- Your official logo or standard pictures/images should appear on the site to identify it as the organization’s official site and not a personal/individual site/account
- An organizational email account should be created to allow minors/visitors a means of communication to a specific department and not an individual. Organizational email accounts for leaders, administrators and volunteers (as needed) should be created for professional communication means
- Any social media sites (Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, etc.) that are linked to your website/page should have the organizational email account associated with it and not a personal email account. This is a barrier that prevents outsiders from reaching out to minors. This also allows a means to create/delete administrators for the website/page so when there is staff turnover, things still run smoothly and changes are properly made and maintained

Parish and School Ministry Websites:

- Posting personal information or contact information regarding minors on public websites
- Inappropriate pictures/information of any parish or organizational staff/volunteers appearing on any page/site. This does include family pictures, social events, home phone numbers/addresses and personal email accounts, etc