

## Did You Know...

1. The *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* was established by the USCCB in June 2002 and revised in June, 2011. It is a comprehensive set of procedures for addressing allegations of sexual abuse of minors by Catholic clergy.
2. The *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* includes guidelines for reconciliation, healing, accountability, and the prevention of future acts of abuse. The Church has learned a painful lesson and seeks forgiveness for its failure to protect children in the past.

Since 2002, the Church in the United States has experienced a crisis without precedent in our times. The sexual abuse of children and young people by some deacons, priests, and bishops, and the ways in which these crimes and sins were addressed, have caused enormous pain, anger, and confusion. As bishops, we have acknowledged our mistakes and our roles in that suffering, and we apologize and take responsibility again for too often failing victims and the Catholic people in the past. From the depths of our hearts, we bishops express great sorrow and profound regret for what the Catholic people have endured.

3. Dioceses/eparchies heard from 683 adults who were victims/survivors of sexual abuse in the past and came forward for the first time this year. These people were offered help with healing, and 453 people accepted support. Another 1,750 people who reported abuse in the past continued to receive support.
4. Nationwide, 184 clerics were removed from or put on restricted ministry because of allegations of sexual abuse of a minor that occurred either in the past or was current. This ongoing removal demonstrates the bishops' commitment to zero tolerance.
5. Of those clerics accused of past sexual abuse of minors, 253 were deceased, 58 had already been laicized, and 281 had prior allegations and had been previously removed.
6. Training employees and volunteers to recognize the behavior of offenders and what to do about it is one way the Church has reacted to charges of sexual abuse of minors. Safe Environment training is a critical component to preventing child sexual abuse in institutions. There are 2.18 million trained volunteers and employees in our churches and schools.
7. Requiring background evaluations is another way to protect children. It keeps away those people who should not have access to children because of past criminal behavior. Over 2.2 million employees and volunteers have undergone background screening.
8. Codes of Conduct clearly spell out what is acceptable behavior in parishes and schools. These codes let people know what behaviors are and are not acceptable as well as what

behavior can be expected. Codes of conduct can encourage bystanders to report inappropriate behavior before a child is harmed.

9. Trained adults can prevent child sexual abuse. Adults who know the warning signs and are willing to step forward and report what they see can protect children from harm. Sexual offenders can be spotted by their behavior.
10. The warning signs of sexual abusers include adults preferring to be in the company of children. They may go overboard touching, tickling or wrestling with children. These signs should be reported to supervisors.
11. Warning signs of sexual abusers include adults who let children do things their parents would not allow; using drugs or alcohol, showing children pornography. These activities wrongfully make the child feel complicit in the abuse and keep them silent.
12. Warning signs of sexual abusers include adults who prefer to be with children rather than adults. They are frequently alone with children and may exclude other adults from activities involving children.
13. Across the country, 1.8 million volunteers in Catholic parishes and schools are trained to create safe environments and to protect children. An additional 249,000 employees are likewise trained.
14. Children know their abusers in 90% of abuse cases. They are more likely to be abused by relatives or family friends than by strangers. This relationship makes it hard for children to report abuse. Parents need to let their children know they can tell them anything.
15. Children will often not report abuse because they fear no one will believe them. The adult often has more power than the child and is respected by the child. Training children to report abuse to their parents or other trusted adults is an important part of their training.
16. Nationwide over 4.8 million Catholic children were taught to recognize a grooming process, say No, and to tell parents and other trusted adults about such behavior.
17. The Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection helps dioceses/eparchies/become and maintain compliance with the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* and to integrate the *Charter* into the diocesan way of life.
18. The Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection develops resources for use by dioceses/eparchies. These resources include facts and information for parents. <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/child-and-youth-protection/parents.cfm>
19. The Causes and Context of the Sexual Abuse Scandal Study by the John Jay College of Criminal Justice found no one cause for the increase and decline of sexual abuse of children by Catholic clergy, but rather a confluence of events. The National Review Board is developing a set of recommendations based on the Study.

**20.** Each of the 195 dioceses or eparchies has a victim assistance coordinator who responsibility it is to reach out to people making allegations of sexual abuse. Often the VACs are mental health professionals experienced in dealing with survivors or abuse or trauma. They reach out to people making allegations with compassion and an offer to heal.