



Virtus FAQ Reminders

What is Virtus?

Virtus is a best practices program designed to help prevent wrongdoing and promote “right doing” within religious organizations. The program empowers organizations and people to better control risk and improve the lives of those who interact with the Church. Virtus deals with child sexual abuse and other inappropriate sexual behavior.

VIRTUS: Protecting God’s Children (VIRTUS) is a live, three-hour awareness session for adults which better equips adults to protect children in the world around them. VIRTUS sessions are scheduled at parishes and schools throughout the archdiocese and throughout the year.

Who is a minor?

A minor is any person who is under 18 years of age, is a physically or handicapped person under 21 years of age, or a person of any age who habitually lacks the use of reason.

Points to Remember:

Volunteers should not meet with a minor alone in a separate room unless there is a window on the door, or the door is open, Minors are not permitted in staff offices or the rectory. When in rooms with blinds, ensure the blinds remain open.

Volunteers should never accompany minors to events without at least one other adult chaperone present. Volunteers should not give rides in motor vehicles to minors unless another adult is present and permission is granted by the minor’s parent/guardian.

Volunteers should not give or accept gifts of a personal nature from minors without parental permission.

Volunteers must never intentionally post on their personal social networking site or to any social networking site materials that are false, derogatory, defamatory, degrading, malicious, disrespectful, or threatening to anyone.

Any information, including a suspicion that suggests sexual abuse of a minor must be reported immediately to civil authorities and then to the Victim Assistance Coordinator at 216.334.2958, 216.334.2999 or online at response_services@dioceseofcleveland.org.

Electronic Communication:

No private contact with minors (other than volunteer/employee’s own children/family). Private means completely out of sight and hearing of others.

No “friending” of any parish minors other than through Parish sponsored sites that keep everyone informed.

All communication with minors should have oversight from a supervisor.

Be extremely careful how and when you text minors using your personal phone. Do not exchange pictures/videos with minors. Parents should always be aware of communication with youth.

If minors initiate electronic one-on-one contact, inform them that you would be happy to meet during normal working hours, if applicable) in a place that is conducive to your ministry in a non-private setting.

