



## Social Media and Our Children (for Volunteers/Families)

We care greatly about all of our parish and school members, parents and children. With all of the continuing advancements in social media, we wanted to make families aware of the steps Saint Ambrose and the Diocese of Cleveland are taking to protect our children, and how you can help, too! These guidelines apply to all volunteers of our school and parish.

A volunteer is defined as “any person who gives his services to the Diocese, a parish or other entity affiliated with the Diocese without any express or implied promise of remuneration”, and “any person in a position of trust who has contact with children”. This includes coaches, classroom volunteers and chaperones.

- Volunteers who use various forms of social media, e-mail, or the Internet should only use these forms of communication for appropriate reasons and not to develop personal relationships, especially with minors. This includes Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, texting and other various apps, including ever-evolving apps and forms of communication.
- Volunteers shall not post on their own personal social networking sites any image of a minor with whom they are working or have previously worked in a parish or entity.
- A parent who is also a volunteer should refrain from posting pictures of a student who is not their own child, obtained while volunteering, on a personal website or group. When pictures of children are posted that don't include his/her own child(ren), he/she is then operating outside of the role as parent.
- Coaches may not post pictures of their team on a personal site and/or take ownership of the team.
- Coaches may post pictures of their own children on their personal site.
- If someone shares a post to your personal timeline, you can prevent it from showing on your personal site. If you are tagged in a post, you can un-tag yourself. Please do not tag employees, ministry leaders or volunteers in photos with minors.
- It is best practice to never tag minors in photos.
- It is also best practice not to tag parents of minors.

**When communicating on behalf of the parish or school, volunteers should only use official ministry email, accounts and social media sites rather than personal.** If volunteers do use these forms of communication to communicate with a minor from the approved social media account, then a policy should be issued to parents letting them know that such communication is likely to occur. If you feel you should have an official ministry email, please contact your ministry leader.

**We share these best practices as we strive for an atmosphere of understanding and professionalism, and pray for a community that ensures the safety of our children.** Let's help one another as we work together to follow these best practices. If you have questions regarding posts, please contact any of us for help.

Thank you for all you do for our parish community. May God continue to bless you as we build a community of faith centered on the Lord.

If you have any questions, please contact any of the people listed below.

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