

How we protect children

Starting in 2002, the U.S. Catholic Church directed every diocese to implement Safe Environment programs to keep children safe from sexual abuse. These were mandated in the “Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People,” which was a response to the revelations of sexual abuse by priests and other clergy.

The San Diego diocese implemented these programs at all of its parishes, schools and administrative offices. The diocese reviews compliance yearly at all of those locales. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has found the San Diego diocese to be in compliance in every one of its audits.

Adults

All adults associated with the diocese who interact with minors must have a criminal background check and take comprehensive Safe Environment training. This includes all priests (locally based or visiting) and deacons; all diocesan and parish staff; all school personnel; and all volunteers (such as catechists) who interact with minors or potentially interact with them. In addition, all priests and deacons must sign a [“Code of Ethical Standards for Church Ministers”](#) that clearly states what is appropriate and inappropriate behavior.

Children

All children who attend K-12 Catholic schools in the diocese or who participate in faith formation at parishes or other Catholic facilities participate annually in a program called “No-Go-Tell.” This program instructs children in grade-appropriate language what to do if “anyone touches my body in a way that makes me feel weird, or uncomfortable or worried or scared.” Its central rule tells them how to say “No,” where to “Go” to be safe and to “Tell” what happened to them to a trusted adult as soon as possible. This information is posted prominently at all schools and parishes.

Information and Resources