

VIRTUS – PROTECTING GOD’S CHILDREN

What is VIRTUS?

VIRTUS is the brand name for a best practices program designed to help prevent wrongdoing and promote “right-doing” within religious organizations. It was started in Washington DC in March, 1998, as an initiative to prevent child sexual abuse. Many prominent national experts in relevant disciplines have worked on the development of VIRTUS.

What is VIRTUS training?

VIRTUS training is an educational program to help prevent sexual abuse of children. Called **Protecting God’s Children for Adults**, the program is **mandatory** in the Rockville Centre Diocese for all employees and volunteers. Part I of the program is an Awareness Session, which lasts 2 ½ hours, and has three primary objectives:

1. to show adults the many ways that child sexual abuse harms its victims, their families, and the community;
2. to teach adults how to recognize the warning signs of abuse, and how to respond to suspicious behavior;
3. to empower adults with five specific steps to help prevent child sexual abuse.

Part II of the program, follow-up articles to be read online, is required of all employees and volunteers who have contact with children or youth, e.g. Catechists.

Who should participate in VIRTUS training?

In addition to those who are required to complete VIRTUS training, every parent, grandparent, and adult who cares about children should participate in this program, to become better educated and to be part of the effort to help make the world a safer place for our children.

How do I sign up for VIRTUS training?

Go to the VIRTUS website, www.virtus.org, to register. Click on the yellow bar marked “Registration” and follow the directions to register for **Protecting God’s Children for Adults**. Our organization is **Rockville Centre NY (Diocese)**. You can register for a session at Holy Cross or at any site that is convenient for you.

If you have any questions, or need help, please call Jude Pickel at 265-2200x16.