

RESOURCES AND CONTACT NUMBERS

Victim Assistance Minister
Glenda Lawson
(318) 294-1031

Administrator/Assessor
Rev. Peter Mangum
(318) 221-5296

Coordinator for Safe Environment and Education
Deacon Michael Straub
(318) 219-7280
Toll Free (800) 256-1542

Vicar for Clergy
Rev. LaVerne "Pike" Thomas
(318) 746-2508

**To Report Child Sexual Abuse by a Cleric/Church Worker
in the Diocese of Shreveport**

Call: Glenda Lawson
Hotline -- (318) 294-1031
and your Local Law Enforcement Agency

Additional Resources:

Diocese of Shreveport
<http://www.dioshpt.org>

VIRTUS
<http://www.virtus.org>

Louisiana Child Abuse Hotline
1-800-244-5373

Prevent Child Abuse Louisiana
<http://www.pcal.org>



Protecting Our Children

*"we continue in the
Diocese of Shreveport
to take every reasonable
precautionary measure
possible in order to
protect children
and youth."*

*Most Rev. William B. Friend, D.D.
Bishop of Shreveport*

Understanding and Preventing Child Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse of a minor violates human dignity, ministerial commitment and the mission of the church. Policies and procedures designed to provide for the safety of children, the well being of the community, and the integrity of the church in the Diocese of Shreveport include:

- Engaging the services of a victim's assistance coordinator
- Implementation of a safe environment program which requires all clergy, employees and all volunteers who work with children to participate in *Protecting God's Children*™ training
- Expanded role of the diocesan Permanent Review Board; distribution of the Code of Pastoral Conduct and the Diocese of Shreveport Child Sexual Abuse Policies to all employees and all volunteers who work with children.
- Requirement of criminal background checks as part of the application and screening process for employees and volunteers who work with children.

What is "safe environment" training?

Safe environment training, which is required of all clergy, employees, and volunteers who work with children, is a comprehensive program to prevent child sexual abuse in our Catholic churches, schools, and activities. We have chosen *Protecting God's Children*™ which is a component of the Virtus® program of National Catholic Services. Through ongoing training, employees, volunteers, and concerned adults learn about the nature, extent and impact of child sexual abuse and the 5 steps necessary to **prevent** it:

- Know the Warning Signs
- Control Who has Access to Children
- Monitor All Programs
- Be Aware of Your Children
- Communicate Your Concerns

How do I know if the people in my parish or school have had the training?

You can ask your pastor, school principal, or the Diocesan Office of Human Resources if someone is participating in ongoing *Protecting God's Children* training.

What if child sexual abuse occurs at a parish or Catholic school?

Immediately upon reception of a report of abuse, persons appointed by the bishop will offer counsel and assistance to those affected. The Victim Assistance Minister and the Administrator/Assessor will ensure that the proper civil authorities have been notified. At **no** time will the church interfere in a civil investigation. The Permanent Review Board, a group of committed lay professionals, will ensure that all diocesan policies regarding care of victims and investigations are followed.

Where can I get a copy of the Diocese of Shreveport Child Sexual Abuse Policies or the Code of Pastoral Conduct?

You may request a copy from your pastor, Catholic School principal, or the Catholic Center (318-868-4441 or 800-256-1542).

How are people approved to work or volunteer in parishes and schools?

All persons seeking employment or who wish to volunteer in a parish or school should complete a diocesan employment or volunteer application form. They must be interviewed, provide references, and agree to a criminal background check. Only after references have been checked and clear background check results are received may a person begin service.

What about priests, brothers, or sisters who come to our diocese from another diocese or another country?

Before a priest, deacon, or religious can be assigned for pastoral ministry in this diocese the bishop must have received from that person's legitimate superior or bishop a curriculum vitae, a statement verifying the cleric is in good standing, that he has never been found guilty of sexual abuse of a minor, and in general is of good moral character.

What about the laws of our state regarding child abuse?

All persons associated with the diocese are expected to comply with all applicable civil laws with respect to the prompt reporting of allegations of sexual abuse of minors to civil authorities, i.e. local law enforcement agency, and cooperate in their investigation. In every instance, the diocese will advise and support a person's right to make a report to public authorities. The diocese will take all appropriate steps to protect the good name and reputation of all persons involved in the process.