



Office of the Bishop

Diocese of El Paso

Catholic Pastoral Center

To: People of the Diocese of El Paso
CC: The Diocesan Safe Environment Office
From: The Office of the Bishop
Date: October 17, 2023
Subject: **Safe Environment Program for Children: Virtus “Teaching Safety – Empowering God’s Children”.**

Dear Faithful of the Diocese of El Paso,

Following the introduction of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) in 2002, the Diocese of El Paso has remained committed to protecting the children in each of our Catholic schools, parishes, faith-based programs, and youth ministry events.

To achieve full compliance with the requirements outlined in the Charter, the diocese offers age- appropriate child abuse prevention training for children to teach them about healthy boundaries, and the diocese also imposes strict requirements for all adults working with minors in their respective ministries. Requirements for Parents and children are addressed below.

Safe Environment Program for Children: Virtus “Teaching Safety – Empowering God’s Children”.

Parents of children of Religious Formation and Catholic Schools are required to attend a Parent session and watch a yearly awareness video or module, which assist them in providing a safe environment for their children. At this session, a brief explanation of the training their children will receive is reviewed. Parents are also asked to sign the permission form to OPT in/out children to be trained. All children of catholic schools and religious formation are required to be trained in safe environment by a certified Lesson Leader.



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By this Letter, I hereby promulgate as the official diocesan policy our use of **Safe Environment Program for Children: Virtus “Teaching Safety – Empowering God’s Children”** for the year 2023.

May Our Lord Jesus continue to watch over and guide in our efforts to bring the youth of our diocese ever closer to Him. Through the intercession of Mary our Mother and Saint Joseph, may Our Lord Jesus grant you abundant spiritual blessings in your ministry.

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Mark J. Seitz, D.D.
Bishop of El Paso