

## What is a Safe Environment? How does this affect me?

Following the clergy sex abuse scandal of the 1990s, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) began to look at ways to prevent this tragedy from ever happening again. The goal is to establish a safe environment in which our children may learn about, grow in, and practice their faith. Part of this effort is education. Anyone who works with youth and children needs to be trained and educated to understand what constitutes sexual, physical, and emotional abuse; be able to recognize signs of such abuse; and know what to do and to whom to report instances of abuse.

For this reason, all volunteers who are in regular contact with youth and children must attend the Safe Environment Workshop (a.k.a. "Sexual Misconduct Workshop" or "Sexual Abuse and Harassment Awareness and Prevention Workshop"), and then provide proof of attendance in order to work with children in parish-sponsored faith formation programs.

You will only have to attend this 3-hour workshop/training one time, not annually.

Those who attend the workshop will usually sign in. At the completion of the training, you will fill out a 3-piece certificate of participation. The workshop presenter will keep one copy; you will keep the other two copies, one of which goes to your parish, and the other which you keep. Please put your copy wherever you keep important papers so that you have the proof of attendance at your fingertips.

The workshop covers graphic material. Young children will not be allowed in the workshop, so please make arrangements for child care. No one under the age of 18 will be allowed to attend the workshop.

Because of the parental responsibilities\*, all parents of Confirmation candidates must provide proof of attendance at the Safe Environment Workshop *If you took this workshop - even 15 years ago - you do not need to take it again.*

\*Parents of the candidates in a particular Home Class take turns helping with that Home Class by calling and reminding candidates of an upcoming class, bringing refreshments, and staying for the class, part of Risen Savior's commitment to a Safe Environment.