



Illuminations

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Catholic Archdiocese of Atlanta • OCYP Newsletter

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24 Hour Reporting Hotline

888-437-0764

If reporting during regular business hours, call us directly first. If you cannot reach us in person, call the hotline.



OCYP National Office

The Office of Child and Youth Protection (OCYP) at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) in Washington, D.C.

coordinates the audit process for compliance with the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*. The *Charter* was written in 2002 by the USCCB in response to the crisis of abuses toward children at the hands of Church personnel coming to light. "The Catholic Church in the United States has completed its seventh consecutive year of external audits of its dioceses and eparchies to ascertain their compliance with the *Charter*...The efforts show the *Charter* and its articles are integrated into our life as the Catholic Church in the United States; the articles are not just something we do for the purpose of the audits. That is a sign of the progress we have made, and it is good news" (Cardinal Francis George, OMI, *Preface of the 2009 Annual Report*). Take a moment to review the 2009 Annual Report at www.usccb.org/ocyp/annual_report2009.shtml.



Safe Environment Program

As we wrap up the end of the fiscal year and prepare to start the new 2010-2011 year, please take a moment to clean up your Safe Environment files. To that end, please make sure to inactivate any volunteer that has not served at your location in the past year months. Volunteers should be inactivated through the HRiPortal by using Inactivate Workflow. In addition, please schedule Safe Environment Training at your location for the new volunteers that will be joining your parish/school. By doing this, you will ensure that you receive all the safe environment required documents at once. Also, remember to process background checks for all volunteers before they start volunteering at your location. As always THANK YOU for all that you do to maintain a Safe Environment at your location!!!



Victim Assistance Program

A Trauma Recovery Group for adult survivors of childhood trauma is being offered Thursday evenings 7pm - 9 pm beginning July 29, 2010 at St. Andrew Catholic Church. If know of anyone who has been involved in a difficulty readjusting and to them. The goal of this help improve day-to-day the present. The group will help identifying conflicts and related to the effects of the new tools learned in the group



traumatic event who is having coping, this group may be of help Trauma Recovery Group is to functioning to live effectively in members to stabilize by unlearning specific distortions trauma and replace them with setting. The group will be led by

Dr. Ann Howe, PhD and Sue Stubbs MS, NCC. Interested participants should contact Sue Stubbs at for an application. **Registration deadline is July 21, 2010.**

Feature Article

Pornography: The Last and Maybe the Most Significant "Safe Environment" Battle

Mary Beth Hanus ♦ Safe Environment Coordinator ♦ Archdiocese of Omaha, NE

As a church, we have moved "mountains" to create positive institutional changes to provide a "Safe Environment" for all. In fact, probably 99.9 percent of the time, the term "Safe Environment" invokes a recall of trainings, background checks and policies to keep kids safe. If we were a secular institution we could bask in this accomplishment believing that all we need to do is continue on with the status quo and we will keep our children safe.

But we are **Church** and not a secular institution. As **Church**, we need to realize that although the protection of the physical, sexual and emotional well being of our children is essential, so is their "spiritual" protection. The "care of the soul" is the core to our faith and salvation. Pornography is one of the most blatant and aggressive assailants on the souls of our children and faith community. Pornography today is light years away from the pornography of the past in its perversion, accessibility and anonymous nature.

There are over 42 million pornographic Web sites and more than 20,000 images of child pornography posted online every week. Studies show that 12-17 year olds are among the top consumers of Internet pornography with 11-years-old being the average age of first exposure. With such statistics there are

two vital questions we need to ask ourselves.

How did we get here? There are multitudes of theories, but a gradual and then bolder shift in social attitudes has made the soil ripe for pornography to flourish beyond imagination. The high importance of pleasure, image and "materialism" coupled with the clear disconnect of the body from the person has produced a culture of "takers" and an attitude of "anything goes as long as no one gets hurt." This plays out on TV

in advertisements and prime time shows, as well as the movie industry. Quick recognition of what is pornographic does not happen in such an environment, especially for youth.

What do we do to put light on this silent but devastating crisis? We as a Church need to recognize that this is as significant a crisis as the sexual abuse scandal. We need to promote awareness, education

and supportive resources to battle this problem. We need to avoid believing someone else will do it; postponing action until we are less busy or have more resources or lastly doing nothing because of discouragement by the magnitude of the problem.

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