

# September 2016

As I write this month's newsletter for September, my mind is thinking about Back to School. There are signs of back to school in our own house as I am sure there are signs in yours too.

As our youngest child begins his senior year, I realize this is my 17th "first day" and now my last first day of back to school. And while most parents are jumping for joy and chuckling at all the back to school commercials, I have a bit of sadness in my heart because this is it for us at home. In general back to school means no more long lazy and carefree days, late nights and sleeping in until noon (my child, not me). The simple feelings of summer are to be replaced with structure and organization.

I hope that each of you have had some long lazy days here and there and found time to spend alone, as well as with family and friends. You deserved it.

As we gear up for the back to school rush and the busyness of parish activities that will soon fill our calendar, please don't hesitate to call or email if I can help you.

We are all called to serve each other. Thank you so very much for your diligent work.

Reba Sommer  
Diocese of Lansing  
Safe Environment Coordinator  
rsommer@dioceseoflansing.org  
517-342-2551



## MSP Audit

If you are contacted by the Michigan State Police to be audited, please let the Safe Environment Office know prior to the Audit. I want to attend a few and be an observer. It will be helpful to the group if we share the areas that need improvements, suggestions that are made and updates that are occurring. What a great way for us to work together and learn from each other.



## Safe Environment Newsletter



Daycare teachers, aides and other daycare helpers do not need to be fingerprinted. However, they must have a criminal background run and the Department of Human Services (DHS) form completed too. Only **Daycare Directors** must have fingerprinting; using the **Fingerprint Code CPE**. As of this newsletter we have updated the VIRTUS and Criminal Background Check Information Grid and School Flowchart for VIRTUS Training and Criminal Background.

[http://www.dioceseoflansing.org/child\\_and\\_youth\\_protection](http://www.dioceseoflansing.org/child_and_youth_protection)



Do I have to have every single parent who comes into the classroom take Protecting God's Children? This question comes up often. If parents who volunteer have **ongoing, unsupervised contact with minors**, while parties are going on or a classroom activity is being held then **yes**. Parents must take the training before the event begins. If parents are coming to the classroom to observe or help in other areas and these parents do not have **ongoing, unsupervised contact with minors** then they do not have to take the training. \* see below



4 Hour Rule - A few years ago there was a four hour rule that stated any adult who spent four hours or more in the classroom has to take the Protecting God's Children training. It became hard to track time that was spent in the classroom and before you know it, the four hours have turned into six hours or eight hours of voluntary time. If you have a parent who wants to volunteer and will fill the responsibilities of on going supervision, follow best practice and ask them to take the training. Throw out the four hour rule. It will save you so much time not to track each individual person.



Please check the Safe Environment page on the Diocese website for the most current form. Some forms have been revised. A new look to the page will be coming in 2017.

\*More and more of our schools in our Diocese are putting together a new year Welcome Packet for parents. In this packet of good information, every parent is asked to take the Protecting God's Children at the beginning of the school year. On-line training is available if someone can not schedule a live session. This has been well received and minimizes the amount of scrambling and last minute training when searching for volunteers. If you are interested, let me know and I can send you a sample check list of what has been given to me. Religious Formation groups in our parishes are doing this too.