

Diocese of San Bernardino  
Safe Environment Policy for the Protection of Children and Young People

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DSB 102 Promulgated December 15, 2003 – Revision #2 January 2008

For additional copies of this **Safe Environment Publication # DSB 102:**

- This document is available by accessing the Diocesan website: <http://www.sbdiocese.org>, checking the right-hand column for "Diocesan Child and Youth Protection", and under it, the Safe Environment Training link. Click this link, and on the following page that comes up (<http://www.sbdsafeministries.org>), search for the title on the left side labeled "DIOCESAN POLICY:", and under that, "Code of Pastoral Conduct". Click on this link to upon the desired document in Acrobat Reader mode.
  
- Or Contact: Diocesan Office of Child and Youth Protection at the Diocesan Pastoral Center
  - (909) 475-5128
  - Fax: (909) 475-5126
  - Email: [childandyouthprotection@sbdiocese.org](mailto:childandyouthprotection@sbdiocese.org)
  
- Or Write to:
  - Diocesan Office of Child and Youth Protection Diocese of San Bernardino  
1201 East Highland Avenue San Bernardino, CA 92404

Diocese of San Bernardino  
Safe Environment Policy for the Protection of Children and Young People

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DSB 102 Promulgated December 15, 2003 – Revision #2 January 2008

<b><u>Table of Contents Page</u></b>	<b>#</b>
I. Introduction	1
II. Code of Pastoral Conduct	2
III. Training	2-4
IV. Background Checks	5
V. Supervision of Minors	5-7
VI. Parish Plans	7
VII Accountability	7

**I. Introduction“**

“Tend the flock that God has entrusted to you; watch over it.... Be examples that the whole flock can follow....” 1 Peter 5:2-3

Our belief in the dignity of all human beings demands that we, the church, must commit to provide a safe environment for all who enter and use our parish and school premises. As Catholics, we extend a welcoming hand to all. We do not condone or accept abuse, bullying or harassment of any kind, whether it is manifested in a physical, sexual, or psychological form.

The mission of the church requires a safe environment. When fundamental human dignities are ignored, abuse may occur or serious issues may arise. Through the implementation of effective safeguards, the risk of such abuse within our parishes, school communities, and throughout all Diocesan organizations can be prevented. Therefore, every person who works and ministers in the name of the Diocese of San Bernardino must abide by all established safeguards. This policy intends to provide protection not only for all of our minors and adults who participate in programs and activities, but also for our employees, volunteers and counselors who provide services for all participants.

Diocese of San Bernardino  
**Safe Environment Policy for the Protection of Children  
and Young People / Code of Pastoral Conduct**

---

**II. Code of Pastoral Conduct**

Catholic values and conduct must be upheld by Bishops, Priests, Deacons, Pastoral Coordinators, Educators, Seminarians, Religious men and women, Lay Employees, Independent Contractors and all Volunteers working in the Diocese of San Bernardino. Individuals ministering in a pastoral capacity must abide by the Diocese of San Bernardino *Policy for the Protection of Children and Young People*, the *Code of Pastoral Conduct* and any code of ethics that may pertain to a particular profession.

In addition, principals, teachers, support staff, other employees and volunteers of our Catholic Schools must also abide by the Diocese of San Bernardino Office of Catholic Schools Policies contained in the Education Welfare Policy Handbook.

Before beginning service in the Diocese of San Bernardino, all persons listed above must review and agree in writing to adhere to all Diocesan policies designed to ensure that a safe environment exist everywhere within the Diocese.

**III. Training**

**A. Target groups:**

The following groups require education and training related to the implementation of the Safe Environment Policy for the Protection of Children and Young People:

- Clergy in all ministry classifications (Bishops, Priests and Deacons)
- Religious communities of men and women
- Candidates for Ordination – Seminarians and Deacon Candidates
- Pastoral Coordinators and Pastoral Administrators
- Educators, including parish school teachers and catechists
- Lay employees
- Independent contractors (Person(s) contracted orally or in writing to provide a service to the Diocese, Parish or church organization, for example: a musician, a gardener, etc.)
- Volunteers who have regular contact with children either in a parish setting or a Catholic School setting.
- Parents of children and young people in Catholic Schools, parish Catechetical Ministries, Youth Ministry or any other parish or Diocesan sponsored program or activity
- Minors (those under the age of 18)

**B. Training curriculum: training content determined by target group.**

1. The target groups, as listed above, require education regarding the following topics prior to beginning service and at later intervals determined by California law and/or Diocesan policies:

**Everyone is required to complete training for:**

- Diocese of San Bernardino Safe Environment Policy for the Protection of Children and Young People
- Diocese of San Bernardino Code of Pastoral Conduct
- Maintaining appropriate boundaries
- Diocesan Policy in Cases of Misconduct (contained in the Safe Environment for the Protection of Children and Young People document)

**All clergy and paid employees are ALSO required to complete training for:**

- State of California Mandated Reporter Training (this includes):
  - Reporting requirements of suspected abuse
  - Recognizing signs of abuse
  - Profile of an offender

**The State of California encourages all volunteers who have regular contact with children to be trained to report suspected child abuse.**

- State of California Sexual Harassment Avoidance Training
- Diocesan policies and procedures:
  - Human Resources Section 500.1, Paragraph 1000-1006 Harassment
  - Diocesan Policy Manual Office of Priest Personnel Section 700.1, Paragraph 26 Residence – Lay Persons Residing in Rectories

Diocese of San Bernardino  
**Safe Environment Policy for the Protection of Children  
and Young People / Code of Pastoral Conduct**

---

2. Parents and guardians are require to have education about the following topics upon admission of their children to Diocesan schools, programs, and activities **and AT LEAST** once annually:
  - Diocesan Safe Environment Policy for the Protection of Children and Young People
  - Diocesan Code of Pastoral Conduct
  - Indicators of abuse, prevention, and reporting procedures as indicated in California law
  - Code of Pastoral Conduct for Parents/Legal Guardians and Adult Volunteers
  - Code of Conduct for Students and Young People
3. Children/minors (those under the age of 18) require age appropriate personal safety education upon admission to Diocesan schools & programs and at least once annually regarding the following topics:
  - age appropriate materials pertaining for personal safety
  - personal boundaries: proper touch and proper relationships
  - Diocesan, Parish and School policies or policies of other organizations as presented by the organization
  - Code of Conduct for Students and Young People

**C. Delivery methods for instruction to the target groups**

- Training sessions/workshops or online training from the Diocesan web site [www.sbdiocese.org](http://www.sbdiocese.org)
- Independent reading material/training packets
- New hire/volunteer orientation
- New Parish Registration information or Registration Packets for a Catholic School or parish Catechetical Ministry program
- Bulletin articles in diocesan and parish bulletins and/or any Diocesan newsletters
- Videos and DVDs
- VIRTUS training for minors - Diocesan approved material for all minors – grades K through 12
- Information posted on the Diocesan website
- New materials as they become available

Training location information is maintained by the Diocesan Office of Child and Youth Protection at the Diocesan Pastoral Center. Location information is available to all Parishes, Schools, and other organizations when needed.

**D. Training Resources**

***Required training for all clergy and employees:***

1. Diocese of San Bernardino Safe Environment Policy for the Protection of Children and Young People/ Code of Pastoral Conduct, available through workshops or online.
2. State of California Mandated Reporter Training – training options: [***Highly recommended for those volunteers who have regular contact with children (catechists, volunteer teachers' aides, volunteer youth workers, etc)***]:
  - i. Online from Diocese of San Bernardino web site [www.sbdiocese.org](http://www.sbdiocese.org) then click the tab that says "Protect Children" and follow the directions provided.
  - ii. On site workshops – contact Caritas Counseling Services (909) 370-1293 or Diocesan Office of Child and Youth Protection (909) 475-5128
  - iii. Video tape or DVD training – contact Diocesan Office of Child and Youth Protection (909) 475-5128

***Required training for all volunteers who have regular, direct contact with minors and others as applicabl:***

1. Diocese of San Bernardino Safe Environment Policy for the Protection of Children and Young People/ Code of Pastoral Conduct, available through workshops or online.

***Required training for Children and Young People:***

1. VIRTUS for all children & youth: -This is the Diocesan approved material for all minors grades K - 12
  - ❖ Catholic Schools - Contact Catholic Schools Office (909) 475-5437;
  - ❖ Parish Catechetical Ministry Programs - Contact Office of Catechetical Ministry (909) 475-5452;
  - ❖ Youth Ministry Programs - Contact Ministry with Youth Office (909) 475-5165.

***Recommended training for parents and all caregivers for children and young people:***

1. Out of Harm's Way/Fuera Del Peligro Contact - Diocesan Office of Child and Youth Protection (909) 475-5128.

Diocese of San Bernardino  
**Safe Environment Policy for the Protection of Children  
and Young People / Code of Pastoral Conduct**

---

**Other Resources available as shown or through the Diocesan Office of Child and Youth Protection:**

1. Videos: "Sacred Trust" [[faithtrustinstitute.org](http://faithtrustinstitute.org)] "I'm the Boss of My Body" [[www.christiancounselingservice.org](http://www.christiancounselingservice.org)]; "What a Difference a Day Makes" [contact San Bernardino Sexual Assault Services (909) 885-8884 or [www.calcasa.org](http://www.calcasa.org)].
2. Books: "Taking Back Our Lives" Patti Sherlock. Healing reflections from an abuse survivor; "Raising Careful Confident Kids in a Crazy World" Paula Statman M.S.W. "How to Raise Emotionally Healthy Children" Gerald Newmark, PhD.[Contact Diocesan Office of Child and Youth Protection].
3. Websites: Diocese of San Bernardino website:[www.sbdioocese.org](http://www.sbdioocese.org); United States Conference of Catholic Bishops [www.USCCB.org](http://www.USCCB.org) ; National Catholic Education Association [www.ncea.org](http://www.ncea.org); the State of California Child Protective Services.

**E. Documentation**

Each Diocesan Parish, School, and Organization is responsible for documenting the initial and ongoing Safe Environment education for all cited personnel in the list found in III A of this document.

The parish Pastor, Pastoral Coordinator, Pastoral Administrator or assigned designee is responsible for assuring that training and documentation occur. The Catholic School Principal or assigned designee is responsible for documentation at the School site.

Documentation includes: a record of the training with date, location, entity number of the parish or school and the names of each individual who attends (sign in sheets) and a copy of the signed acknowledgement form for each individual who attended the entire workshop. This form indicates that the person received the training and will be accountable for using the information gained. If training is completed from the online training at the Diocesan web site, a copy of the certificate of satisfactory completion is to be printed and given to the parish or school by the individual.

The Director of Human Resources, in collaboration with the Director of the Diocesan Office of Child and Youth Protection, facilitates the training and documentation of Diocesan employees. The Director of the Office of Catechetical Ministry facilitates the training and documentation of children and youth in Catholic Schools, parish Catechetical Ministry programs and Youth Ministry programs. The Directors or Administrators of all other organizations and groups are responsible for ensuring that this training and documentation is completed by every person within their area of responsibility.

Evidence of compliance submitted by a parish or school must include:

- attendance sheets from workshops and inservices or a tracking tool that lists
  - o the names of all persons required to receive training
  - o the date on which this training occurred
  - o the place where the training took place
  - o the name of the person who gave the presentation.
- Copies of articles distributed and other resources utilized for update purposes are to be attached to a form that indicates who received the materials and the method of distribution.

**Send copies of the attendance sheets and accountability forms to the Diocesan Office of Child and Youth Protection**

**Audit Compliance deadlines**

For Children and Youth:

- ❖ By May 15<sup>th</sup> a report is to be sent to the Office of Catholic Schools that summarizes the education and training requirements for children attending Catholic Schools.
- ❖ By June 1<sup>st</sup> a report is to be sent to the Office of Catechetical Ministry that summarizes the education and training requirements for all children (K-12) attending parish Catechetical Ministry programs and any youth attending only Youth Ministry programs.
- ❖ By July 1<sup>st</sup> a summary report is to be sent to the Diocesan Office of Child and Youth Protection for the education and training of **all** children, (Catholic Schools, Youth Ministry and parish Catechetical Ministry).

For Adults:

- ❖ By July 1<sup>st</sup> a report from each parish is to be sent to the Diocesan Office of Child and Youth Protection for the education and training requirements for all adults, namely - employees - and volunteers who have regular contact with children.

*These requirements are in compliance with the requirements of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young people issued by the USCCB.*

Diocese of San Bernardino  
**Safe Environment Policy for the Protection of Children  
and Young People / Code of Pastoral Conduct**

---

#### **IV. Background checks**

The Diocese of San Bernardino requires current LiveScan fingerprinting for background checks of all Bishops, Priests, Deacons, Pastoral Coordinators, Educators, Seminarians, religious men and women, lay employees, and independent contractors. The Diocese also requires current Live Scan fingerprinting for background checks for those volunteers who have regular contact with minors (those under the age of 18) in our parishes and schools. This is a minimum requirement. A parish may require that additional ministries be background checked as part of their Parish Plan.

*All persons 18 or older who supervise or assist when minors are present must have a current satisfactory LiveScan background check on file with the Diocese of San Bernardino.* Youth, those between the ages of 14-18, who volunteer with minors, and will be alone with minors, will also need to be background checked. Many times these are young people who accompany a child to the restroom, wait with them after an activity, etc. It is understood that these youth will also be supervised by an adult who has completed a satisfactory background check and the required training determined by this document.

#### **V. Supervision of Minors**

Each office that provides ministry to minors in the Diocese of San Bernardino is responsible to maintain policies and procedures that ensure adequate and safe supervision of minors. Each Office Director is responsible for collaborating with other ministries to ensure that policies and procedures are compatible with one another and are distributed to DPC and parish staff and volunteers. These policies must include but are not limited to the following as they apply to individual ministries:

##### **A. Two Adult Rule**

Gatherings of minors, such as classes, social activities, sports, nursery care, and the like, generally require supervision by at least two adults 18 years of age or older with satisfactory LiveScan reports on file with the Diocese. They must also have completed the training for the Safe Environment Policy for the Protection of Children and Young People/Code of Pastoral Conduct. If a class has only one supervisor, the activity must be visible through an open door or windows with clear visibility. In certain cases the activity may have to be cancelled if the Two Adult Rule cannot be fulfilled.

Each Diocesan, Parish and/or School Ministry must create and adhere to written guidelines for supervision for the various types of gatherings and locations where they conduct activities that include minors. Such guidelines must be consistent with this Safe Environment Policy for the Protection of Children and Young People. It is preferable that both male and female adult supervision is provided, especially when both boys and girls participate in an activity.

##### **B. Windows and Open Doors**

To ensure a safe environment on our premises for both minors and adults, the Diocese of San Bernardino requires the following:

All classrooms, meeting rooms, offices, or counseling areas are to have:

- A door with a window that allows anyone outside the room to observe inside the room without having to open the door. **OR**
- The door will remain open to any room where there isn't a window that will allow observation.
  - These rooms will be posted with a sign that mandates the doors are to be left open.
- Where the door cannot be left open due to weather conditions or fire code requirements, then the only option is to have two background cleared supervisors present in the room.

##### **C. Planned Supervision**

All elements of a program or outing (all socials, dances, school and religious activities organized or endorsed by a Parish or School) offered through the Diocese of San Bernardino must be carefully reviewed to ensure that children are supervised before, during, and after the event, until all children are returned to their parents/guardians or **are off the parish or school premises**. This supervision must follow the two adult rule as stated above. This supervision plan is a required part of the Parish Plan described in Part VI of this document.

Diocese of San Bernardino  
**Safe Environment Policy for the Protection of Children  
and Young People / Code of Pastoral Conduct**

---

**D. Overnight Rule**

All adults who stay overnight with children must have a completed background check on file and have completed all required Safe Environment training. If the required number of adults with completed background checks and required training is not available, the event will be cancelled. In the presence of both male and female minors, there must be both genders represented as supervisors. Again, all supervisors are to be background cleared and Safe Environment trained. **If there are male minors or female minors only, there must be at least two background cleared and Safe Environment trained supervisors of that gender.**

**E. Nursery Policy and/or the care of minors during an Event**

Parents or guardians must sign their children into and out of the nursery or area of supervision. **An emergency card** completed by the child's parent or legal guardian must be on file that indicates individuals authorized to pick up each child. **Children will be released only to those authorized to pick them up.**

Nursery service during Mass must follow the two adult rule. If, five minutes before Mass begins, the required two adults are not present in the nursery, an announcement must be made from the pulpit stating that another adult is needed immediately or the parents must pick up their children, and the Nursery will be closed.

It is a Diocesan Safe Environment requirement that when any organization gathers and children are present, these children **MUST be supervised**. An example might be when a prayer group gathers, the children who come with their parent must be supervised by adults who have been background checked and trained.

**F. Parental Permission**

1. Volunteers and staff must have written parental permission to be alone with a minor such as:
  - To give a car ride;
  - To advise (if a minor does not want the parent to know about counseling; in accordance with California Law, another adult must be present or within sight).
2. Permission can be written (including a fax) or by phone in the event of an emergency. Phone permission requires that two people listen to the permission given over the phone. It is suggested that the phone conversation be transcribed and the two persons who listened to the phone permission sign the transcription. The parent is to be informed that the conversation will be put in writing. A copy of the written and signed conversation is to go with the chaperone of that child.
3. Volunteers and staff must notify their supervisor in advance if they are to meet with an individual minor so that proper supervision can be arranged.

**G. Minors Volunteering in the Parish**

Minors who are engaged in a volunteer activity for the parish or are fulfilling community service work must be visible when performing these tasks. Minors are to be under the visual supervision of an adult(s) and work only when two adults are on the property. Minor volunteers will be told the location of their supervisors and how to contact them. Supervisors on the premises will be informed that minor volunteers are working and that they (the supervisors) should "check in" with the minors hourly. If the minor volunteer will be working with younger minor children, and there is the possibility that the minor volunteer may be alone with a younger child - for any reason -they are to be background checked with Live Scan Fingerprints and do the Safe Environment Policy training as other volunteers who work regularly with children do.

**H. Counseling Behaviors**

Private counseling and pastoral care of a minor can present a dilemma. Sometimes advice can be misconstrued. Care must be taken to balance confidentiality and protection for both parties – minors and adults. Those working with minors must never overstep their bounds. Priests, deacons, pastoral ministers, and religious men and women, are obliged to abide by the Diocese of San Bernardino policies for Code of Pastoral Conduct and Safe Environment for the Protection of Children. The meeting site must be in a room allowing at least visual access to non-participants. The meeting must be scheduled at a time when it is likely that others will be on the premises. Private meetings at homes are expressly prohibited when it is known that there are no other adults present.

Diocese of San Bernardino  
**Safe Environment Policy for the Protection of Children  
and Young People / Code of Pastoral Conduct**

---

**I. Independent contractors**

Independent contractors who will be on the property when children are present are required to be under the direct supervision of a Diocesan approved Parish or School adult who has a satisfactory LiveScan background report and training documentation on file with the Diocese. If the Independent Contractor is on the premises on a regular basis, for example a gardener, that person must comply with the requirement to be background checked and complete the training for Safe Environment and mandated reporter.

**J. Buddy System**

Minors are encouraged to always have a buddy accompany them whenever leaving the classroom or main activity. Minors are never to leave a supervised area and go to an area that is not properly supervised.

**VI. Parish Plan for Safe Environment**

Each Parish is responsible to design a Safe Environment Plan for their parish. The Plan is to incorporate all aspects of the Safe Environment Policy for the Protection of Children and Young People adopted by the Diocese of San Bernardino in each parish and school. It is to include:

- the plan for ongoing Safe Environment training and education for both adults and children
- supervision procedures for arrival, class time and dismissal of minors – this must also include all youth ministry activities .

The plan is to be submitted to the Diocesan Office of Child and Youth Protection and kept on file at the parish. It is to be evaluated annually and revised if needed. The results of the evaluation are to be included in the annual report that is submitted each year by July 1<sup>st</sup>. If the parish needs help designing their plan, they may contact the Diocesan Office of Child and Youth Protection 909-475-5128 for assistance.

**VII. Accountability**

Every adult and young adult hired to work or accepted as a volunteer in the Diocese of San Bernardino is equally accountable for implementing Diocesan policies and procedures.

To maintain the integrity of this Safe Environment Policy for the Protection of Children and Young People, it is necessary to report violations of this policy, the Code of Pastoral Conduct, other Diocesan policies, or any applicable Laws of the State of California.

If there is suspected abuse of a minor:

- Report to local law enforcement authorities and to Riverside or San Bernardino County Child Protective Services office. In **Riverside County** call **1-800-442-4918** or in **San Bernardino County** call **1-800-877-8724** or **909-384-9233**.
- **Diocesan Vicar General, 909-475-5120** or the **Diocesan Hotline** at **1-888-206-9090**, if a member of the clergy committed the abuse, or
- Director Human Resources 909-475-5177 if a Church employee or volunteer committed the abuse, and/or
- Superintendent of Schools, 909-475-5437 if an Catholic School teacher, school employee or school volunteer committed the abuse, and/or
- To your immediate supervisor. If your immediate supervisor was the person violating policy, then report to the next person up in the line of authority. **As part of the Safe Environment plan for each parish, an accountability process will be specified.**

Part V – **Supervision** and Part VII – **Accountability** are to be published as part of the individual Parish Plan for the ongoing Safe Environment training and individual background check. As stated in Part VI of this document – Parish Plan – this plan is to be evaluated annually and revised as needed.

**References:**

1. Good Shepherd Catholic Church Safe Environment Policy, Archdiocese of St. Louis, Missouri 1995
2. Diocese of San Bernardino Policies:
  - Code of Pastoral Conduct
  - Diocesan Policy Manual Human Resources Section 500.1, Para 1000-1006 Harassment
  - Diocesan Policy Manual Office of Priest Personnel Section 700.1, Para .26 Residence – Lay Persons Residing in Rectories
  - Diocesan Policy in Cases of Misconduct
  - Sexual Abuse by Clergy

Diocese of San Bernardino  
Safe Environment Policy for the Protection of Children  
and Young People / Code of Pastoral Conduct

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**Appendix II**

**Prayer**

**Leader:** Creator God please hear your people as together we pray:

**All:** God of endless love,  
ever caring, ever strong,  
always present, always just,  
You gave your only Son  
to save us by the blood of his cross.

Gentle Jesus, shepherd of peace,  
join to your own suffering  
the pain of all who have been hurt  
in body, mind, and spirit  
by those who betrayed the trust placed in them.

Hear our cries as we agonize  
over the harm done to our brothers and sisters.  
Breathe wisdom into our prayers,  
soothe restless hearts with hope &  
steady shaken spirits with faith.  
Show us the way to justice and wholeness,  
enlightened by truth and enfolded in your mercy.

Holy Spirit, comforter of hearts,  
heal your people's wounds  
and transform our brokenness.  
Grant us courage and wisdom, humility and grace,  
so that we may act with justice  
and find peace in you.  
We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Diocese of San Bernardino  
Safe Environment Policy for the Protection of Children  
and Young People / Code of Pastoral Conduct

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**Appendix III**

**CASE STUDY**

One Sunday afternoon a teen group attended a retreat at St. Justin's Parish. The adults present included the Youth Minister (YM), the Pastor and the Confirmation Coordinator. There were 15 teens in the group ranging in age from 13 to 16. During the break, one of the teens noticed that the Youth Minister had left the group to go into a side room. He noticed that the YM was typing on his lap top and laughing. Thinking that the YM was playing a video game, the teen eagerly went to join him. As he approached the YM, the teen realized that he was watching child pornography on his lap top. When the YM realized that the teen was also staring at his computer screen, in shock and embarrassment he quickly shut the computer down and tried to shrug it off as a fluke with his computer system. He told the teen, "Keep this silly thing between us guys.", and quickly walked away.

When the group returned from break, the teen told his friend about the "naked kids" on the YM's lap top. His friend just laughed and said that the YM was okay and didn't mean any harm. He reminded the teen how the YM always bought pizza for them and had all the kids over to his house on weekends. The friend even bragged that he had spent some weekend sleepovers at the YM's house with his parent's full permission. "The guy is cool, don't sweat it".

The teen decided to report the incident to the Confirmation Coordinator. She assured the teen that she would discuss this issue with the Youth Minister and let him know that he should never do that again. Shortly after that conversation she went to the Youth Minister and asked him to put his lap top into his car, which he did immediately.

- A. List one person whose behavior followed the Code of Pastoral Conduct. What was that behavior?
- B. List three people whose behaviors did NOT follow the Code. What were their behaviors?
- C. Should the incident be reported? If yes, why and to whom? If no, why not?