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## Power Up The Team To Protect Our Children

As you well know, the child sexual abuse scandal has effected every “nook and cranny” of the church in America and around the world. Our diocese has put its heart and soul into efforts to make sure that abusive incidents of any kind are non-existent in our parishes, schools and agencies. Toward that end, we continue to work and make improvements in our policies and procedures. The diocesan Child Protection Policy was established in 2003. The widely publicized policy provides clear guidelines for reporting allegations of abuse to the diocese and local law enforcement. Additionally, all staff and volunteers have had extensive awareness and prevention training through the Virtus program, a three (3) hour session and for those who work with children, in addition to attending the Virtus program there is an online continuous training component which consists of receiving monthly bulletins authored by leading experts in the field. Our diocesan response to this horrific scandal is multipronged, ongoing and complex. We need you to be part of our team.

In the Harvard Business Review, August 2011 there was an article that had management tips for increasing team performance. The article explained that to successfully manage a team is a complex undertaking and recommended three ways to increase the odds of improving team performance:

- 1) **Establish Urgency:** Each team member needs to believe that they are working on something that matters and that it matters today not some nebulous time in the future.
- 2) **Set High Standards:** The higher the expectation, the more likely the team will live up to its performance potential. Set ambitious goals and hold the team to them.
- 3) **Start Off on the Right Foot:** Pay particular attention to initial impressions. How the team starts its work together often sets the tone for future interactions.

There is no more urgent matter than to make sure that children are able to learn, pray and play in a safe environment when they attend our parish or diocesan sponsored programs. Everyone is well aware of what can happen when children are not protected. Bishop Murphy and his staff, the pastors, school principals, the *Virtus* facilitators and, so many others, continue to work diligently to protect children from harm.

We are calling on all parents to join our team. Why not attend a Virtus session and learn about child sexual abuse and how to prevent it? This, of course, is not mandatory for you but it would certainly expand our ability to protect children to have you join us in this important work. Please go to [www.drvc.org](http://www.drvc.org) and click on the Virtus calendar/registration. Just select a convenient location and follow the prompts to register for a session.

Now, that the parish programs and schools are back in session, we ask all parents to join our team. Be informed, active and involved in helping all of us create a safe wholesome environment for God's children.

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