



## **Protecting God's Children®**

**Safe environment training** for adults (also known as *Protecting God's Children* or *Virtus training*) is a requirement of both the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' "Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People," as well as the "Child Protection Policy" of the Archdiocese of Boston.

This 3-hour workshop (required of all clergy, employees, and volunteers) teaches attendees how to:

- Recognize inappropriate and concerning actions adults exhibit, which may also indicate an intention to harm children,
- Identify behavioral cues that children might exhibit when experiencing abuse or grooming,
- Voice your concerns to those in charge, and
- Report suspicions of child abuse to authorities in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

## **CHANGES TO THE PROGRAM**

- As of September 2022, all new employees and volunteers *working directly with children* (catechists, coaches, etc.) have **30 days** from their start of service to attend a Protecting God's Children workshop. Employees and volunteers **not working directly with children** have **60 days** to attend PGC.
- Between August 8, 2022, and June 24, 2023, the Office of Child Advocacy re-trained over 300 PGC Facilitators in the use of the new program released by Virtus at the end of 2021. There were 17 full-day trainings provided.
- On June 30, 2023, the Archdiocese of Boston discontinued the use of all previous versions of Protecting God's Children (up to and including version 3.5). At this time, only the current version (4.0) is authorized for use.
- All clergy, employees, and volunteers who attended Protecting God's Children prior to the use of version 4.0 are **NOT** required to repeat the workshop. Those required to take PGC for the first time are required to take version 4.0 moving forward.
- Also, on June 30<sup>th</sup>, anyone previously trained as a facilitator who did not attend Facilitator 4.0 training became ineligible to facilitate future PGC workshops.
- More than 50% of parishes/collaboratives and diocesan schools currently have a 4.0 facilitator. *We aim to have at least one facilitator at every parish and school by June 30, 2024.*

## **FACILITATOR TRAINING**

We invite all parishes and schools in the Archdiocese of Boston to send at least one person to an upcoming training for new facilitators. Having your own facilitator will allow you to:

- Hold PGC workshops according to your schedule and to best accommodate the 30/60-day requirement mentioned above, as well as
- More easily control the actual PGC dates of your employees and volunteers

### **Who should attend?**

- Anyone who would like to become a PGC facilitator for their parish or school. (*Must already have taken any version of Protecting God's Children for Adults.*)
- Anyone trained as a facilitator prior to August 8, 2022, who wants to return to facilitating Protecting God's Children workshops.

### **What will I receive?**

- Comprehensive training on the NEW Protecting God's Children 4.0 program,
- All new materials including, facilitator manual, USB drive with videos, and all approved handouts (DVD also available upon request),
- New online access to set up workshops and review training history.
- A periodic newsletter designed just for PGC Facilitators, containing helpful hints, program updates, and ways to network with other facilitators.

### **What is the cost?**

- Each set of materials costs \$75 (1 set per location minimum, transferred to you at our cost; training is free). If a co-worker attended a previous workshop, save money and bring their manual unless you want a second set of your own.
- Cash or check made out to "Office of Child Advocacy" and brought to the training.

### **How do I register?**

- Log into your account on [virtusonline.org](http://virtusonline.org). In the "Current Training" box click the "Register for Training" link. Choose the "*Protecting God's Children for Facilitators*" training that meets your schedule.
- Each session is IN-PERSON only.

## **SCHEDULE**

All Protecting God's Children for Facilitators Workshops will be held at the Pastoral Center, 66 Brooks Drive, Braintree. They run from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm. All participants must arrive on time and stay until the end. The upcoming dates include:

- Wednesday, September 20, 2023
- Wednesday, December 27, 2023
- Thursday, March 21, 2024
- Tuesday, June 25, 2024

**If anyone has questions or trouble registering, please get in touch with Deacon Stephen May, Safe Environment Coordinator, at 617-746-5994 or [smay@rcab.org](mailto:smay@rcab.org).**