



Archdiocese of Newark

OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

November 23, 2015

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Our *Teaching Touching Safety* Program continues to be the training we use in our Catholic elementary and high schools to help give the children the knowledge they need to keep themselves safe. As a substitute, schools may use the RCL Benziger Family Life Program – the newest version has safety lessons built into each chapter. I personally reviewed and approved of both Programs.

The Child Assault Prevention, or CAP Program, is a state-funded Program currently used in public schools in New Jersey. As an official Program in the State's efforts to prevent child abuse, CAP office staff work in every county with each school district to provide training to students and staff regularly on this important, sensitive subject, and works as part of the regular curriculum. Like *Teaching Touching Safety* in the Catholic schools, CAP addresses the subject in an age-appropriate fashion, is supported by local public school administration, and complements the existing curriculum in your child's school.

I have reviewed all of the materials for CAP, and staff in the Archdiocesan Office of Child and Youth Protection have been assured of the comprehensive approach to presenting this important information to children in schools in the four counties within the Archdiocese. As a result, I again have directed that CAP serve as the educational awareness program for children in Religious Education Programs conducted by Parishes in the Archdiocese. Not only does it meet all of the educational requirements of the Charter, this school-based Program will eliminate the need for you to arrange for your child to attend a special program in the Parish at a time that could be inconvenient for you, and will ensure that your child receives the full benefit of his or her current Religious Education training.

I am aware that a small number of districts make use of programs that are similar to CAP, and members of the district's own teaching or guidance staffs typically conduct them as part of their regular curriculum. Because such programs are similar in content to CAP and are funded with public funds from the district, they also are acceptable to the Archdiocese.

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Each individual school district schedules its safe environment/awareness program according to its own schedule, so I urge you to be in touch with your local board of education or school principal to find out when your child's school is scheduled to receive this educational program. Together, through programs like these, we as Catholics can advocate for increased awareness and safety for all children.

With kindest personal regards, I am

Sincerely in the Lord,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John J. Myers". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning.

✠Most Reverend John J. Myers
Archbishop of Newark

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