

Reporting Child Abuse and Sexual Misconduct

It is the law that all actual or suspected cases of abuse involving a child under the age of 16 be reported immediately to child protection authorities.

There are seven Children's Aid Societies providing services in the geographical area of the Diocese of Hamilton. It is recommended that individuals contact their local agency.

Hamilton

Catholic Children's Aid Society of Hamilton
905-525-2012
(Emergency after hours 905-522-8053)

The Children's Aid Society of Hamilton
905-522-1121
(Emergency after hours 905-522-8053)

Halton

Children's Aid Society
905-333-4441

Brant

Family and Children's Services of Brantford
519-753-8681

Kitchener-Waterloo

Family and Children's Services of Waterloo
Region - 519-576-0540

Wellington

Family and Children's Services of Guelph and
Wellington County - 519-824-2410
1-800-265-8300

Bruce-Grey

Bruce-Grey Child and Family Services
519-371-4453

Child Protection Services also extend to youth aged 16 and 17. While not required to report, youth in this age group have the right to protection through child protective services. If you experience, suspect or witness abuse of someone in this age category, you may call the Bishop's Delegate (# below) for advice on how to proceed.

If you experience, suspect or witness abuse of someone who is not legally considered a child, you are still encouraged to report it to the Bishop's Delegate using the contact information provided below.

To report a case of child abuse or sexual misconduct by any diocesan personnel, please contact the Bishop's Delegate:

**Mr. Rocco Gizzarelli at
905-745-4455
roccogizzarelli@gmail.com**

In case of emergency, call 911



DIOCESE OF HAMILTON

www.hamiltondiocese.com

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Persons: A Sacred Trust

Sexual Abuse Prevention Policies and Reporting Information



Message from Bishop Crosby

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Hamilton respects and upholds the dignity of every person as a child of God. Moreover, we hold as a sacred responsibility the protection of every person within our sphere of influence, with particular concern for children and other vulnerable persons. The sexual integrity of each and every individual is inviolable. The perpetration of sexual abuse by Church representatives – clergy or laypersons, employees or volunteers – is especially abhorrent, since it violates not only the person but the sacred trust that is ours.

Through this brochure, I want to reassure the faithful in the Diocese of Hamilton that we strive to create safe environments for all. We are committed to giving you the information you need to report any suspected or witnessed instances of sexual abuse. We are prepared to provide emotional and spiritual support to victims and their families.

We pray for those whose lives have been impacted by sexual abuse and we work to heal the wounds and restore the trust that has been broken.

Sincerely in Christ and Mary Immaculate,

+Douglas Crosby, OMI

(Most Rev.) Douglas Crosby, OMI
Bishop of Hamilton

Sexual Abuse: A Painful Truth

Statistics tell us that 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 5 boys [1], will experience some type of sexual abuse/assault before the age of 18. [1 <https://www.ispcan.org/>]. The extent and depth of this social problem - both in the church and more broadly across society - has come into greater public awareness in recent decades. In recognition of this painful truth, every jurisdiction, institution, and program that serves children and vulnerable persons, has been required to develop and implement a variety of mechanisms to safeguard the vulnerable and to hold accountable those who abuse them. The Church is not alone in this work. Excellent, expert resources are now available to us and the Church draws upon these to establish best practices and to promote healthy and appropriate adult-child relationships in carrying out its work.

These mechanisms include:

- Rigorous screening and monitoring of all personnel - clergy religious and lay- paid and volunteer.
- Formation and training programs that ensure candidates for ministry and others understand their obligations to protect the vulnerable, recognize the warning signs of abuse and know what to do when they witness them.
- Easy to access information and reporting processes for anyone who has experienced abuse.
- Safe environment policies which include standards of professional conduct as well safe design of physical space.

Policy Statement - Summary

(The complete policy, reporting and screening process, may be found at:

<https://hamiltondiocese.com/safeguarding-protocol-screening/>)

- All allegations of abuse or misconduct made to officials of the Diocese will be thoroughly investigated.
- Individuals who come forward with an allegation of sexual misconduct will be treated with respect, dignity and compassion.
- Diocesan investigations are conducted by an independent agent known as the Bishops' Delegate supported by an advisory committee known as the Safeguarding Advisory Panel.
- The Diocese requires that all allegations involving a child under the age of 16 years, are reported immediately to the appropriate Children's Aid Society. (List provided in this brochure)
- The Diocese cooperates fully with civil authorities when allegations constitute crimes under civil law.
- The Diocese retains permanent written records of all allegations of sexual misconduct made against anyone acting in any role within the diocese.
- Records are not cleaned or destroyed subsequent to the death of a person who is accused of sexual misconduct or abuse.