

# Teaching Safety



Deadline to report.

## May 27, 2024

Each year the Diocese of Helena requires all parishes & schools to facilitate an in-person and age-appropriate lesson from the Teaching Safety – Empowering God's Children® program for every youth at their location.

You may find all of the lesson plans in the Educator's Tab at [virtus.org](http://virtus.org). Or, for your convenience, we have also posted them on our website (see link below).

Pastors/Principals may choose whichever lesson that best suits their community. There are 6 lessons from which to choose, each with an age-appropriate plan per cohort.

Effective last year, VIRTUS has discontinued lessons 7-12. There are still 6 different lessons from which to choose. As always, it is up to each pastor/principal to choose which lesson will be taught. You may use any lesson for each age-cohort; you do not have to use the same lesson for every age. For example, you can use Lesson 2 for grades K-2, Lesson 5 for grades 3-5, lesson 2 for 6-8, and lesson 6 for 9-12.



## Preparation Suggestions:

When planning your lesson, it is important to keep in mind the steps below. You may teach the lesson at any time during the year, but make sure to plan ahead so that you can **SUBMIT YOUR REPORT** by May 27, 2024.

### Three Weeks Prior to Lesson:

- **CHOOSE LESSON:** Choose one lesson for each of the 4 cohorts: K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12. (You do not have to use the same lesson for all cohorts.)

### Two Weeks Prior to Lesson:

- **EMAIL ALL PARENTS THE LESSON, INTRODUCTORY LETTER & OPT-OUT FORM.** Sending them the lesson ahead of time gives them the chance to opt-out, and it eliminates the need to follow up with families of absent students.

### One Week Prior to Lesson:

- **COLLECT OPT-OUT FORMS** – Parental disclosure is critical to the success of this program. You must record how many opt-out!

### Lesson Day:

- **TAKE ROLL CALL** – Make sure to record the number of students present, absent, & who opted out.

### After Lesson:

- **SUBMIT REPORT ON VIRTUS.ORG** – The one who submits the report does not necessarily have to be the teacher.

**Find Lessons & Video Instructions for Reporting Here:**

[diocesehelena.org/teachingsafety](http://diocesehelena.org/teachingsafety)



**Make your report at [virtus.org](https://virtus.org)**

## Designated Educators

Each location must have an individual designated as an "Educator." This does not have to be the same person who facilitates the lessons. The Educator is responsible for recording information from all lessons at their location online at [virtus.org](https://virtus.org). If your location does not have a designated Educator, please contact the Center for Catholic Life at 406.442.5820.

The goal is to teach every young person this information. Parental disclosure is critical. Parents who choose to teach their own children should tell you that by turning in an "opt out" form, which can be found online at [diocesehelena.org](https://diocesehelena.org). When you make your report, the total number of youth registered at your location should equal the total number of youth you trained plus the total number of opt-out forms you receive from parents:

**Total Registered Youth = Total Youth Trained + Total Opt-Outs**

## Recording Instructions:

Sign in to [virtus.org](https://virtus.org), open "Educators" tab, and select "Record Training" on left sidebar.

Data Point	Report:
Program Name	Enter "Empowering God's Children"
Where Training Occurred	Enter your location name
School Type	Choose "Youth Ministry," "Religious Ed." or "Catholic School"
When Training was Conducted	Enter date of lesson
Who Conducted the Training	Enter instructor's name
Age/Grade of Children	Enter grade of students
Lesson Number	Enter lesson number
Number of Students Trained	Enter total number in attendance
Number of Students Opting Out	Enter number of opt-out forms you received
Number of Students Absent	Enter number of students absent
Comments Section	Include: "An email with the lesson was sent to all families of students."

## Questions?

LESSONS & REPORTING:  
Kevin Molm  
406.389.7055  
[kmolm@dohmt.org](mailto:kmolm@dohmt.org)

EDUCATOR TAB & TRAININGS (VIRTUS)  
Center for Catholic Life Front Desk  
406.442.5820  
[cfcladmin@dohmt.org](mailto:cfcladmin@dohmt.org)

SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICY  
Cassie Hall  
406.389.7070  
[chall@dohmt.org](mailto:chall@dohmt.org)