**Module O – Prevention, Deterrence and Treatment of Clergy Sexual Abuse**

**(Primarily for Dioceses)**

**Outline, Goals and Comments, Discussion Questions, References, and Sources**

**Outline**

1. Title Slides (O-1 to O-2)
2. Main sources of Data (O-3)
3. Overview of Prevention, Deterrence and Treatment of Clergy Sexual Abuse (O-4 to O-20)
4. Prevention Policies (O-5 to O-10)
5. Five Ways to Prevent Abuse by Implementing Situational Crime Prevention Models (O-11 to O-15)
6. Deterrence – Oversight and Accountability (O-16 to O-20)
7. Models of and Changes in Treatment for Sex Offenders (O-21 to O-24)
8. Initial Diocesan Response to Sexual Abuse Allegations, 1950-1989 (O-25 to O-26)
9. Sex Offender Treatment for Catholic Priests after 1985 (O-27)
10. Recommendations for Policy Changes (O-28 to O-29)
11. Summary of Prevention, Deterrence and Treatment of Clergy Sexual Abuse (O-30)
12. Discussion Questions (O-31)

**Goals and Comments**

The goals of Module O are to raise awareness of diocesan leaders about ways to prevent sexual abuse through education and adherence to the principles of prevention models; to deter sexual abuse through oversight and accountability, and, if abuse has occurred, to understand treatment options and policies that must be followed.

Models for prevention of abuse are described in the first section. It begins with appropriate education of seminarians and continues with ongoing education and renewal opportunities for priests. The situational crime prevention model identifies five ways to reduce the occurrence of sexual abuse: ***increase the effort*** it takes for priests to commit acts of abuse; ***increase the risks*** by making it more likely that those who commit acts of abuse will be identified, and once identified, will have more to lose; ***reduce the rewards*** by providing alternate outlets for close bonds with others; ***reduce provocations*** by diminishing the factors that may lead priests to abuse, such as stress; and **r*emove excuses*** through education about what types of behavior are and are not appropriate with minors.

The second goal is concerned with examining means of deterrence of sexual abuse. It requires consistent oversight, transparency, and accountability, achieved by establishing appropriate structures. These and other structures, such as the safe environment and audit programs, must become routine and institutionalized. Attention must be paid as well to varied geographical and subcultural contexts, including places where international priests serve.

The third goal considers the several models for treatment of sexual abusers that have developed through the years. Medical models and behavioral models were prevalent through the 1960s. In the1970s, treatments were expanded and programs were diversified by adding components such as social skills training; in the 1980s, the therapeutic technique of relapse prevention was adapted to help sex offenders, and in the 1990s, the use of the polygraph was added, to provide insight into the acts of offenders and to indicate whether or not they were being truthful during the treatment programs. The current state of understanding about the treatment of sexual offenders is that sexual offending is the result of a complex matrix of social, psychological, and developmental problems and therefore requires in depth and diverse forms of professional treatment.

Based on evolving knowledge of professionals, experiences of dioceses, and concurrent research, the bishops in 1992 adopted a Policy on Priests and Sexual Abuse of Children, which stated:

“[W]hen there is even a hint of such an incident: 1) investigate immediately; 2) remove the priest whenever the evidence warrants it; 3) follow the reporting obligations of the civil law; 4) extend pastoral care to the victim and the victim’s family; and 5) seek appropriate treatment for the offender.

**Discussion Questions**

1. What components of the prevention models are most useful in your diocesan and parish situations?
2. What other means of deterrence are possible to prevent further abuse in your diocese?
3. To what extent are recommendations on education of young people, parishioners, and church leaders being implemented?
4. Does the progression in treatment of sexual abuse ensure the safety of children and young people as much as it can?
5. How can oversight be enhanced in your diocese to help prevent further clergy sexual abuse?

**References**

O-1: Module O

O-2: Title Slide: Prevention and Deterrence of Clergy Sexual Abuse and Treatment of Those Accused of Abuse

O-3: Main Sources of Data

O-4: Overview of Prevention, Deterrence, and Treatment of Clergy Sexual Abuse

O-5: A. Prevention Policies

O-6: Complex Agenda for Prevention

Notes: *Causes and Context*, p. 120

However, it is critical to implement prevention policies that are independent of a particular risk factor, be they social, psychological, or developmental factors.

O-7: Education, 1: Initial Formation of Seminarians

Notes: The findings of the *Causes and Context* study should be digested and used as the

basis for a mandatory curriculum for a workshop for all seminary faculty.

O-8: Education, 2: Ongoing Formation of Priests

Notes: *Causes and Context*, p. 120

*The Basic Plan for the Ongoing Formation of Priests* also outlines formation at different stages of priesthood and discusses some of the practical possibilities for formation.

Many pastors believe bishops must support, even make obligatory, some form of continuing education if parish life is to thrive. Almost all professional groups require ongoing (continuing) education and development.

O-9: Ongoing Education and Renewal, 3: Importance for Priests

Notes: *Causes and Context*, p. 120

The addition of formal educational models related to human formation would be one step toward reducing the likelihood of abuse at times in which priests are most vulnerable.

O-10: Situational Prevention Models

Notes: *Causes and Context*, p. 120

The peak of sexual abuse incidents in the Catholic Church occurred at a time of social upheaval, and it is possible that other social factors could influence harmful behavior in the future.

O-11: Five Ways to Prevent Abuse by Implementing Situational Crime Prevention Models:

1. Increase the Effort

Notes: *Causes and Context*, pp. 101, 120-121

Crime-prevention techniques, as depicted in Table 5.1, range from “hard” to “soft” approaches. Hard strategies (such as blockading the cockpit on airplanes that make the pilots inaccessible to potential terrorists) incapacitate targets and make it impossible for the crime to be committed. In other words, the suspect desires to commit the crime, but the implemented SCP strategies prevent him or her from accomplishing the illegal act. Soft techniques (such humanizing potential victims) reduce situational prompts/cues that increase a person’s motivation to commit a crime during a specific event. These techniques, in turn, prevent a crime from occurring at a particular time.

1. Target harden

* Steering column locks and immobilizers
* Anti-robbery screens
* Tamper-proof packaging

1. Control access to facilities

* Entry phones
* Electronic card access
* Baggage screening

1. Screen exits

* Ticket needed for exit
* Export documents
* Electronic merchandise tags

1. Deflect offenders

* Street closures
* Separate bathrooms for women
* Disperse pubs/bars

1. Control tools/weapons

* “Smart” guns
* Disabling stolen cell phones
* Restrict spray paint sales to juveniles

O-12: Five Ways to Prevent Abuse, 2: Increase the Risks

Notes: *Causes and Context*, pp. 101, 120-121

By regularly surveying priests, administrative staff, and parishioners about their responses to, and satisfaction with, the priests with whom they have contact, dioceses are more likely to be alerted to questionable behavior that might have been undetected in the past. By sending a clear signal to all members of a parish community that their responses to individual priests are valuable, diocesan leaders open avenues of communication and gain early notice of problems.

1. Extend guardianship

* Take routine precautions: go out in group at night, leave signs of occupancy, carry phone
* “Cocoon” neighborhood watch

1. Assist natural surveillance

* Improved street lighting
* Defensible space design
* Support whistleblowers

1. Reduce anonymity

* Taxi driver IDs
* “How’s my driving?” decals
* School uniforms

1. Utilize place managers

* CCTV for double-deck buses
* Two clerks for convenience stores
* Reward vigilance

1. Strengthen formal surveillance

* Red light cameras
* Burglar alarms
* Security guards

O-13: Five Ways to Prevent Abuse, 3: Reduce the Rewards

Notes: *Causes and Context*, pp. 101, 121

1. Conceal targets

* Off-street parking
* Gender-neutral phone directories
* Unmarked bullion trucks

1. Remove targets

* Removable car radio
* Women’s refuges
* Pre-paid cards for pay phones

1. Identify property

* Property marking
* Vehicle licensing and parts marking
* Cattle branding

1. Disrupt markets

* Monitor pawn shops
* Controls on classified ads
* License street vendors

1. Deny benefits

* Ink merchandise tags
* Graffiti cleaning
* Speed bumps

O-14: Five Ways to Prevent Abuse, 4: Reduce Provocations

Notes: *Causes and Context*, pp. 101, 121

1. Reduce frustrations and stress

* Efficient queues and polite service
* Expanded seating
* Soothing music/muted lights

1. Avoid disputes

* Separate enclosures for rival soccer fans
* Reduce crowding in pubs
* Fixed cab fares

1. Reduce emotional arousal

* Controls on violent pornography
* Enforce good behavior on soccer field
* Prohibit racial slurs

1. Neutralize peer pressure

* “Idiots drink and drive”
* “It’s OK to say No”
* Disperse troublemakers at school

1. Discourage imitation

* Rapid repair of vandalism
* V-chips in TVs
* Censor details of modus operandi

O-15: Five Ways to Prevent Abuse, 5: Remove Excuses

Notes: *Causes and Context*, p. 101

It is critical not only to educate priests about the harm of abuse to victims but also to continue to do so once they have been ordained.

Continued discourse about appropriate forms of closeness to others is critical throughout the life of the priest.

The church has taken many of the steps necessary to reduce opportunities for abuse, which should be maintained and continually evaluated for efficacy. Many individuals who enter the priesthood will have vulnerabilities that, if not addressed, may lead to a higher risk of abuse. It is important not only to address some of these vulnerabilities in seminary but also to offer post-ordination education, training, and evaluation. Knowing that most potential abusers will not be identified before the abuse occurs, and knowing that many priests have vulnerabilities that may lead to the commission of deviant behavior, it is important to reduce the opportunities for abuse to occur. The church has taken an important step in risk reduction through the safe environment education programs; post ordination education and evaluation can also play a role in further reducing the possibility of abuse.

Individuals primarily neutralize feelings of wrongdoing through excuses and justifications for their behavior.434 Sykes and Matza described these rationalizations as “vocabularies of motive,” 435 which not only allow the individual to commit the act of abuse, but also allow the behaviors to persist.436

1. Set rules

* Rental agreements
* Harassment codes
* Hotel registration

1. Post instructions

* “No Parking”
* “Private Property”
* “Extinguish camp fires”

1. Alert conscience

* Roadside speed display boards
* Signatures for customs declarations
* “Shoplifting is stealing” signs

1. Assist compliance

* Easy library checkout
* Public lavatories
* Litter bins

1. Control drugs and alcohol

* Breathalyzers in pubs
* Server intervention
* Alcohol-free events

O-16: B. Deterrence – Oversight and Accountability, 1: Time and Leadership

Notes: *Causes and Context*, p. 121

The Catholic Church has undergone an organizational change regarding how it responds to sexual abuse of minors by priests. However, this change is not yet complete. Organizational change often takes decades and requires not only “buy in” from those involved in the organization but also that changes become routine.

Catholic dioceses must continue to complete their innovation in response to, and prevention of sexual abuse of minors. Not all dioceses have responded as thoroughly as some.

O-17: Deterrence – Oversight and Accountability, 2: Steps in Developing Responses

Notes: *Causes and Context*, pp. 121-122

The more efficient matching of diocesan agenda with accountability and transparency structures. The church has partially achieved this step by introducing the safe environment and audit programs and through gaining a better grasp of the problem by commissioning two studies about the sexual abuse problem.

Because cases of sexual abuse of minors continue to be reported and the community does not fully understand the temporal distribution of sexual abuse incidents over the last sixty years, it appears to some that sexual abuse is still at peak levels.

Finally, the transparency/accountability innovations of the Five Principles will achieve some degree of routinization; that is, they will have become institutionalized as part of the ordinary practice and culture of the diocese. This state of affairs has not yet been realized.

O-18: Deterrence – Oversight and Accountability, 3: Steps in Developing Responses

Notes: *Causes and Context*, pp. 121-122

O-19: Deterrence – Oversight and Accountability, 4: Steps in Developing Responses

Notes: *Causes and Context*, pp. 121-122

O-20: Deterrence – Oversight and Accountability, 5: Steps in Developing Responses

O-21: C. Models of and Changes in Treatment for Sex Offenders, 1: Medical Models

Notes: *Causes and Context*, p. 78

O-22: Models of and Changes in Treatment for Sex Offenders, 2: Behavioral Treatment

Notes: *Causes and Context*, p. 78

O-23: Models of and Changes in Treatment for Sex Offenders, 3: Cognitive Behavioral

Treatment

Notes: *Causes and Context*, p. 79

O-24: Models of and Changes in Treatment for Sex Offenders, 4: Professionalization of

Treatment

Notes: *Causes and Context*, p. 79

O-25: Initial Diocesan Response to Sexual Abuse Allegations, 1950-1989

Notes: *Causes and Context*, p. 81

O-26: Reassignment and the Understanding of Relapse

Notes: *Causes and Context*, p. 80

O-27: Sex Offender Treatment for Catholic Priests after 1985

Notes: *Causes and Context*, p. 82

O-28: Recommendations for Policy Changes, 1

Notes: *Causes and Context*, p. 81

O-29: Recommendations for Policy Changes, 2

Notes: *Causes and Context*, p. 81

O-30: Summary of Prevention, Deterrence and Treatment of Clergy Sexual Abuse

O-31: Discussion Questions

**Sources**

This module and others prepared for use in seminaries and schools of theology are based primarily on the two reports presented to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops by the John Jay College Research Team, The City University of New York: *The Causes and Context of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Catholic Priests in the United States*, 1950-2010, March, 2011 and *The Nature and Scope of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Catholic Priests and Deacons in the United States, 1950-2002*, February 2004.

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