Youth ministers are constantly striving to look for ways to involve their youth in fun, yet challenging experiences. One particular activity growing in popularity is the participation in work missions trips or service projects.

On a crisp fall day, a clean-cut middle-aged man dressed in a suit and tie entered St. Margaret Mary daycare, and identified himself to the worker as Stan, and indicated that he was at the daycare to pick up April. Stan explained that April’s mom and dad were working late and asked her to take her home.

Lois, the daycare worker was not sure what to do. It was obvious that April recognized him as Stan, but her parents had not mentioned anything about Stan picking April up. Rock’s file did not mention Stan. Lois made a quick decision and decided to allow April to leave with Stan, she just seemed to know him so well.

About 20 minutes later, April’s mother arrived at the daycare. She became distressed when she learned that April had left shortly before with Stan. The local police department was contacted. With luck and hard police work, April was returned to her family five hours later. It was later learned that April recognized Stan because he was a client at the bank April’s family frequented.

April and her mother underwent counseling as a result of this incident. A claim was submitted to cover these costs. Stan also underwent counseling as a requirement of the facility.

The above incident could have been avoided by knowing the type of work they would be expected to perform, other non-work related activities they may participate in, departure and arrival dates and times, names of chaperones, types of work they would be expected to perform, other non-work related activities they may participate in, departure and arrival dates and times, names of chaperones.

If possible, the youth leader should make an advance visit to the area. This could assist in foreseeing potential problems that may be encountered. These risks should be properly accounted for to minimize problems. From a liability standpoint, it is important to plan for the safety and security of the participants.

All individuals 18 and older also need to complete a form or waiver of all claims, which includes a medical release portion.

All adult chaperones must follow (Arch) Diocesan requirements to comply with the (Arch) Diocesan Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People. This would include having a criminal background check conducted and attending Safe Environment training.

Determine if any additional insurance coverage will be needed. If this trip will take place outside of the United States, all participants should check with their healthcare provider to find out if their coverage will follow them. If their coverage does not apply, arrangements should be made to acquire adequate health insurance coverage for the trip.

Arrange a meeting with all participants and parents/legal guardians.
SUMMERTIME SAFETY REMINDERS

To minimize the risk of heat-related illness, follow this advice from the American Red Cross:

⇒ Dress for the heat. Wear light-weight, light-colored clothing. Light colors will reflect away some of the sun’s energy. It is also a good idea to wear hats or use an umbrella.

⇒ Drink water. Carry water or juice with you and drink continuously even if you do not feel thirsty.

⇒ Eat small meals and eat more often. Avoid foods that are high in protein which increase metabolic heat.

⇒ Slow down. Avoid strenuous activity. If you must do strenuous activity, do it during the coolest part of the day.

⇒ Take regular breaks, when engaged in physical activity on warm days. Take time out to find a cool place.

⇒ Wear sunscreen, with an SPF of 15 or higher.

Older children are often recruited to assist with the younger children in these types of programs; however, they must be supervised by an adult at all times. An adult is considered 23 years of age or older.

Each adult volunteer/employee should be provided with a brightly-colored shirt, hat, or badge to make them easily identifiable by the participants.

Designated individuals should be responsible for overseeing drop off/pick up of the participants. A child should only be released to an individual designated in writing by the parent/legal guardian.

Dangers or high risk activities should not be allowed during vacation or school or summer camp. If you question whether a certain activity would be considered danger-ous or high risk, contact Catho-

Catholic Mutual Risk Management Department

SUGGESTIONS OR QUESTIONS MAY BE DIRECTED TO:

Paul Peterson, Assistant Vice President, Catholic Mutual Group, (402) 551-2461, (402) 551-2463, or (800) 228-6108, Fax: (402) 551-2493.

Newsletter Committee Members: Paul Peterson, Michele DeGeorge, Greg Standish, Diane Blanquet, Coleen Trippe

Please contact us if your mailing address is incorrect.

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Do you have a question, or an article you'd like to see? Let us know, by contacting anyone on the Newsletter Committee!