



Third Semi-Annual Report on Continuous Quality Improvement Initiatives

Submitted by:

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and

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June 1, 2007 – November 30, 2007

The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston

The RCAB Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) schedule identifies four CQI topics as the subjects of this reporting period. These are:

1. Review accomplishments of previous set of tasks, complete if necessary;
2. Review 1st year CQI accomplishments and modify CQI schedule as needed for the next 2 years;
3. Review effectiveness assessment products on outcomes and assess needed improvements; and
4. Assess screening and formation in pastoral education and personal development at archdiocesan seminaries and recommend changes as needed.

The following summary outlines activities and efforts related to each of these topics and lists efforts on the initiatives for the period of June 1, 2007 – November 30, 2007.

1. Review accomplishments of previous set of tasks, complete if necessary

- a. Improve communication with and feedback from parish Child Abuse Prevention (CAP) Teams:
 - i. During this reporting period the Office of Child Advocacy (OCA) conducted three regional CAP team meetings – West Region, St. Cecilia’s, Ashland, June; Central Region, Bishop Peterson Hall, Brighton, September; and North Region, St. Patrick’s, Stoneham, October. Attendees included CAP Team members, Directors of Religious Education (DRE’s) and pastors. Each session included an update from the OCA; discussion of pre-submitted questions by attendees; and a general discussion of CAP team experiences at the parish and regional level.
 - ii. Several common themes emerged from these meetings:
 - The situation at the parish level has clearly changed since 2002-2003. There is increased acceptance of and a better level of enthusiasm for the “Protecting God’s Children” (PGC) training.
 - RCAB needs to clarify policy on who needs to be trained in PGC so that it is consistent across parishes. CAP team members would like to receive regular updates from the OCA that might enhance the training they do (for instance, information and resources on internet safety, child pornography, etc.).
 - Future CAP team meetings might be organized around particular topics of concern. Attendees were appreciative of the regional meetings. The OCA is compiling a list of email addresses of all CAP team members from all parishes in order to facilitate direct contact between the CAP teams and the OCA.
- b. Create and implement procedures for monitoring and tracking of mandated reporting in parishes and schools: Materials sent to the parishes/schools and posted on the RCAB website during this reporting period reaffirmed RCAB policy that anyone who has a reasonable cause to suspect that a child is being abused or neglected must immediately

make an oral report to the Department of Social Services followed by a written (51A) report within 48 hours. Data continue to be collected on an annual basis by the OCA from pastors, principals and DRE's about any 51A reports filed in the previous year. As mentioned in the last CQI report, the Special Assistant to the Cardinal continues to receive copies of 51As filed by schools and parishes.

- c. Assess current status of Review Board, its structure and functioning, changes made, etc., per March 2006 recommendations, including the improvement of communications and feedback to complainants and accused concerning case status at milestones: As stated in the previous CQI Report, in March 2006 the Review Board and the IOAC completed an extensive two-year review of the Archdiocese's 2003 *Policies and Procedures for the Protection of Children* and made a series of recommendations for revision. Some of the major recommendations concerned the Review Board itself. The document, entitled "Children First – A Two-Year Assessment of the Implementation of *Policies and Procedures for the Protection of Children* (July, 2003)," was posted on the RCAB website on April 7, 2006 and may be reviewed at this address: (<http://rcab.org/ChildAdvocacy/ChildrenFirstPolicyAssessment-060407.pdf>).

i. Having made a generally positive response to *Children First* before the IOAC on September 14, 2007, and having already put some of its recommendations into practice, the Cardinal continues to take the recommendations of the *Children First* report under advisement and will issue a written response to the document after fully vetting the draft response and preparing the way for any internal archdiocesan changes to infrastructure, assignment of function, etc. At present, therefore, commenting on the current status of the recommendations of *Children First* is premature. The ways in which the specific recommendations pertaining to the functioning of the Review Board are implemented will be addressed in the next CQI report.

- d. Implement upper grade safety program in parishes and schools: As mentioned in the second CQI report, a program called "Keeping Children Safe" (KCS) was designed by a committee of Catholic school principals, teachers, and religious educators, and was piloted successfully in more than a dozen schools and parish religious education programs. Over 475 curriculum kits were printed and assembled, and almost 900 teachers and religious educators (representing over 90% of the parishes and schools) were trained in this curriculum, implementation of which began during the last reporting period.

Make-up training sessions and training sessions for new school and parish teachers in the KCS curriculum took place during this reporting period on September 20, October 11, and November 8, 2007. Also scheduled are two additional training sessions on January 12 and 15, 2008. To date, 189 parishes and 83 Catholic schools have submitted implementation plans indicating either that the "Keeping Children Safe" program has already begun or will be implemented during the next academic year.

2. Review 1st year CQI accomplishments and modify CQI schedule as needed for the next two years

The conduct of regular CQI examination has been productive for RCAB during this first year of CQI activities and contributes a great deal toward a rolling kind of evaluation of policies and procedures. This has been significant, among other reasons, because the IOAC has not been involved this year in a regular two-year periodic review of implementation of policies (as IOAC was involved in reviewing 2003-2005, which produced *Children First*). To a good degree, the CQI process has supplanted the review process recommended in the RCAB *Policies and Procedures*. Among the activities that have been accomplished are the following:

- a. OCA has established and publicized an annual schedule for training in the various safe environment programs (PGC, TAT, KCS for grades 4-6, KCS for Grades 7-8) so that all parishes and schools have advanced notice of trainings available for new staff.
- b. Ongoing review and tracking of implementation is occurring through surveys, phone contact, and parish visits to provide technical and training assistance. Again, CAP team regional sessions have occurred in three of the five regions (with plans for meetings in the remaining two regions early in 2008). Feedback from these meetings has helped provide better understanding of the evolution of CAP Team needs and directed the development of ways to meet those needs. Mandated reporters have responded to the request to submit copies of filed 51A's to the Special Assistant so that the Archdiocese can verify that timelines for reporting are being observed.

3. Review effectiveness assessment products on outcomes and assess needed improvements.

Effectiveness assessment products continue to be developed and piloted as part of the overall effort to develop a methodology for studying program effectiveness. In some ways, although progress is necessarily slow as the research group investigates and develops the measurement standards, this is the most exciting area of development regarding prevention of abuse and protection of children because it promises to show a certain inculturation of the same across the Archdiocese even as it will provide some hard data on what works and what does not work in creating a safe environment. Training sign-in sheets have proved valuable in assessing the extent of the implementation of the adult safe environment training. The collection of 51A data from schools and parishes has provided a measure of acquired knowledge and compliance with mandated reporting procedures. Current data collection strategies are evaluated regularly to ensure that the types of data collected and the organization and reporting of that data reflect as best as possible the current state of implementation of programs and the quality of programs implemented. In addition, data collected through other offices is being merged with data from the Office of Child Advocacy to create a central depository for all available information on the effectiveness of and progress in implementation efforts.

A six-month update on the Archdiocese's efforts to develop a research methodology for measuring the effectiveness of multi-faceted programs for child protection and abuse prevention was published under separate cover during this reporting period (September 30, 2007) and can be found at the following address:

<http://www.rcab.org/ChildAdvocacy/EffectivenessAssessment-070930.pdf>

A final report on this effort will be publicly released on March 31, 2008.

4. Assess screening and formation in pastoral education and personal development at Archdiocesan seminaries and recommend changes as needed.

The two Archdiocesan seminaries have extensive screening and formation programs in place at this point. Both seminaries have incorporated thorough psychological testing as well as intensive interviews as part of the screening process for admission to the seminary. Two national certifying agencies (the Association of Theological Schools – the accreditation authority for the Archdiocese of Boston – and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Office of Priestly Formation) consistently give Boston’s seminaries high marks on admissions screening and ongoing evaluations.

Both seminaries require CORI’s prior to admission, and the Office of Child Advocacy conducts VIRTUS® “Protecting God’s Children” training each year to ensure that all seminarians (and new faculty) have been trained prior to any pastoral formation experiences at the parish level. Both seminaries require ongoing individual spiritual direction and supervision for field placements in health care and the parishes. The pastoral counseling course includes instruction on personal boundaries and sensitivity training. This year there will also be a course on human formation at St. John’s that directly addresses the effects of the clergy sexual abuse crisis on survivors, parishes and the priesthood. It is recommended that this course become an established part of the curriculum.

The Archdiocese has also tapped the expertise of Dr. Cynthia Crosson-Tower, a noted author of educational materials for clergy regarding issues of abuse and neglect, to provide guidance on improving programs and materials used to help seminarians be better prepared to respond appropriately to disclosures of abuse, and facilitate pastoral support. Through this initiative, the Office of Child Advocacy aims to incorporate Dr. Crosson-Tower’s counsel into training materials that can be used to assist clergy.

In September 2007, Dr. Crosson-Tower completed a handbook on mandated reporting that also facilitates that ongoing process and the development of reporting protocols and safety teams in the Catholic schools and parishes. In yet another way, this handbook demonstrates a degree of inculturation of certain practices of prevention and protection in the Archdiocesan organization. The handbook has been published under the auspices of the OCA and the Catholic Schools Office and has been distributed free of charge to the schools of the Archdiocese.

Next CQI report due May 31, 2008.