

DIOCESAN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FOR

NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING

A Program of the NCCB Committee for Pro-Life Activities

DIOCESAN NFP PROGRAM - PROFILE

1997 SUMMARY



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DIOCESAN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FOR
NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING
(A Program of the NCCB Committee for Pro-Life Activities)

DIOCESAN NFP PROGRAM - NATIONAL PROFILE

In the Fall of 1990, the Diocesan Development Program (DDP) initiated an annual national survey. Diocesan NFP coordinators or contact persons were asked to complete a *Profile* questionnaire that would:

1. Give the DDP a clearer understanding of diocesan NFP efforts, by focusing on the unique needs of individual dioceses.
2. Enable the DDP to provide the bishops and NFP coordinators with a national picture of diocesan NFP program activity.

The following information is based on responses to the 1997 Diocesan NFP program *Profile* survey.

OVERVIEW OF THE 1997 PROFILE

In November of 1997, **187** Profile questionnaires were mailed to the dioceses. **Ninety-three or 49%** completed and returned questionnaires. Data provided indicate that trends have remained constant with NFP programs around the nation:

- A. Where the diocesan bishop/clergy publicly support NFP efforts, NFP programs are strong and effective, even with limited funding. NFP Coordinators and teachers need inspiration and support for their hard work and dedication. Every year this is the greatest plea identified in the *Profile*.
- B. Most NFP diocesan programs can provide only the most basic information and limited classes on NFP to interested couples. **56%** of all NFP diocesan programs operate on less than **\$5,000** per year. **30%** of dioceses dedicate less than a **\$1,000** to NFP efforts. A typical arrangement is for an NFP program to share the funding, material, and staff support of an umbrella department, e.g., Family Life Office, Catholic Charities, or the facilities of a Catholic hospital. There are a few dioceses which fully fund their NFP programs.
- C. Almost every diocese has a person designated as the Diocesan NFP Coordinator. Often, the NFP “hat” is one of many worn by this person. For example, the Family Life Director might be responsible for NFP development as well as his/her general responsibilities for Family Life Ministry.

- D. Most diocesan marriage preparation programs include some discussion of NFP methods. The time allotted for NFP in **52%** of the dioceses surveyed are less than 30 minutes. Sometimes, NFP is barely mentioned or is covered by giving out literature to couples without discussion. A more substantive inclusion of NFP in education programs about human sexuality and conjugal love remains a distant goal in most marriage preparation programs.
- E. The Ovulation Method and the Sympto-thermal Method are the most preferred methods of NFP. Various NFP national provider groups are used by dioceses.
- F. Most diocesan NFP teachers are volunteers. A few dioceses provide stipends to teachers to cover personal costs, e.g., transportation, baby sitter, materials, etc.
- G. There are at a minimum 1,000+ NFP teachers scattered in dioceses across the nation. Some form a cohesive group working within a diocese, others teach independently. Training new teachers and keeping seasoned ones is a constant challenge in practically every diocesan program. These teachers contribute well over half a million dollars in donated time and energy toward NFP efforts. They are a great resource for the teaching of human sexuality within a faith context, a resource not fully utilized.

SUMMARY:

NFP efforts in dioceses, when viewed as a whole, remain varied and uneven. Some dioceses have robust NFP programs. Some have made tremendous strides in improving programs by meeting the *National Standards of the NCCB*. A few dioceses have experienced a reduction in programs either through teacher loss, budget cuts, and/or diocesan restructuring. Using diocesan funding as indicative of commitment, it can be said that NFP is only marginally supported.

Dioceses which have demonstrated a commendable long-term commitment to NFP ministry through funding, staffing, and program services include: Cleveland, OH; Harrisburg, PA; La Crosse, WI; Phoenix, AZ; St. Cloud, MN; and Springfield, IL. These dioceses can serve as models or consulted by dioceses with less developed programs. Check the *National Diocesan NFP Coordinators' Directory* or contact the DDP/NFP at the NCCB for further information.

In conclusion, two compelling pastoral questions remain:

Can couples who wish to be faithful to Church teaching on responsible parenthood get the NFP help they need within their diocese?

and

Have the majority of Catholic couples been substantively educated on the Church's teaching regarding the immorality of artificial contraception and the existence and morality of Natural Family Planning?

Gratitude is extended to the following dioceses which provided data for the 1997 *Profile* survey:

Allentown, PA; Albany, NY; Alexandria, LA; Amarillo, TX; Arlington, VA; Austin, TX; Beaumont, TX; Biloxi, MS; Birmingham, AL; Bismarck, ND; Boston, MA; Bridgeport, MA; Brooklyn, NY; Buffalo, NY; Burlington, VT; Camden, NJ; Cheyenne, WY; Cincinnati, OH; Cleveland, OH; Columbus, OH; Corpus Christi, TX; Covington, KY; Denver, CO; Denver, CO; Des Moines, IA; Detroit, MI; Dodge City, KS; Duluth, MN; El Paso, TX; Erie, PA; Evansville, IN; Fargo, ND; Fort Wayne, IN; Galveston-Houston, TX; Gaylord, MI; Grand Rapids, MI; Green Bay, WI; Greenburg, PA; Harrisburg, PA; Hartford, CT; Houma-Thibodaux, LA; Jackson, MS; Jefferson City, MO; Joliet, IL; Kalamazoo, MI; Lafayette, IN; Lafayette, LA; Lincoln, NE; Little Rock, AR; Los Angeles, CA; Lubbock, TX; Madison, WI; Manchester, NH; Memphis, TN; **Matachewan [should this be Metuchen? Ask Tn on 1/3/13]**, NJ; Miami, FL; Milwaukee, WI; Monterey, CA; Nashville, TN; Newark, NJ; New Orleans, LA; New Ulm, MN; Ogdensburg, N.Y.; Orange, CA; Orlando, FL; Owensboro, KY; Palm Beach, FL; Pensacola-Tallahassee, FL; Peoria, IL; Philadelphia, PA; Phoenix, AZ; Phoenix, AZ; Pittsburgh, PA; Reno, NV; St. Augustine, FL; St. Cloud, MN; St. Nicholas, IL; St. Paul & Minneapolis, MN; St. Petersburg, FL; Salt Lake City, UT; San Diego, CA; San Jose, CA; Santa Rosa, CA; Scranton, PA; Sioux City, IA; Sioux Falls, SD; Springfield, IL; Springfield, MA; Springfield of Cape Girardeau, MO; Superior, WI; Trenton, NJ; Venice, FL; Washington, DC; Wheeling/Charleston, WV; and Wichita, KS.

I. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

1. Does the (arch)diocese have a person(s) who serves as the NFP Coordinator(s), either in an official or unofficial capacity?

98% - Yes

2% - No

2. If the answer to question (1) was “yes,” who is responsible for coordinating NFP ministry, (*e.g. Family Life Director, Director of Catholic Charities, Engaged Encounter Couple, NFP Coordinator, Respect Life Director, etc.*)?

44% - Diocesan NFP Coordinator

43% - Family Life Director

04% - Director Catholic Charities

02% - Respect Life Coordinator

04% - Other

03% - No Response

3. For this position, NFP work is:

49% - One aspect of other responsibilities
12% - Full-time, paid
02% - Full-time, volunteer
18% - Part-time, paid
17% - Part-time, volunteer
02% - No Response

4. Is the NFP coordinator trained in NFP methodology?

84% - Yes
15% - No
01% - No Response

5. If the answer to question (4) is “yes,” for which of the following roles was the NFP coordinator trained? (*Check all that apply.*)

60 - Teacher
62 - User
40 - Promoter
12 - No Response (*Frequency*)

6. If the answer to question (4) is “yes,” the NFP coordinator is trained in: (*Check all that apply.*)

56 - STM
43 - OM
20 - BBT
16 - No Response (*Frequency*)

7. If you answered question (6), please indicate which school(s) of NFP trained the coordinator: (*Check all that apply*)

(*Frequency*)
19 - Billings Ovulation Method Association (BOMA)
23 - Couple to Couple League (CCL)
23 - Creighton Model Ovulation Method Programs
07 - Family of the Americas Foundation
04 - Northwest Family Services
18 - Other
16 - No Response

8. Which statement best describes the NFP programs’s support staff?

22% - We have our own staff.
37% - We share support staff

38% - We do not have support staff
03% - No Response

9. How many NFP teachers work for the (arch)diocesan program? (*Count teaching couples as two.*)

Total: 931

10. Which statement best describes the NFP program policy regarding remuneration of its teachers?

19% - Most of our NFP instructors are volunteers. We give them a stipend.
55% - Most of our NFP instructors are volunteers. We do not give them a stipend.
12% - We pay our NFP instructors (*part and/or full time*).
11% - Salaries/stipends for instructors are provided by other sources (e.g., *Catholic Hospital, Knights of Columbus, etc.*).

11. The (arch)diocesan NFP program is:

05% - Its own department.
64% - Part of the office of Marriage & Family Life
08% - Part of Catholic Charities
10% - Part of Pro-Life Activities
04% - A service of our Catholic hospital(s)
05% - Other: Office of Pastoral Planning, Volunteer Couples, etc.
04% - No Response

12. Other than the (arch)diocesan NFP program, NFP services are also provided by: (*Check all that apply.*)

35% - Does not apply
35% - Independent NFP teachers
20% - Independent NFP organizations
15% - Other: Various hospitals
05% - No Response

13. Does the (arch)diocese have an NFP Advisory Committee?

Yes - 40%
No - 60%

14. Does the (arch)diocese have an NFP teacher training program?

Yes - 28%
No - 72%

15. If the answer to question (14) was “no,” which organization trains the (arch)diocesan teachers? (*Check all that apply.*)

(*Frequency*)

- 08 - Does not apply
- 22 - Billings Ovulation Method Association (BOMA)
- 41 - Couple to Couple League (CCL)
- 31 - Creighton Model Ovulation Method Programs
- 07 - Family of the Americas Foundation
- 10 - Northwest Family Services
- 16 - Other: Various local sponsored settings
- 21 - No Response

16. What factors help you decide upon which NFP teacher training program you choose for your teacher candidates, (e.g., *methodology, affordable fees, convenient locale etc.*)?

(*Frequency*)

- 38 - Methodology
- 25 - Afford ability
- 18 - Convenient Locale
- 08 - History
- 06 - Teacher Interest & Choice
- 20 - Other: Quality of training, simplicity of presentation, HMO coverage, etc.
- 29 - No Response

II. PROGRAM BUDGET

17. How much money was spent specifically on NFP programing last year?

- 04% - \$0
- 26% - \$1-999
- 26% - \$1,000 - 4,999
- 10% - \$5 - 9,999
- 15% - \$10 - 29,999
- 08% - \$30 - 49,999
- 03% - \$50 - 69,999
- 05% - \$70,000+
- 03% - No Response

18. What percentage of the total in question (17) comes from (arch) diocesan funds? (*Please give your best estimate.*)

- 33% - 100%
- 28% - More than 50%

21% - Less than 50%
14% - 0%
04% - No Response

19. Other than (arch)diocesan funding, what additional sources of income are used to support NFP ministry?

(Frequency)

04 - Federal/State grants
13 - Individual parishes
71 - Client fees
12 - Catholic organizations
10 - NFP Program fund raising activities
05 - Health insurance coverage
25 - Other: individual donations, corporate donations, profits from materials, etc.

20. Please estimate the total monetary value of the contributions made by volunteers to the NFP program; e.g. professional time in teaching/follow-up (*average \$10.00 per hour*); misc. expenses. (*Please give your best estimate.*)

Estimate total amount of donated services: \$423,570

III. PROGRAM SERVICE

21. Which NFP method(s) is currently taught in the (arch)diocesan program? (*Check all that apply.*)

70 - STM
56 - OM
5 - BBT
8 - Other

22. Does the (arch)diocese have guidelines for marriage preparation?

Yes - 95%
No - 02%
No Response - 03%

23. If the answer to question (22) was “yes,” is NFP included in the guidelines for marriage preparation?

Yes - 76%
No - 21%
No Response - 5%

24. Does the (arch)diocese mandate NFP instruction for engaged couples?

Yes - 12%

No - 87%

No Response - 01%

25. Does the (arch)diocese have a policy which strongly encourages engaged couples to participate in an NFP course of instruction?

Yes - 60%

No - 38%

No Response - 02%

26. Does the (arch)diocese mandate an *introduction* to NFP for the engaged?

Yes - 43%

No - 57%

No Response - 0%

27. Is NFP included in your various (arch)diocesan marriage preparation programs?

Yes - 91%

No - 7%

No Response - 2%

28. If the answer to question (27) was “yes,” on the average how much time is allowed NFP education? (*Give your best estimate.*)

19% - 5 minutes - 15 minutes

34% - 20 minutes - 30 minutes

22% - 35 minutes - 45 minutes

18% - 1 hour - 2 hours+

7% - No Response

29. Does the (arch)diocese have guidelines on human sexuality?

Yes - 60%

No - 35%

No Response - 05%

30. If the answer to question (29) was “yes,” is NFP incorporated in the human sexuality guidelines?

Yes - 41%

No - 20%

No Response - 39%

31. Continuing and out-reach education in NFP was provided in the (arch)diocese, during the last 12 months, for: *(Check all that apply.)*

(Frequency)

59 - NFP Teachers

51 - NFP Clients

22 - Deacons

36 - Priests

6 - (Arch)diocesan directors of religious education 17 - Health Care Professionals

21 - Other: youth ministers, sponsor couples, marriage prep ministers, seminarians, etc.

32. What format is used for continuing and out-reach education? *(Check all that apply.)*

(Frequency)

22 - Seminars

25 - Workshops

28 - Special lectures

46 - Articles for the diocesan newspaper

33 - Informational mailings

25 - NFP Diocesan newsletter

21 - Periodic informational meetings

10 - Other: clergy convocation, EE weekends, CCL newsletter, etc.

IV. OPTIONAL

33. Please include additional program information not covered by this questionnaire which you feel the DDP/NFP should know regarding the (arch)diocesan NFP program and/or how we can be of further assistance to you.

(Not relevant for general distribution)

34. Please describe the greatest obstacles that hinder the growth/establishment of NFP services in the (arch)diocese.

(Frequency)

26 - Lack of public support by bishop and priests

18 - Insufficient funds

14 - Lack of teachers

10 - An uninformed medical community

11 - An uninformed laity (i.e., confusion with rhythm method)