

*“In summary – This is a positive report. There has been a dramatic shift in the ten years. Bishops are more accountable. They adopted the Charter, created the National Review Board, and supported the Audit. They report to laity through the Annual Report.*

*Children are safer. The Church has moved from a strictly legal response to a pastoral response. The Audit is continuously refined to protect children and to advance healing. We must remain vigilant. The NRB members are here to assist the Church in restoring trust with the faithful.”*

Mr. Al Notzon III, Chairman  
National Review Board

*“The bishops rely greatly on the expert counsel of the NRB to help them keep the promises they made to protect children and restore trust. The Progress Report is another example of how important those efforts are.”*

-Timothy Cardinal Dolan  
President, USCCB

## Working to Keep All Children Safe

The lay National Review Board was established in 2002. Comprised of lay men and woman it collaborates with the USCCB in preventing sexual abuse of minors by persons in service of the Church. Its responsibilities include advising, consulting, and offering recommendations to the bishops in matters of child and youth protection.

In 2002, the bishops of the United States approved the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*. Ten years later there has been striking improvement in the Church’s response to and treatment of victims.

**Children are safer now because of the creation of safe environments, and action has been taken to permanently remove offenders from ministry.**

Yet much work still needs to be done. The National Review Board (NRB) offered a report to the bishops and the faithful to highlight both what has been done and what is still needed to be done to protect children and restore trust. This is a summary of that report. To find the full text of the Report visit [usccb.org](http://usccb.org) and search: Ten Year Progress Report.



If you or someone you know has been harmed by someone in service to the Church, you are encouraged [to report it to civil authorities](#) and then to diocesan personnel. To find your diocesan/eparchial victim assistance coordinator visit [www.usccb.org](http://www.usccb.org) and search Victim Assistance Coordinator.

# Keeping the Promise to Protect



## A Ten-Year Progress Report from the National Review Board

## To Promote Healing and Reconciliation with the Victims/Survivors of Sexual Abuse of Minors

While the majority of abuse occurred in the past, the hurt of the abuse is present today. Many people abused decades ago are still hurting. Strides have been made in the work of **healing and reconciliation**.

- All dioceses/eparchies have a **Victim Assistance Coordinator** who is to demonstrate a sincere commitment to the spiritual and emotional well-being of victims/survivors.
- Bishops have transitioned from a strictly legal response to a **pastoral response** that recognizes the allegation's criminal nature and its impact on the victim/survivor.



## To Guarantee an Effective Response to Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors

Transparency in all matters is imperative in restoring the trust of the faithful.

- Allegations of sexual abuse of a minor are being reported to civil authorities.
- People making allegations that occurred decades ago are informed of their right to report the crime to civil authorities.
- Priests that have an established allegation of sexual abuse of a minor made against them are **permanently removed** from public ministry.
- Codes of conduct are in place, helping all to recognize and report inappropriate behavior.

## To Ensure the Accountability of our Procedures

An independent auditing firm regularly conducts compliance audits of dioceses/eparchies/eparchies. These audits are instrumental in protecting children, being transparent, and reestablishing the trust of the faithful.

- The NRB **recommends** that parishes be included in audits to better determine that diocesan policies and procedures are **being implemented** where it really counts—in the parishes.

There should be no question that the faithful expect 100% participation in the audit.

The NRB and the Bishops' Committee on the Protection of Children and Young People continue to **collaborate** with each other and to **offer advice** in matters of child and youth protection.



## To Protect the Faithful

Dioceses/eparchies invest millions of dollars to

- **Train** clergy, employees, and volunteers to **prevent child sexual abuse**
- **Conduct background** evaluations on employees and volunteers.

Diocesan personnel work tirelessly to make sure this requirement is met.

Parents and guardians are welcomed **partners** in protecting children in the Church.

1985	1995	2002	2003	2005	2005	2011
Church begins to deal with sexual abuse claims as a national conference	<i>Five Principles</i> developed	<i>Charter</i> approved in Dallas	First audits conducted	<i>Essential Norms</i> officially recognized by Vatican	First <i>Charter</i> revision approved	Second <i>Charter</i> revision approved