Safe Environment Newsletter
Archdiocese of Indianapolis

Cell Phone Monitoring
What can we do?

Potential concerns for monitoring cell phone use...

- ☐ Cyberbullying
- ☐ Sexting
- ☐ Access to unwanted information
- ☐ Access to virtual predators
- ☐ Disruption in studies

There are multiple ways in which we are responsible for protecting children, and today's online world magnifies opportunities as well as complications.

Do not be afraid of new technologies!

"These rank among the marvelous things which God has placed at our disposal to discover, to use and to make known the truth, also the truth about our dignity and about our destiny as His children, heirs of His eternal Kingdom."

Pope John Paul II from January 24, 2005

Monitoring to Protect

Young people of today face challenges as they are navigating a world of communication technology that gives them instant access to people and information. Unfortunately, this same technology also gives them access to information and people that may put them at risk. We must take responsibility for protecting our young ones to ensure safe environments for children and youth in the same way that we protect them in their physical surroundings.

Parents should consider creating a "Cell Phone Agreement" with their children. Discuss and decide on boundaries for cell phone usage including: approved activities and prohibited apps, as well as time spent on devices. Put it down on paper, and ask children to sign it. **Teach your children the importance of moderation, as well as the need to stay safe in the online world.**

Options for Monitoring Cell Phone Usage

In addition to creating an agreement, parents need to plan a system for monitoring. Be proactive and check on children when they are using cell phones on their own.

My Mobile Watchdog is an example of software that can be installed on a phone and used to track location, monitor SMS messages, block unsafe websites/apps and set time limits for phone usage.

Tracking Applications can be installed in a child's phone by their parent. This will show the exact location of the phone at chosen time intervals.

Mobile Spy or IM guard can be used to monitor online activity, text messages, Whatsapp and other IM activity, social networking, call details and websites visited, block apps, record emails, and more.

Parental Controls can be used to restrict use of the appstore or even specific apps.