

DIOCESAN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FOR

NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING

A Program of the NCCB Committee for Pro-Life Activities

DIOCESAN NFP PROGRAM - PROFILE

1996 SUMMARY



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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 1996 Diocesan NFP program *Profile* survey.

OVERVIEW OF THE 1996 PROFILE

In early January of 1997, **187** *Profile* questionnaires were mailed to the dioceses. **Ninety-one** or 49% had completed and returned their questionnaires to meet the deadline for data analysis. Some trends are very evident concerning NFP programs in dioceses around the nation:

- A. Where the diocesan bishop and clergy publicly encourage and support NFP efforts, NFP programs are strong and effective, even with limited funding. Some NFP coordinators feel their programs are treated as peripheral and given limited recognition.
- B. Most NFP programs receive some financial support from their dioceses. A common financial 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. Still, half of all diocesan programs have less than \$5,000 per year for their NFP program efforts. 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 responsibility for NFP activities is one hat of many for this person. For example, the Family Life Director might also be tasked with the responsibility for NFP development as well as Pro-Life Activities in addition to his/her general responsibilities of Family Life Ministry.
- D. Most diocesan marriage preparation programs include some overview of NFP methods. The time allotted for NFP in marriage preparation programs is often less than forty-five

minutes. Sometimes it is barely mentioned. A greater inclusion of NFP in the teaching efforts about human sexuality and conjugal relations remains a goal.

- 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 of the diocesan NFP teachers are volunteers. A few dioceses give teachers stipends to cover personal costs, e.g., gas, a baby sitter, materials, etc.
- G. There are at a minimum more than 1,000+ NFP teachers scattered in dioceses across the nation. They contribute well over \$1,000,000 in donated time and energy toward NFP efforts. NFP teachers represent a great resource for the teaching of human sexuality within a faith context, a resource not fully utilized.

NFP program efforts in dioceses, when viewed as a whole, remain varied and uneven. Some dioceses have made tremendous strides in improving their NFP programs by meeting the *National Standards of the NCCB*. A few dioceses have experienced a reduction in NFP programs either through teachers leaving the diocese, budget cuts, and/or diocesan restructuring. Dioceses which have demonstrated a long-term commitment to NFP ministry through substantial funding, staffing, and program services should be better utilized for consultation purposes by dioceses with less developed programs. Some of the model diocesan NFP programs include: Cleveland, OH; Harrisburg, PA; La Crosse, WI; Phoenix, AZ; St. Cloud, MN; and Springfield, IL. Consult your National Diocesan NFP Coordinators' Directory or the DDP/NFP for further information.

In conclusion, the single most compelling pastoral question is: "Can couples who wish to be faithful to Church teaching on responsible parenthood get the NFP help they need within our diocese?" The answer to that question will determine how best to strategize program development for local diocesan NFP ministry.

Grateful appreciation is extended to the following dioceses which submitted data for the 1996 *Profile* survey:

Allentown, PA; Arlington, VA; Baker, OR; Beaumont, TX; Belleville, IL; Boise, ID; Biloxi, MS; Brooklyn, N.Y.; Burlington, VT; Camden, N.J.; Canton, Romanian Catholic Diocese; Charleston, S.C.; Cincinnati, OH; Charlotte, N.C.; Cleveland, OH; Colorado Springs CO; Columbus, OH; Corpus Christi, TX; Covington, KY; Davenport, IA; Des Moines, IA; Detroit, MI; Dodge City, KS; Duluth, MN; El Paso, TX; Erie, PA; Fargo, N.D.; Galveston-Houston, TX; Gaylord, MI; Grand Rapids, MI; Greenburg, PA; Harrisburg, PA; Hartford, CT; Honolulu, HI; Houma-Thibodaux, LA; Indianapolis, IN; Jackson, MS; Joliet, IL; Kansas City, MO; La Crosse, WI; Lafayette, IN; Lafayette, LA; Lansing, MI; Little Rock, AR; Los Angeles, CA; Lubbock, TX; Madison, WI; Manchester, N.H.; Marquette, MI; Memphis, TN; Metuchen, N.J.; Nashville, TN; New Orleans, LA; New Ulm, MI; New York, N.Y.; Newark, N.J.; Newton, MA (Melkite-Greek Catholic); Ogdensburg, N.Y.; Oklahoma City, OK; Orange, CA; Orlando, FL; Owensboro, KY; Palm Beach, FL; Peoria, IL; Philadelphia, PA; Pittsburgh, PA; Phoenix, AZ; Providence, R.I.; Pueblo, CO; Rapid City, S.D.; Rockford, IL; Rockville Centre, N.Y.; San Antonio, TX; San Francisco, CA; San Jose, CA; Santa Rosa, CA; Sioux City, IA; St. Petersburg, FL; St. Cloud, MN; St. Louis, MO; Salina, KS; Springfield, IL; Stamford, CT; Trenton, N.J.; Tulsa, OK; Venice, FL; Washington, D.C.; and Wichita, KS.

1996 Profile Report*

I. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

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

88 [97%] YES
 2 [2%] NO
 1 [1%] (No Response)

2. If the answer to question (1) was “Yes” who is responsible for coordinating NFP programs and services in your diocese: e.g., Family Life Director, Director of Catholic Charities, Engaged Encounter Couple, Pre-Cana Couple, Diocesan NFP Coordinator, Respect Life Director, etc.?

Frequency:

45 [50%] Diocesan NFP Coordinator
 30 [32%] Family Life Director
 11 [12%] Other: Respect Life Director, Director of Catholic Charities
 5 [6%] (No Response)

3. If the answer to question (1) was “Yes” this position is: (Check only one.)

10 [11%] Full-time, paid
 1 [1%] Full-time, volunteer
 55 [60%] Part-time, paid/part of other responsibilities
 19 [21%] Part time, volunteer
 6 [7%] (No response)

4. Please check the statement which best describes your program’s staff:

10 [11%] We have our own support staff.
 46 [51%] We share support staff.
 34 [37%] We do not have a support staff.
 1 [1%] (No response)

5. How many NFP teachers work for your diocesan program?

Total NFP work force as reported by 84 dioceses consists of 916 teachers.

Comment: Based on other sources, there are over 1,000+ NFP teachers nationally.

**Totals, percentages, and comments were compiled (4/4/97) from 91 dioceses.*

6. Please check the statement which best describes the program management of your teachers:

- 18 [20%] Most of our NFP instructors are volunteers.
We give them a stipend.
- 55 [60%] Most of our NFP instructors are volunteers.
We do not give them a stipend.
- 12 [13%] We pay our NFP instructors a salary (part and/or full time).
- 6 [7%] (No response)

7. The diocesan NFP program is: (Check one)

- 9 [10%] Its own department
- 56 [61%] Part of the Marriage and Family Life office
- 6 [7%] Part of Catholic Charities
- 4 [4%] Part of Pro-Life Activities
- 3 [3%] A service of our Catholic hospital(s)
- 11 [12%] Other: various diocesan institutions, departments, or approved agencies.
- 3 [3%] (No response)

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

Frequency:

- 35 Independent NFP teacher(s).
- 16 Independent NFP organization(s).
- 8 Other
- 31 Does not apply
- 8 (No response)

9. Does your diocese have an NFP Advisory Committee?

- 33 [36%] YES
- 56 [62%] NO
- 2 [2%] (No response)

10. Does your diocese have its own NFP teacher training program?

- 30 [33%] YES
- 58 [64%] NO
- 3 [3%] (No response)

11. If the answer to question (11) was “No”, who trains your teachers? (Check all that apply.)

Frequency:

21	Billings Ovulation Method Association of the United States (BOMA)
40	Couple to Couple League (CCL)
5	Family of the Americas
8	Northwest Family Services
25	Pope Paul VI Institute (Creighton Model, OM)
22	Other
17	(No response)

Comment: The results represent the frequency each provider was mentioned. Dioceses use a variety of national providers. NFP teacher training is diverse and is reflected in the provider(s) chosen.

12. Why was your NFP provider(s) chosen for training your teachers; e.g., methodology, affordable fees, convenient, locale, etc.?

Frequency:

33	Methodology
21	Cost
10	Convenient locale
18	Other
35	(No response)

Comment: Dioceses select provider(s) for various of reasons; e.g., long standing association with provider; proximity; cost; quality of program; materials; sustained support; incorporation of Church teaching; and good working relationship with the provider.

II. PROGRAM BUDGET

13. How much money was spent last year on NFP programming?

5 [5%]	0
38 [42%]	1-4,999
8 [9%]	5-9,999
19 [21%]	10-29,999
7 [8%]	30-49,999
5 [5%]	50-69,000
2 [2%]	>70,000
7 [8%]	(No response)

Comment: Only a handful of dioceses allocate specific funding for NFP programs. Most of the dioceses spend only a few hundred dollars directly on NFP materials and programs. Most NFP program money comes from the general budget of a diocesan department; e.g., family life, pastoral ministries, or respect

life office. A couple of dioceses with large NFP programs are subsidized partially by Catholic hospitals, various Catholic organizations, and some public funding.

14. What amount of the total in question (13) comes from diocesan funds? (Please estimate the percentage and check only one.)

29 [32%]	100%
28 [31%]	More than 50%
18 [20%]	Less than 50%
10 [11%]	0
6 [6%]	(No response)

15. Other than diocesan funding, what additional sources of income are used to support NFP programs in your diocese? (Check all that apply.)

<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Sources of Funding</i>
3	Grants
10	Individual parishes
68	Client fees
10	Catholic organizations
8	NFP program fund raising activities
22	Other: Catholic hospitals, K of C's, etc.
24	(No response)

Comment: These numbers represent the frequency a specific source of funding was mentioned. Many programs rely on a variety of funding sources.

III. PROGRAM SERVICE

16. Please estimate the total monetary value of the contributions made by your volunteers to your NFP program. (Please give your best estimate.)

Total from 56 dioceses: \$526,300.00

Comment: The exact dollar amount of donated time, materials, and energy is much higher than reported. For all dioceses the total would be over \$1,000,000. Many NFP coordinators found it difficult to put a dollar value on volunteer efforts. As with other Church ministries, NFP programs exist because of the dedication of committed people. It is their ministry.

17. Which NFP method(s) is currently taught in your diocesan program? (Check all that apply.)

<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Methods</i>
62	STM
49	OM
4	BBT
9	Other
7	(No response)

Comment: Because most dioceses use a variety of providers or teachers having been taught in different NFP methods, various NFP methods are offered. The STM and OM methods of NFP are the most popular. The frequency of each method reflected in dioceses throughout the country.

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

45 [50%] YES
41 [45%] NO
5 [05%] (No response)

19. Is NFP included in your various diocesan marriage preparation programs?

82 [90%] YES
4 [04%] NO
5 [06%] (No response)

20. If the answer to question (19) was “Yes”, on the average, how much time is allotted to NFP education? (Give your best estimate.)

Time Allotted for NFP Education:

16 [19%] 5 min. - 15 min.
26 [29%] 20 min. - 30 min.
22 [23%] 35 min. - 45 min.
16 [17%] 1 hr. - 2 hrs. +
11 [12%] (No response)

Comment: The time allotted to NFP varies considerably, not only from diocese to diocese, but within each diocese; e.g., emphasis of instructor, type and length of a marriage prep program, etc. Often, NFP is barely discussed.

21. Continuing education in NFP was provided in the diocese, during the last 12 months, for: (Check all that apply.)

Frequency:
54 NFP Teachers
37 NFP clients

- 24 Clergy
- 19 Health care professionals
- 11 Other: engaged couples, seminarians, parish and student groups, etc.
- 18 (No response)

22. How was continuing education provided? (Check all that apply).

Frequency:

- 24 Seminars
- 26 Workshops
- 14 Special lectures
- 32 Articles for the diocesan newspaper
- 29 Informational mailings
- 33 Periodic informational meetings
- 15 Diocesan NFP newsletter
- 12 Other: diocesan conferences, deanery meetings, individual sessions, etc.
- 18 (No response)

23. Does your diocese have guidelines on human sexuality?

- 52 [57%] YES
- 32 [35%] NO
- 7 [08%] (No response)

Comment: Every diocese needs guidelines for the teaching of human sexuality in schools, CCD and youth programs, and adult education of which NFP should be a component.

24. If the answer to question (23) was “Yes”, is NFP incorporated in your Diocesan Human Sexuality guidelines?

- 33 [36%] YES
- 16 [18%] NO
- 42 [46%] (No response)

The following booklets which are available from the DDP/NFP contain valuable information either to begin a diocesan NFP program or to evaluate existing programs:

“Diocesan Plan for Natural Family Planning Program Development”

“National Standards of the National Conference of Catholic Bishop’s Diocesan Development Program for Natural Family Planning”

This report has been compiled and analyzed by Rev. Robert R. Cannon, M.A., M.Ed., Diocese of Venice.