

Dear Parents and Guardians,

September 2024

In an effort to assist in the monumental mission of protecting children, the Diocese of Metuchen and St. Thomas the Apostle Parish is partnering with you to present a safe environment lesson to your child. It is our cherished role as adults to fully protect children. In addition, we must also teach children/youth about their safety rights and boundaries, so that they have tools to protect themselves. What follows is information about the program itself and the resources available to you. **PLEASE NOTE: There are required action items on page 2 with content you need to return.**

Empowering God's Children Program Information:

A program for children, each lesson includes a grade-appropriate video component along with learning activities. The material is designed to better equip your child to know their safety rights, recognize their boundaries, and to empower them to protect themselves when safe adults are not immediately available—and ultimately be safer from people who might want to harm them.

As we partner together in delivering this content to youth, there are two especially helpful resources to assist in delivering the lessons. These resources are provided to our Lesson Leaders (which include you as parents, along with the persons delivering the content per the organization). First, the *Teaching Boundaries and Safety Guide*, which equips safe adults to facilitate an ongoing safety dialogue, and the *Lesson Leader Orientation and Certification Module*, give you better insight about conducting the lessons. Please communicate directly with your local or diocesan coordinator to gain access to each of these specific resources. Following the lesson, we encourage you to continue reinforcing the message at home whenever possible.

- I. TRAINING FORMAT: We will be providing two lesson plans per year to you as the parent/guardian to present the information directly to your own child.** Your Parish Catechetical Leader will share the above lesson with you and any additional instructions on sharing this information with your child.

- II. The Empowering God's Children program consists of 6 age-appropriate lessons of which we will give you 2 each year. This year you will be given Lesson 1 & Lesson 2 (next year will be Lesson 3 & Lesson 4). Within each Lesson there are 4 Options or Activities. Please do at least one Option or Activity from each Lesson and return the attached Parent Acknowledgement Form, signed, by December 5th, 2024.**

Lesson 1: Physical Boundaries: Safe and Unsafe Touching Rules

Lesson 2: Safe Adults, Safe Touches and Special Safe Adults

CONTACT INFORMATION: For questions, or to obtain access to the resources, the specific lesson and related activities, please contact : Andrea Madonna, PCL, amadonna@saintthomasob.com