

Lesson 2 for Grades 3-5

Partnering with Parents & Guardians for Safety: *Safe Adults, Safe Touches and Special Safe Adults*

PRINCIPLE

Children must learn how to respect their own health and safety and the safety of others, by understanding the difference between safe and unsafe individuals. In this way, we work together to prevent / reduce the risk of sexual abuse and boundary violations.

CATECHISM / SCRIPTURE

Life and physical health are precious gifts entrusted to us by God. We must take reasonable care of them, taking into account the needs of others and the common good. —Catechism of the Catholic Church, #2288 (1997)

OBJECTIVES

After lesson 2, children should be able to:

- Recognize how to respect one's own boundaries, and the boundaries of others
- Identify safe friends, safe adults and *special* safe adults, and better distinguish unsafe adults as well
- Stand up for themselves and others more effectively by responding in an appropriate manner to unsafe situations involving themselves or their friends
 - Say "No!" if someone shares unsafe or inappropriate material / images
 - Leave the situation
 - Tell an adult as soon as possible
 - Also tell an adult if it happens to a friend

Background for Parents and Guardians:

In preparation for teaching this lesson and to lead the activities, review the *Teaching Boundaries and Safety Guide: Safe Environment Guide for Caring Adults, Parents and Guardians*.

Before sitting down with your child(ren) and beginning the activities, read through this entire lesson and view the video. Choose the activities that you are most comfortable with first and gradually moving to the others. You will find it is helpful to have the *Teaching Boundaries and Safety Guide* handy to navigate the lesson material. These activities are intended to empower young people to think about safety issues with you as their partner.

Considerations for the age groups—

This age group is learning how to function independently of their parents. They know how to read, and their comprehension levels are giving them a better sense of abstract ideas. Their writing skills are getting better as they become more refined with communicating their ideas. Children this age are away from home more often and are recognizing that safety issues can arise when they are off with friends. They like to be in constant motion and are always on the go. Groups are important. Capable of intense loyalty to others, they usually have a best friend in which to confide. They have a strong sense of right / wrong, fair / unfair and are more able to discern the difference between safe / unsafe. They are able to use logic, can argue and hold strong debates. Parents and guardians can include them in discussions establishing rules or guidelines.

Activity #1: Introductory Video

Directions: View and discuss the introductory video with your child. The introductory video for all grades is designed to open a simple discussion with children about personal boundaries and touching safety. The video is approximately six minutes long and is *neither created nor intended as a substitute for the activities*. It's merely an intro designed to "break the ice" and assist the transition into completing the interactive Lesson Activity options. It can be used in to introduce any of the following activities. Discussion and practice are the critical components needed to teach children how to protect themselves. They learn best by "doing"; not just listening or watching.

Grades 3-5 Video links:

English K – 5: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/As5weSq9Jw>

Spanish K – 5: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/-ELCTmNKsw4>

Activity #2: Review and Discuss Vocabulary words in an age-appropriate way with your child

Respecting boundaries—we should have respect for ourselves, and respect for others. Respect for ourselves means we understand our dignity and value as a person, and work to create or maintain boundaries to protect ourselves. We feel upset or uncomfortable when someone doesn't honor our own boundaries, and we communicate with the right person if we need help. Respecting another's boundaries means you care about them, and won't do anything that would bring them harm, and that you communicate with the right person to get them help if they are being harmed by someone else. [Give children examples of respecting others, i.e. not calling people mean names, not hitting others, following rules at school or at home, stopping an activity when someone asks, letting an adult know when someone is in pain or hurt, etc.]

Safe friends and safe adults—safe people won't hurt you without a good reason and won't intentionally confuse you. They listen to and consistently respect boundaries and follow the rules. [Explain that a child may have many safe friends and adults. Give children examples of adult behavior that could hurt them, but may be necessary for the child's safety, i.e. medical exams, vaccinations, throat swabs, removing splinters, stopping a child from running into the road, etc.]

Special safe adult—*special* safe adults are those very few special adults who can see or touch a child's private body parts, but only for the purpose of keeping the child safe, clean and healthy. They have permission to help with bathing, restrooms, putting on clothes, and providing care when sick. Not every safe adult is a *special* safe adult, and sometimes *special* safe adults are only for specific occasions or reasons. [Give children examples of *special* safe adults who are always *special* safe adults, including a child's mother or father. Also, give an example of someone who is a *special* safe adult for specific reasons at a specific time, such as a doctor or nurse—but only for specific purposes and when a parent or caretaker is also present.]

Unsafe friends and unsafe adults—unsafe friends and unsafe adults put a child at risk for emotional, spiritual, and physical harm. These are people who place a child in danger for their own purposes without concern for the welfare of the child. They also do not consistently listen to the parents' wishes or the child's boundaries. [Tell children we can know when someone is unsafe if they do not follow the rules or listen to our boundaries.]

Safe touches—touches that have a good purpose, aren't intended to hurt and should be familiar. They're safe and can also be meant to keep you healthy, even if the person isn't known well, as long as the touches are appropriate for the particular relationship, such as when mom kisses your forehead at night, when you high-five your teammate, etc. [Avoid saying safe touches that *feel* good are "safe, loving or show someone loves you" since sometimes touches are safe and necessary, but can also hurt— although they hurt for a good reason to keep children safe, such as stiches, a doctor shot or dental cleanings.]

Unsafe touches—touches that are inappropriate, could be meant to hurt or scare, or are contrary to the touching rules. If unsure about a touch, ask a parent. [Provide examples of unsafe touches, such as hitting, punching, tripping, kicking, spitting, touching private parts, etc.]

Secret—something kept hidden, never told or unexplained. Secrets exclude others and have potential to harm, sometimes causing the person involved to feel frightened or uncomfortable. [For example, let children know that there are no secrets when it comes to personal and physical safety. Tell children it's wrong for an adult or another child to ask to keep a secret about safety—especially unsafe touches—because that's a way for people to get hurt. If an individual tries to make a child keep a secret or makes him / her feel frightened, the child must know to communicate this information right away to a parent or caring adult—and be reassured that the child will be protected regardless of threats or seeming consequences of "telling".]

Activity #3: Assertive Communication

Directions: Use the blank worksheet on the next page to instruct and discuss with your child behaviors of in-person and online communication.

Example: Read each of the situations below. All the answers are located in the Word Bank. One word in the Word Bank will be used twice.

For an added element of difficulty, cover up the word bank and try to fill in the blank without reading the available options.

IN-PERSON COMMUNICATION / BEHAVIOR SCENARIOS

1. Most touches are safe, but there are some that are unsafe.
2. If someone or something makes me feel uncomfortable, it's OK for me to stick up for myself and say the word "no" to an adult or other child.
3. If someone tries to touch my private body parts or wants me to touch their private parts, I should try to get away from the person and tell my parent(s) or my special safe adult right away!
4. If my friend tells me that something bad happened to them but asks me to keep it a secret, I need to still tell an adult right away because their safety is so important!
5. No one has a right to touch my private body parts, except to keep me clean and healthy, and only if they are a special safe adult.

ONLINE & INTERNET COMMUNICATION / BEHAVIOR SCENARIOS

6. If I'm using technology or the Internet and I see something that I know is against the rules, I should go tell my parent or safe adult immediately!
7. If I'm playing a game online and something scares me or upsets me, I need to tell an adult about it right away.
8. If someone says bad or mean words to me when we are playing or having fun, it is important for me to tell a safe adult about what was said.
9. If someone shows me an inappropriate image using a phone, or when using the Internet, it's OK for me to tell about it even though I might have looked at the image.

WORD BANK: "no", parent(s), rules, scares, secret, right, unsafe, image, bad or mean, healthy, special, adult

Assertive Communication

Instructions: Read each statement below for situations that deal with in-person communication / behavior, and behavior that occurs while online or using the Internet. Use the words from the Word Bank to complete each sentence. NOTE: One word in the Word Bank will be used twice.

WORD BANK

“no”
parent(s)
rules
scares

secret
right
unsafe
image

bad or mean
healthy
special
adult

IN-PERSON COMMUNICATION / BEHAVIOR SCENARIOS

1. Most touches are safe, but there are some that are _____.
2. If someone or something makes me feel uncomfortable, it's OK for me to stick up for myself and say the word _____ to an adult or other child.
3. If someone tries to touch my private body parts or wants me to touch their private parts, I should try to get away from the person and tell my _____ or my _____ safe adult right away!
4. If my friend tells me that something bad happened to them but asks me to keep it a _____, I need to still tell an adult right away because their safety is so important!
5. No one has a right to touch my private body parts, except to keep me clean and _____, and only if they are a _____ safe adult.

ONLINE & INTERNET COMMUNICATION / BEHAVIOR SCENARIOS

6. If I'm using technology or the Internet and I see something that I know is against the _____, I should go tell my parent or safe adult immediately!
7. If I'm playing a game online and something _____ me or upsets me, I need to tell an adult about it right away.
8. If someone says _____ words to me when we are playing or having fun, it is important for me to tell a safe _____ about what was said.
9. If someone shows me an inappropriate _____ using a phone, or when using the Internet, it's OK for me to tell about it even though I might have looked at the image.