

Lesson 2 for Grades 6-8

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—

Children of this age are dealing with enormous peer pressure while trying to understand their independent role in the world apart from their families. This is the age where puberty may begin or has already. It is not always "cool" to say that you must tell someone if you are touched or approached (in person, or online) in an inappropriate or sexual way. These situations may create feelings of immense shame, guilt, threats, etc., for the youth. Good communication while speaking to this age group should be stressed. With this age group it will be important to stress "healthy" behavior and boundaries, and the "right thing to do" when boundaries are violated.

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 6-8 Video links:

English 6 – 8: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/P3RoYAYkDQ4>

Spanish 6 – 8: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/XBN8gsD8A7U>

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 stitches, 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: Being Safe Online

Directions: Before distributing the worksheet, explain the following to your child: When you're using a technological device with the Internet, there are many opportunities to share information about yourself and others. Be extremely careful with the information you provide, as it could put you or your loved ones at risk. Items posted or shared on the Internet can have major consequences and can really hurt others. Think twice before posting anything, even if you have safety filters! Then, give your child the worksheet on the next page and instruct him/her to read each statement and select the correct multiple-choice answer. Use the examples one by one to ask the youth to explain why they chose the specific answers. Help them understand the correct answers.

INTERNET SAFETY ANSWER KEY

Question: Multiple choice answers:

1. What information should you keep to yourself when interacting with others or posting about yourself online?	A. My legal name and address information B. My school, city and state C. Both A and B D. The name of my favorite movie
2. If someone I know online asks me to keep a secret from my family or other friends, what should I do?	A. Write a post online sharing the information with everyone B. Talk to my parents about it C. Tell only my best friends D. Keep it a secret, because this person is a new friend and you wouldn't want to jeopardize the relationship
3. When I've started to talk to someone online who I don't know in person...	A. I should be cautious, because I don't actually know if this person is who they say they are B. I don't need to be cautious because it's just communicating over the Internet C. I should believe everything that they say to me—why would they lie?
4. When is it OK to meet with someone you've only known online?	A. When you've exchanged enough secrets that you feel safe and comfortable meeting one another B. When they pressure or threaten you, and say if you don't do what they want then they'll do something bad C. When you've spoken to your parents and have developed a plan to safely meet in a safe environment with their approval and presence.
5. What is the right thing to do if someone threatens or bullies you or a friend of yours online?	A. Leave the device / situation, and tell a safe adult immediately—showing them what happened B. Act tough and bully the person back C. Take it upon yourself to respond back to the bully D. Don't tell anyone or do anything—and hope that it will resolve on its own
6. What is appropriate behavior online?	A. Getting help for others when they aren't getting help for themselves B. Using kind and appropriate language when communicating with others instead of offensive language C. Refusing to join in bullying behavior, making fun of others or participating in inappropriate behavior D. All of the above

Being Safe Online

Instructions: Read each statement below for situations that deal with behavior that occurs while online or using the Internet and circle / highlight the correct answer from the options provided.

Question: Multiple choice answers:

1. What information should you keep to yourself when interacting with others or posting about yourself online?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. My legal name and address information B. My school, city and state C. Both A and B D. The name of my favorite movie
2. If someone I know online asks me to keep a secret from my family or other friends, what should I do?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Write a post online sharing the information with everyone B. Talk to my parents about it C. Tell only my best friends D. Keep it a secret, because this person is a new friend and you wouldn't want to jeopardize the relationship
3. When I've started to talk to someone online who I don't know in person...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. I should be cautious, because I don't actually know if this person is who they say they are B. I don't need to be cautious because it's just communicating over the Internet C. I should believe everything that they say to me—why would they lie?
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