

## Lesson 2 for Grades 9-12

## 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

*Anyone who uses the power at his disposal in such a way that it leads others to do wrong becomes guilty of scandal and responsible for the evil that he has directly or indirectly encouraged.*  
"Temptations to sin are sure to come; but woe to him by whom they come!" —  
Catechism of the Catholic Church, #2287 (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 is the age where all the experiences that began with puberty accelerate rapidly as the teenager matures into a young adult. Self-consciousness deepens and matures. The world of "children" is now renounced. Teens believe in their immortality and may tend to be reckless in their behavior—in person and online. They may appear to reject authority to define their independence, in reality though, they rely on strength and support of parents and other influential adults. Feeling supported and understood is important for this age group, as is upholding boundaries while the reasoning portions of their brains continue to develop. Teens have a great deal of personal freedom. This freedom also puts them at risk in various ways. Parents and guardians expect teens to take care of themselves and to ask for the help that they need. Fortifying online boundaries and guidance with online behavior is needed.

### 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 9-12 Video links:

English 9 – 12: [https://www.youtube.com/embed/eY\\_oa646oc](https://www.youtube.com/embed/eY_oa646oc)

Spanish 9 – 12: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/ScP07b62IR0>

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

**Boundaries**—the physical and emotional limits that define one person as separate from another or from others. Boundaries promote and preserve physical or emotional personal space in our relationships. Boundaries give each person a clear sense of “self” and a framework for how to function in relation to others. Boundaries bring order to our lives and empower each of us to determine how others will interact with us.

**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.

**Safe friends and safe adults**—safe people won’t hurt you without a good reason and won’t intentionally confuse or manipulate you. They listen to and consistently respect boundaries and follow the rules.

**Unsafe touch**—harmful touches committed by an individual or group that physically, sexually, or psychologically harms a child or young person. This touch is often from people who either cannot or choose not to see the harm in their actions.

**Peer Pressure**—the strong influence of a group—especially of young people—on members of that group to behave as everyone else does.

**Activity #3: Boundaries Discussions**

**Preparation:** This activity is ideal to discuss situations that might arise placing teens at risk and develop an action plan.

**Directions:** Begin by asking your child to pretend that they are journalists on a weekly newspaper, which features a column for teenagers—an opportunity for teens to anonymously seek advice on their personal problems. For the purpose of the exercise, the editor has just put them in charge of answering letters from various teens. Read each letter together and ask your child to take note of the important points. Ask them to talk to you about the possible solutions for each of the letters. Discuss.

**Letter 1:** My coach seems to be always tapping, rubbing or slapping me. She does this to everyone. Yet, I feel uncomfortable when she does it to me. It is just me? How should I handle it? My coach gives me extra help with practice time, so I feel like I don’t have a right to say “no.”

**Letter 2:** The halls at school are crowded between classes. One student seems to have lots of “accidents” that cause him to rub up against me every day—even when I try to get out of his way. What can I do? I feel like he’s not respectful of my space.

**Letter 3:** My mom has drunk friends who come over to our house late at night. One comes into my room and touches my private body parts. I feel so ashamed and disgusted, and don’t want to tell anyone about it. How should I handle it? I tried to say something to my mom, but I couldn’t get the words out. I also don’t think she’d believe me if I did talk to her about it.

**Letter 4:** One day after practice, a group of us went over to our coach’s house to shoot pool. Lying there on a table in the den were books and magazines full of pictures of naked women—and there were even images of women we knew from school! I was uncomfortable, but everyone else was laughing and joking and looking at the pictures. If I tell my parents, everyone will think I’m a loser. What should I do?

**Letter 5:** The person I’m dating wants to come over to my house when my parents are gone, and has been pushing me to have sex, and I’m afraid that I won’t be able to say “no” if we are alone. What should I do?

**Letter 6:** My stepfather keeps coming in my room uninvited—just when I am getting dressed. How can I stop him without making a big scene?

**Letter 7:** When is it okay to keep a secret?

**Letter 8:** I sent a friend a nude photo of myself and found out that it was sent to others. I was informed by someone else in school that if I didn't do what he wanted me to do, then he would publish the photo on the Internet. I'm terrified that my parents will find out, and am I willing to do almost anything to stop people from spreading the photo. Now what do I do?