

# **Personal Safety Curriculum For Children and Youth**

**A Component of the  
Safe Environment Education Program**

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June 2006**



# THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

## DIOCESE OF TUCSON

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### OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

August 2006

To all those who collaborate in the education of children and youth:

An important part of the future of our Church lies with our willingness and effectiveness in forming the young in the Faith. As we do so, we must also provide for their safety. Of course, a great part of the latter depends on our success in screening, educating and supervising all who work with children and youth. Still, children themselves can play a role in their own safety; children can learn to recognize, resist and ask for help with unsafe or uncomfortable situations. With our help, parents and grandparents can learn how to provide such education to their children and all teachers can work in tandem with parents by providing basic safety education in the course of religious education.

To assist religious educators and youth ministers with this task, we offer the Personal Safety Curriculum for Children and Youth as a component of the Safe Environment Education Program of the Diocese of Tucson. This curriculum has been developed with the help of many individuals. Most prominent among them are professional educators and catechists. This group benefited also from consultation with parents whose recommendations were incorporated into the final document.

This is now the recommended curriculum of the Diocese of Tucson. I ask you to review it carefully to see if it will fit the needs of your local parish or school community and make it easier for you to offer effective annual education in personal safety in the context of formation in the Faith. It can be used on its own, or in combination with other programs that have been implemented effectively in the diocese during the last two years.

I thank the Roman Catholic Diocese of Tulsa and the National Catholic Educational Association for extending so generously their program for our adaptation. I thank the team that developed this curriculum: Ms. Jean McKenzie, Mr. Mike Berger, Sr. Elise Calmus, C.P.P.S., Ms. Mary Ann Hendrickson, Ms. Laura Stehle, and Dr. Paul Duckro. I thank the parents who gave their time to carefully review and suggest changes to an earlier draft. I am also grateful to all of you whose dedication to the Catholic education of our children has allowed us already to have reached so many children with personal safety education. I am confident that this curriculum will help you further your efforts to teach our young people.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Gerald F. Kicanas, D.D.  
Bishop of Tucson

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## Introduction

In recent years our society has begun to understand the pervasiveness of child sexual abuse. It is estimated that one female child out of every four will be sexually abused before she is 18 years old.<sup>1</sup> In addition, one male child out of 8 will be sexually abused as well.<sup>2</sup> Child sexual abuse is not confined to any racial, ethnic, or socio economic class. Children across the world experience the nightmare of abuse. Only now are we beginning to research the effects of abuse on children. The abuse experienced by children, especially young children, appears to explode into countless emotional problems that affect everyone in our society.

As our awareness of the effects of child sexual abuse grows, frustrated parents and educators look for ways to prevent the abuse from happening. In order to teach prevention techniques, we are forced to examine our social, cultural, and religious attitudes about appropriate roles, family life, personal safety and violence. The continuing patterns of abuse can be broken with the use of preventive education and with appropriate counseling interventions with children who have already been victimized.

Education is an important aspect of effectively preventing the sexual abuse of children. Education accomplishes the following:

- **it** breaks through the individual and societal silence and denial that have long supported/tolerated sexual abuse of children;
- **it** increases access to community resources for treatment and intervention for young people;
- **it** decreases the level of public acceptance of sexual abuse;
- **it** increases the degree of understanding and awareness by children of the issues related to sexual violence.<sup>3</sup>

Prevention education focuses on the dissemination of factual information about child sexual abuse and the development of skills to enable a child to avoid or to resist an approach by an offender. A necessary ingredient for education is information about what to do and whom to contact for help if assaulted. Beyond these obvious goals, prevention education within a religious context offers the Church an opportunity to teach children about God's care for children, about justice and forgiveness, and about the Church's care for survivors.

Even though many public schools are introducing prevention curricula, it is essential that the Church be involved in the prevention of sexual abuse. Children who have been taught child abuse prevention in the context of religious education report that having this information in this setting allows them to discuss values, Scripture, and Church teachings as it relates to this topic. Teaching prevention also allows the Church to offer children images of hope, comfort, and healing that will be very useful to them in the future no matter what their experience. Every avenue of communication must be used to spread the Gospel message of God's love and care for children.

### Notes:

- <sup>1</sup> David Finkelhor, *Protecting God's Children: A Time to Protect God's Children* (The National Catholic Risk Retention Group, Inc., 2002)
- <sup>2</sup> David Finkelhor, *Child Sexual Abuse: New Theory and Research* (New York)
- <sup>3</sup> Marie Fortune, *Sexual Abuse Prevention: A Study for Teenagers* (New York: United Press Church Press, 1984), 9

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

**June 2006**

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Tucson is indebted to the following:  
The Roman Catholic Diocese of Tulsa Curriculum Committee Members and the  
National Catholic Educational Association Member for granting permission to use their  
Safe Environment Program in our Diocese.

### **Members of the Curriculum Committee of the Diocese of Tucson**

Mr. Mike Berger, Director of the Office of Catechesis  
Sr. Mary Elise Calmus, CPPS, DOT Safe Environment Parish Liaison  
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Mrs. Mary Ann Hendrickson, Programs Coordinator, Dept. of Catholic Schools  
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### **Member of the National Catholic Education Association**

Wade Marshall, Director of Member and Information Services  
National Catholic Educational Association

## Guidelines and Explanation Regarding Prevention And Education Programs for Children

As stated in Article 12 of the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Youth*, “Diocese/eparchies will establish “safe environment programs. They will cooperate with parents, civil authorities, educators, and community organizations to provide education and training for children, youth, parents, ministers, educators, and others about ways to make and maintain a safe environment for children. Dioceses/eparchies will make clear to clergy and members of the community the standards of conduct for clergy and other persons and members in positions of trust with regard to sexual abuse.”

- Parents are the primary educators of their children
- The prevention and education programs for children will focus on enhancing the ability of children to recognize abuse and on encouraging safe environments that allow them to communicate any potential endangerment.
- The prevention and education programs for children will emphasize developing basic safety skills for safety from dangerous or abusive situations.
- The prevention and education programs for children will be designed to educate children and parents about personal safety and appropriate boundaries between children and adults.
- The prevention and education programs taught to children will include instruction on how to **recognize, resist, and report** through the following:
  - ❖ Communicate any concerns they may have
  - ❖ Say “NO” to unwanted situations
  - ❖ Identify trusted adults with whom to speak
  - ❖ Recognize that abusive situations are never the fault of the child
  - ❖ Disclose inappropriate or unwanted actions directed to self or others

## **How to Use the Personal Safety Education Program**

This curriculum is to be inserted into the existing curriculum of our school/parish programs. It is an integral part of the religious education and training of our young persons and should be implemented within the course of the year, preferably in the fall of each academic year. Lessons have been designed to be approximately 30-45 minutes in length, with more materials than can actually be used in any one class period to allow for some personal choice of activities.

The instructional content of this curriculum is intended for all catechists, including classroom teachers, youth ministers, and Directors of Religious Education within our parishes and schools. If however, one or more of the catechists are unprepared or uncomfortable with teaching the content, we encourage the assistance of a resource teacher. The resource teacher may be another catechist on the local team or a member of a local community agency who deals with personal safety education. Nevertheless, the regular catechist should remain with the class while the content is being taught to the class or group.

It is also strongly encouraged that this program be integrated with the general curriculum as the teaching lends itself throughout the year. We encourage catechists to take advantage of each and every “teachable moment” to discuss personal safety with our children and youth.

Components of the program have been taken from “Faith, Family and Friends” with the permission of The National Catholic Educational Association (publisher) and the NCEA Department of Chief Administrators of Catholic Education.

The format for each lesson is as follows:

### **Student Objectives**

This section identifies the specific objective of the lesson, i.e., what is the student to know, do, or be like, at the end of the lesson.

### **Lesson Overview**

This paragraph is a short summary of student activities and experiences during the lesson. It would be helpful to the catechist if a cursory look is given to the lesson overviews of the grade level below and the grade level above. This information will provide the catechist with a sense of the continuity of the content of each lesson.

## **Background Information**

The Background Information portion gives the person teaching this module information and viewpoints helpful for putting together the total lesson. It may alert catechist to watch for specific student responses, give helpful factual background information, or relate the lesson to the student's developmental stage. It will remind the catechist to check the specific local resources that are available.

## **Vocabulary**

This section will include terminology which may be unfamiliar to the audience, or that may need reinforcement for the understanding of the material. Vocabulary may need to be modified by the catechist to meet the individual needs of the students.

## **Catechist's Role**

The term "catechist" includes all those persons who teach children and youth. This includes classroom teachers within the school setting, youth ministers, Directors of Religious Education and religious education catechists in parish programs.

This section provides suggestions for instructional strategies which may be helpful in the delivery of the content.

## **Suggested Materials**

Any materials used in the lesson are identified in this section. Handouts and attachments are included with many of the lessons. Other items will be every day school materials. In a few cases a literature story is suggested. Every lesson plan includes more than enough material to be used. This will allow for leeway within the plan delivery. This also allows for modifying the lesson to meet the individual needs and/or the maturity level of the children/youth. There will be opportunities throughout the personal safety education curriculum for integration into the general curriculum.

## **Teaching/Learning Activities**

**Activity/Experience:** This section gives the students a common experience, which provides the basis for accomplishing the objectives. The activity/experience establishes the framework for the message and the content of the lesson.

**Processing the Experience:** This section is divided into two parts, content and personalization. The content questions assist students to verbalize and clarify what they have learned in regards to the objective. The personalization questions help students apply the lesson to their personal lives. These latter questions can be used in a variety of ways: quiet reflection, class discussion, journaling. It is important that the individual catechist decide which method is best for his/her class. Catechists should assess the students' level of trust in this section.

The catechist needs to be prepared with responses for students comments and questions. In some instances they may disclose a reportable event. The catechist should use his/her discretion to determine if this information should be solicited at a later point in time.

## **Closure**

This section helps students bring together the learning and application for that experience. At times it ends with the end of the class; at other times it may carry over into another class period.

# **PERSONAL SAFETY EDUCATION PROGRAM**

## **Roles and Responsibilities of Implementation**

Those responsible for implementation of the Personal Safety Education Program, a component of the Safe Environment Program at the parish and school level must bear in mind that some people involved in ministry may be survivors of abuse themselves. It is important that those involved in parish/school ministry to acknowledge their own pain and process of healing and to be vigilant so that their concerns and issues about abuse are not overlaid in their response to young people. If they are in doubt about their ability to respond appropriately and professionally they should identify their concern to the person responsible for the program. They should be encouraged to seek therapeutic or pastoral assistance for themselves.

### **Role of the Pastor/Administrator:**

The Pastor/Administrator is ultimately responsible for the implementation of the Personal Safety Education Program. There may be several ways in which this program may be implemented.

- 1) Delegate the annual implementation of the program to the appropriate staff members responsible for the formation of children and youth.
- 2) Collaborate with nearby parishes/schools.
- 3) Consult with experts such as those within the parish who have professional expertise.
- 4) Oversee the reporting of outcomes at the end of the academic year (See Appendix).

### **Role of the Program Director (Principal, DRE, Youth Minister):**

It is the duty of the program director to ensure that this curriculum is being implemented annually at all grade levels. In addition, it is their responsibility that information is shared with parents at all grade levels. In order to properly document this education program the Appendix of this book contains forms which will be useful for the documentation of the educational component of the Safe Environment Program in the Diocese of Tucson. Each year these forms are to be completed and signed by the Pastor/ Compliance Representative by the end of the academic year. Copies shall be maintained at each local site by each Compliance Representative. These will assist parish and school Compliance Representatives in the completion of forms for Diocesan audit purposes.

## **Role of Parents:**

While parents are their children's first and principal educators, they are not solely responsible for handing on the heritage of our faith. Pope John Paul II has noted "the family is the primary but not the one and exclusive educating community" (Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World, Familiaris Consortium #40). The parish/school has a role in educating the child.

Because parents are the primary educators of their children, they should have a unique knowledge of their children and insights into their readiness to learn. It is imperative that parents be aware that our children and adolescents need to be offered knowledge of personal safety and the values that guide it. Therefore, parents should be invited to participate in the informational sessions prior to the presentations for children and youth. They will also be given the opportunity of a purposeful, written refusal, should they opt to decline this personal safety program for their children. As a result of their participation in this program, they will:

- Be aware of what their children are being taught, thereby allowing for increased parent support.
- Have a better awareness of safe environments within the home.
- Become knowledgeable of the mandatory reporting laws. In this, parents are more likely to contact civil authorities if the need arises and less likely to feel betrayed if the parish or school must make such a report.

## **Role of the Catechist:**

Catechists are teachers who are entrusted with the responsibility of teaching. They must be mature individuals carefully chosen and well prepared for the task. This includes religious education catechists as well as teachers within our schools. They must possess an appreciation for the sacredness of the human person. If they are in doubt about their ability to respond appropriately and professionally, they should identify their concern to the person responsible for the program.

## **Role of the Diocesan Offices:**

The Department of Catholic Schools, The Office of Catechesis, and The Office of Child, Adolescent and Adult Protection, are available to:

- Provide supplemental curriculum to be used with children, youth and parents.
- Act as resources for the local level.
- Approve the use of materials that may deviate from this recommended curriculum.

**Grade Level: Pre-K**

**Personal Safety Curriculum for Children and Youth  
A Component of the Safe Environment Education Program  
Diocese of Tucson**

**Student Objectives**

The student will:

- a. Learn that each person's body is the temple of the Holy Spirit
- b. Discuss that they have parts of their bodies that are considered private and to respect these in self and others
- c. Learn that all children are persons of worth and their bodies belong to them

**Lesson Overview**

Through stories and role-playing, children learn about the sacredness of their bodies and learn to say no to unsafe touches.

**Background Information**

Children will learn that their private parts are covered by a bathing suit.

**Vocabulary**

Private Parts: those parts of the body covered by a swimsuit.

Respect: being nice and kind to others.

Safe/comfortable touch: touches that make you feel safe and loved (they might include hugging, playing, snuggling, helping, etc.)

Unsafe/uncomfortable touch: touches that make you feel angry or afraid (they include, but are not limited to kicking, grabbing, biting, pushing and touching the private parts of our bodies for no good reason)

**Catechist's Role**

Develop in the children the understanding of the sacredness of their bodies and help them to know that they are persons who are good and lovable.

## **Suggested Materials**

- Dolls (boy & girl)
- Pictures of boys and girls both as babies and young children

## **Teaching/Learning Activities**

### **Activity/Experience:**

1. Discuss:
  - God gave us a wonderful gift in our bodies.
  - Think of all the wonderful things our bodies help us do (for example, walk, run, sit, play, study).
  - Think of all the great things our bodies help us enjoy (e.g., eating, sleeping, singing).
  - We are made in the image and likeness of God. Because we are a child of God, our bodies are very special. God's life in us makes our bodies temples of the Holy Spirit. (Be sure they understand this term as a special place.) Being temples of the Holy Spirit means we are special and must take care of our bodies.
2. Ask the children to name some ways we take care of our bodies (elicit such answers as: eat, clothe, wash, care for).
3. Have the class listen to this story:  
John was angry with Billy. He threw dirt on Billy and made his clothes dirty.
4. Ask: Was Johnny nice to Billy?
5. Tell this story:  
Carmen and Juanita were fighting over their dolls. Carmen said her doll had prettier clothes than Juanita's had. Juanita tore the clothes off Carmen's doll. Then she took her doll's clothes off. "Now they are the same," said Juanita.
6. Ask:
  - Was what Juanita did right?
  - Should Carmen have teased Juanita?
  - Did Carmen and Juanita respect each other and each other's property?
7. Discuss:
  - We are special.
  - Our bodies are special.
8. Have the children look at the pictures of babies and children.
9. Explain that God made parts of our bodies very private. These parts we always keep covered and only our mothers and fathers, big brothers and sisters, those who take care of us and our doctors and nurses should see our private parts. And they see our private parts only when they need to help us. For example, when they help us get dressed, take a bath or are taking care of us when we are sick. Each of us is important and our bodies belong to us.

10. Have the class listen to this story:  
Jim had new *Sponge Bob Squarepants* underwear. He wanted the kids in the school to see it. Should he let them see it?
11. Ask: Should he? (No)
12. Tell this story: Mary's friend wanted Mary's little brother to undress.
13. Ask: Should Mary let her brother do that? (No)
14. Who should Mary tell if her friend keeps asking? (Parents, older brother or sister).
15. Explain that we keep our private parts covered. Have the class look at the dolls. Ask them to see how they are all properly dressed. Add that we are all properly dressed and no one should ask us to take our clothes off unless it is our parents and they are helping us dress or bathe.

## **Processing the Experience**

### **Content Questions:**

1. Why are our bodies special?
2. What can our bodies do?
3. Why do we respect our bodies?
4. Is it important to keep parts of our bodies private?
5. What do we do if someone asks us to show them our private parts?

### **Questions for Personal Reflection:**

1. How do you take good care of your body?
2. How do you show respect for other people's bodies?

## **Closure**

Say this prayer:

*"I am special as can be  
Because God loves me."*

Sing this song to the tune of "Frere Jacques"

*I Am Special  
I am special! (twice)  
Yes, I am! (twice)  
I am very special! (twice)  
You are too! (twice)*

**Grade Level K**

**Personal Safety Curriculum for Children and Youth  
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Diocese of Tucson**

**Student Objectives**

The student will:

- a. Learn that all children are persons of worth and their bodies belong to them
- b. Describe the differences between safe [comfortable] touch and unsafe [uncomfortable] touch
- c. Decide that it is right to say no
- d. Discuss who to go to for help if they are abused
- e. Realize that they are loved persons who are deserving of respect

**Lesson Overview**

Through stories and role-playing, children learn to say “no” to uncomfortable touches and where to go for help. Students will also listen to a story and discuss the concepts of physical and verbal abuse and correction.

**Background Information**

Young children are interested in pleasing the adults around them. They seek our attention and reinforcement. Often, when they are corrected they feel their world has fallen apart. It is important that catechists and significant adults reinforce that correction does not equal rejection. Correction is the way in which adults help children mature and grow. It is the way in which children learn from their mistakes. Positive correction does not leave bruises. It does not involve kicking, slapping, scratching, biting, punching, cuts or bruises. Correction does not demean and belittle. Physical and verbal abuse do. Spanking may sometimes be used as a form of correction; when not over done.

Constructive criticism or correction enhances the development of the child. It is important that children understand that the people who really care about them will correct them when necessary. It is important to help children understand that the person correcting them is not rejecting them. Adults who care about children do not want to hurt them, physical abuse leaves marks that can last for days and is painful. Verbal abuse is demeaning and emotionally debilitating. Both behaviors suggest a misuse of power. Children may encounter situations where adults hurt or belittle them. They need the support and encouragement of healthy adults.

When children are physically abused they face great distress and are in need of trustworthy adults who will intervene on their behalf.

Both physical and verbal abuse are harmful to a child’s self-esteem. Children need to learn that in cases like this, they need not listen to those adults. They need to confide in a

parent, catechist or someone they trust. The important point to stress with children is that when they are faced with an abusive situation, they need to talk about it as soon as they can. Children being labeled “bad” are especially easy targets for abuse.

## **Vocabulary**

Private Parts: those parts of the body covered by a swimsuit.

Respect: being nice and kind to others

Safe/comfortable touch: touches that make you feel safe and loved (they might include hugging, playing, snuggling, helping, etc.)

Unsafe/uncomfortable touch: touches that make you feel angry or afraid (they include, but are not limited to kicking, grabbing, biting, pushing and touching the private parts of our bodies for no good reason)

## **Catechist’s Role**

Assist students to realize what they do in order to show respect for self and others in difficult situations. Students need to be able to recognize, resist and respond to different situations. Introduce the no, go, tell format to students that may not be familiar with it. (Say no to the person who is making you feel uncomfortable then go and tell someone you trust about what happened.)

## **Suggested Materials**

- Dolls (boy & girl)
- Crayons and paper

## **Teaching/Learning Activities**

### **Activity/Experience:**

1. Discuss:
  - Does everyone remember that our bodies are sacred?
  - Our private parts are always kept covered and only certain special people can see them for good reasons.
2. Have the class listen to this story:  
The big boy was tickling Andy all over. At first, Andy was having fun. Then the big boy began to tickle Andy in his private parts. Andy felt uncomfortable and told him to stop. Andy ran home.
3. Ask:
  - Is it okay to play with our friends and feel happy? (Yes, that is safe, comfortable touching.)
  - Is it okay to play with our friends and feel uncomfortable or scared? (No, that is uncomfortable touching.)
4. Explain:
  - A touch, a hug, a kiss from someone who loves us, that makes us feel good and happy is a comfortable touch.

- A touch, a hug, a kiss or a squeeze from someone who loves us and who is our friend and that makes us feel funny, scared, or unhappy is an uncomfortable touch.
  - Our family, our church, and our friends are suppose to help us grow in love and are not suppose to do things that make us feel uncomfortable.
  - If someone touches the private parts of your body you need to say no then go and tell someone you trust.
5. Tell this story:  
A lady told Sally she was a friend and asked Sally to keep an important secret. The lady began to touch Sally all over. Sally didn't like it and said "No." She ran home and told her mother. (Reinforce the No, Go, Tell format.)
6. Ask:
- Did Sally do the right thing? (Yes)
  - Should she have told her Mother? (Yes)
  - Should we keep secrets? (No)
  - Did Sally do anything wrong? (No)
7. For role-play situations using dolls, point to the word on the poster for the correct response, and have the children say it out loud.
- Boy doll is touched in the private parts. (Children say "No")
  - Boy and girl doll play doctor and touch each other in the private parts. (Children say "No".)
  - Mom puts dolls in the bath tub for bath and washes them. (Children say "Yes".)
  - Girl doll takes off her clothes and runs around. (Children say "No".)
  - Girl doll asks boy doll to keep a secret and touches his private parts. (Children say "No".)
8. Explain that if someone, either a friend or a relative tries to hurt them or touch them in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable, sad, afraid or ashamed, they must tell their mom or dad or a grown-up who loves them. Even if someone tells them to keep the uncomfortable touches secret, they are to tell a grown-up they trust.
9. Explain that we all are interested in pleasing grown-ups and we feel happy when we are told we did something well. When we make a bad choice and a grown-up tells us so this is called a correction. We may get punished or disciplined for our bad choice but it is important that we understand that being corrected helps us grow and learn.
10. Ask: When we are corrected does that mean we are not loved? (No)
11. Have the class listen to this story.  
Jason was at home with his Mom. While his Mom was talking on the phone, Jason opened the front door and went outside. In front of Jason's house is a very busy street with lots of cars and trucks driving on it. Jason saw a dog across the street and he ran toward the street to get the dog. All of a sudden his Mom grabbed his arm and pulled him

away from a car that was coming down the road. Then she gave Jason a spanking on the bottom. While she gave him a spanking she told Jason that he could have been hit by the car.

12. Ask: Is it okay for Jason's Mom to spank him? (Discuss spanking - how in some families this is used as discipline, as long as it is not overdone). Why do you think she did so? (Explain to the children that Jason was in danger and could have been killed on the street, and that she didn't want her child to be hurt.)
13. Remind them that God loves them very much and each one of us is made in the image of God. Each person is special and people need to treat them with respect. That includes the way we talk to one another.

## **Processing the Experience**

### **Content Questions:**

1. Who would I tell if someone touched me and made me feel afraid or uncomfortable?
2. What would I say to someone who tried to touch me in places my bathing suit covers? (Say no! Then go tell.)
3. Does someone have the right to make you feel uncomfortable?
4. What should do if you feel uncomfortable? (Say no! Then go tell.)
5. Why are you and your body special?

### **Questions for Personal Reflection:**

1. Think to yourself: how can I be nice to other people?

## **Closure**

Have the children draw a picture of three grownups they know and trust and with whom they could tell if another person is physically or verbally abusing them.

End with this prayer: "Thank you God, for making me special and loving me."

## Grade Level 1

# **Personal Safety Curriculum for Children and Youth A Component of the Safe Environment Education Program Diocese of Tucson**

## **Student Objectives**

The students will:

- a) Discuss that they have parts of their bodies that are considered private
- b) Learn to respect these parts of the body in themselves and in others
- c) Learn to respect all children as persons of worth and worthy of respect
- d) Understand the difference between comfortable/safe touch and uncomfortable/unsafe touch
- e) Become confident that if they experience discomfort or hurt from another they can bring that experience to a trusted adult
- f) Learn the concept of telling adults until they are heard
- g) Learn strategies for resisting hurt and protecting self (safety rules)

## **Lesson Overview**

Students:

- Cut out a body silhouette to represent the self, draw a swimsuit on it, and learn that the parts covered by a swimsuit are private.
- Discuss comfortable/safe touches and contrast them with uncomfortable/unsafe touches.
- Learn basic safety rules.
- Saying “no” to uncomfortable/unsafe touches.
- Consider who is a trusted adult in their lives.
- Practice telling a trusted adult that they feel uncomfortable or unsafe because of an experience with another child or an adult.

## **Background Information**

At this age, it is natural for children to be very inquisitive about their bodies and the bodies of others. It is important not to instill shame regarding the body as they ask questions. However, it is also important that they understand that the body is to be treated with respect and that there are parts of the body that are private.

Children will need a definition of respect for the body and of privacy and then some illustrations of how respect and privacy are acted out. There should be a discussion of

what makes a touch or any other experience uncomfortable or unsafe, and what internal reactions make clear to the child that this doesn't feel good or right.

That being said, at this age, children have difficulty with approaches to personal safety that emphasize concepts or feelings as markers for what is safe. The most effective approaches seem to be those that emphasize safety rules and include rules about touching among the other safety rules.

Finally, children need examples and practice as to how they can assertively resist uncomfortable or unsafe behavior and how their discomfort or sense of being unsafe can be shared with trusted adults. They should also understand what to expect from a trusted adult when they bring such concerns, alleviating fear that they will be punished or someone else will be harmed because they "told."

Children are vulnerable to abuse by adults because they are naturally trusting and need affection and admiration. Abuse occurs most often by those the child knows and trusts, not strangers. This makes the ultimate effect of the abuse much more painful.

Child abuse cannot continue without the benefit of deceit, secrecy and intimidation. If children are approached before they have learned anything about social mores regarding sexual behavior (touches of private parts), they are easily drawn in.

Children who are abused often get direct instructions not to tell anyone and sometimes these instructions are accompanied by threats or predictions of dire consequences for the child, the family or even the abuser.

Although sexual abuse gets our attention, it is important to remember that abuse may take many forms—physical, emotional and, most commonly, neglect of basic needs.

Even when children do not talk about the abuse openly, there are usually signs or symptoms. Neglect may be evident in physical changes or talk about conditions in the home. Physical abuse may manifest in the form of bruises, marks or even broken bones.

A radical change in behavior signals some type of problem, whether abuse or something else. It deserves the attention of the adults around. Keep a chronological log when changes in behavior are noted and, if there is reasonable suspicion that the child may have been harmed, make the report.

One final note: remember that although this class is focused specifically on safety, children learn best when a lesson is presented many times and in many ways. Look for opportunities throughout the year to teach about safety in general, assertive maintenance of personal boundaries and seeking the assistance of trusted adults.

## Vocabulary

- Safe/comfortable touch: touches that make you feel safe and loved. [They might be illustrated as hugging, playing, snuggling, helping, etc.]
- Unsafe/uncomfortable touch: touches that make you feel angry, sad or afraid. [They might be illustrated as kicking, grabbing, biting, pushing and touching the private parts of the body].
- Private parts: those parts of the body covered by a swimsuit. Note that something private is something all our own and is not shared except for good reasons, like seeing a doctor or taking a bath at home.

## Catechist's Role

Help children:

- Understand the meaning of privacy and respect, of the body and of the person in general.
- Understand the difference between comfortable/safe and uncomfortable/unsafe experience and how they can tell the difference according to their reactions.
- Understand how to say “no” and how to tell a trusted adult when they are uncomfortable or feel unsafe.

## Suggested Materials

- Outline of a body (Handout) for each child
- Crayons, scissors, construction paper, glue
- *Your Rights* (Handout)

## Teaching/Learning Activities

Activity/Experience:

1. Ask the children to cut out the outline of a body, then to draw or to paste on the outline the kind of swimsuit they would wear.
2. Explain that the parts of the body that are covered by their swimsuit are private parts. These parts are worthy of special respect. Respect includes the rule that no one touches those parts except for good reasons. Review some of those reasons with examples like bath time with mommy or daddy and a visit to the doctor.
3. Make two columns on the board. Title one, “comfortable/safe” and the other “uncomfortable/unsafe.” Make sure the students know the meaning of the words.
4. Ask students to name the kinds of behaviors and experiences that would fit in each column.
5. Have students name trusted adults, persons to whom they can go to talk about uncomfortable or unsafe experiences.
6. Develop examples of behaviors that can be used to resist uncomfortable or unsafe behavior.
  - a. Stay an arm's reach away from someone you don't know.
  - b. Don't talk to strangers without mommy or daddy right there.

- c. If someone wants to do something unsafe or uncomfortable or if someone is making you feel uncomfortable or unsafe, say “no,” go (get away) and tell a trusted adult.
7. Practice how the child might tell a trusted adult about an experience that was uncomfortable or unsafe. Practice what to do if the first person responds in a manner that is frightening, hurtful or dismissive.

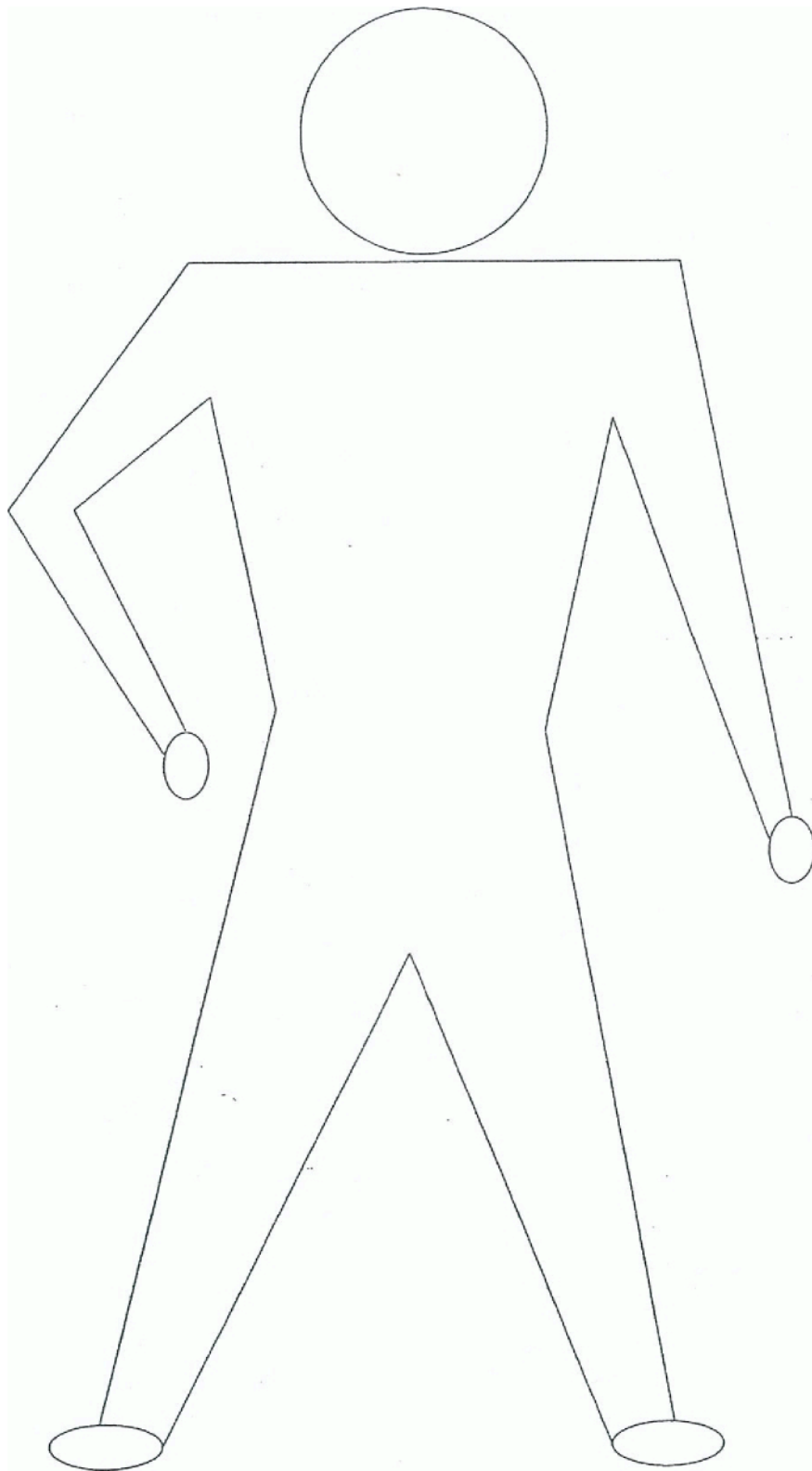
## **Processing the Experience**

### **Content Questions:**

1. Where are the private parts of the body?
2. What are the differences between uncomfortable/unsafe touches and comfortable/safe touches?
3. What do you do if someone wants you to do something uncomfortable or unsafe? (Say no, go, and tell a trusted adult.)
4. Why are children special? (Because God made them and loves them.)
5. What are the safety rules? (No, go, tell)

## **Closure**

1. Read the safety rules with the children.
2. When you feel uncomfortable or unsafe,
  - a. It's ok to say “no”
  - b. It's ok to go away
  - c. It's ok to tell a trusted adult
  - d. No, Go, Tell.



# **YOUR RIGHTS**

**You have the right to get help.**

**You have the right to tell if you or  
someone you know is abused.**

**You have the right to protect yourself.**

**You have the right to say "No!" to anyone  
who tries to hurt you.**

## Grade Level 2

# **Personal Safety Curriculum for Children and Youth A Component of the Safe Environment Education Program Diocese of Tucson**

## **Student Objectives**

The students will:

- a) Review the parts of the body that are private and what it means to respect those parts of the body in self and others.
- b) Discuss touches and other experiences that are comfortable/safe and those that are uncomfortable and unsafe.
- c) Be confident that they can say “no” and go away when they are uncomfortable or feel unsafe.
- d) Believe that it is the best thing to tell a trusted adult when they are uncomfortable or feel unsafe and that it is alright to tell another adult if the first one does not respond in a helpful way.
- e) Learn that all children are persons of worth and that their bodies belong to them.
- f) Appreciate that they are worthy of respect from other children and from adults.
- g) Learn what it means to be respected and to respect others.

## **Lesson Overview**

Students:

- Make a collage about caring for self and others. They then talk about and give examples of caring and relate caring to respect.
- Discuss saying “no” and going away when touched inappropriately. Extend the implications to speaking up whenever they feel uncomfortable or hurt by the actions of another.
- Learn the difference between “tattling” and telling a trusted adult when they feel uncomfortable or hurt.

## **Background Information**

Loving oneself and others are very important qualities. Loving oneself, if understood correctly, is a foundation for loving others more genuinely.

Loving oneself is manifested in part in proper self care and assertiveness in protecting oneself from harm.

It is important for children at this age to begin to understand that they have certain rights that should be respected by others. These rights include the right to privacy, to freedom from harm, to resisting uncomfortable or hurtful behaviors, and to expect help from trusted adults when they experience such behavior from others.

Children will be more likely to ask for help if they expect and receive non-threatening and non-judgmental responses from adults when they speak up. An adult should first help the child articulate what he or she is trying to express, then seek the right solution.

When children seem unable to sort out what is comfortable/caring touch or other behavior from what is uncomfortable or hurtful, or when a child seems too submissive or too aggressive in response to uncomfortable/hurtful behavior, it is a sign that there is some kind of trouble.

The sign may or may not point to abuse, but it is deserving of attention and response. If there is reasonable suspicion of abuse, even though you do not know for sure, make the report.

Remember in developing your plan that children at this age will do best with education that emphasizes participation and practice.

Remember also that a context of general safety and of respectful relationship makes the material easier to receive and retain.

## **Vocabulary**

- Safe/comfortable touch: touches that make you feel safe and loved [They might be illustrated as hugging, playing, snuggling, helping, etc.].
- Unsafe/uncomfortable touch: touches that make you feel angry, sad or afraid. [They might be illustrated as kicking, grabbing, biting, pushing and touching the private parts of the body].
- Private parts: those parts of the body covered by a swimsuit. Note that something private is something all our own and is not shared except for good reasons, like seeing a doctor or taking a bath at home.

## **Catechist's Role**

Help children:

- Review safety rules. [No, Go, Tell; Private parts are not for touching except for good reasons).
- Understand that they are special people who deserve respect.
- Understand the difference between comfortable/safe experiences and uncomfortable/unsafe experiences.

- Develop confidence that they can tell the difference between safe and unsafe experiences. Develop a knowledge that their experience will be taken seriously by someone if they persist in telling trusted adults.
- Become more resilient and strong in resisting what makes them uncomfortable or unsafe.

### **Suggested Materials**

- Magazines, scissors, glue

### **Teaching/Learning Activities**

#### **Activity/Experience:**

1. Distribute magazines to the children. Ask them to cut out pictures that show children and adults taking care of each other.
2. Discuss what they chose. Then ask them to cut out pictures or draw pictures that show people respecting each other and themselves
3. Discuss how we show respect for others. Include some discussion as to how we show respect for each other's body, including their private parts.
4. Talk about the whole range of uncomfortable/unsafe behaviors. Then solicit examples of how they might respond to each example.
5. Depending on the maturity and readiness of the class, read the story (Handout). [Teachers may adapt the story if there is concern that a particular class might find it to be too much in its present form.]
6. Ask the students to repeat the safety rules. [No, Go, Tell; Private parts are not for touching by others except for good reasons like seeing the doctor or bath time at home.]

### **Processing the Experience**

#### **Content Questions:**

What is the difference between comfortable/safe behaviors and uncomfortable/unsafe behaviors?

1. How can you say "no" when you feel uncomfortable or unsafe?
2. To whom can you speak when you feel badly about your behavior or about what someone did to you?
3. What is the difference between telling a trusted adult and tattling? [Tattling is to get someone else in trouble; telling is for safety.]

#### **Questions for Personal Reflection:**

1. Do you feel strong enough to say "no" and go away if someone is making you feel uncomfortable or wanting you to do something unsafe?
2. Do you feel strong enough to tell a trusted adult if you feel bad or if you see one of your friends feels bad?

## **Closure**

3. Close your eyes and think about all the people who love you and treat you with respect and care. Give them all a big hug.
4. Say this prayer. "Thank you, God, for my beautiful body and for all the people that love me. Thank you for loving me. Amen."

**Personal Safety Curriculum for Children and Youth**  
**A Component of the Safe Environment Education Program**  
**Diocese of Tucson**

**Student Objective**

The student will:

- a. Review briefly the parts of their bodies that are considered private and should be respected by self and others.
- b. Describe the differences between safe touch (comfortable) and unsafe touch (uncomfortable).
- c. Define abuse and who to go to for help if they are abused.
- d. Learn the “Body Safety Rules.”

**Lesson Overview**

Students define and are able to judge examples of safe and unsafe touch. Students will review various touches and discuss how they would make them feel. Students will define physical abuse and listen to a story about a child who had been abused. They will learn “Body Safety Rules” as strategies to protect themselves. Students will make a list of trusted adults they could talk to if they had a “secret” to tell. Students will be educated on how to report abuse situations.

**Background Information**

The statistics for childhood sexual assault are staggering. Nationally, one out of every four girls and one out of every eight boys are sexually assaulted. In 89% of reported cases of sexual abuse, the children were abused by someone they knew. Education is an important tool for decreasing these statistics. If children do not have knowledge of sexual abuse, they will not know what to do if someone tries to abuse them. In addition, lacking such information, victimized children may be too embarrassed or afraid to report the abuse. Assess your own comfort level and biases which could affect the presentation. Not all catechists will feel enough ease to discuss sexual abuse with their students. In such cases, a qualified resource person should be called. (The presentation is more effective, however, when done by the catechist since children are more likely to open up to a familiar person. The catechist should remain in the room and participate as much as possible.)

## Catechist's Role

Assist students in identifying safe and unsafe touches and educate them about reporting abuse situations. Explain the need for making a personal list of people they can talk to if they have a “secret” to tell.

## Suggested Materials

- Poster displaying “Body Safety Rules”
- Paper and pencil for “Closure” activity
- Story of “At Slicker’s House”
- Chart paper or other large sheets of paper

## Vocabulary

- Safe [comfortable] touch: touches that make you feel safe and loved (they might include hugging, playing, snuggling, helping, etc.)
- Unsafe [uncomfortable] touch: touches that make you feel angry or afraid (they include, but are not limited to kicking, grabbing, biting, pushing and touching the private parts of our bodies for no good reason)
- Private parts: those parts of the body covered by a swimsuit. Something that is private is all our own and should not be shared.
- Physical abuse: causing bodily harm to another person.

## Teaching/Learning Activities

### Activity/Experience:

1. Today we will be talking about safe kinds of touching, unsafe kinds of touching and how to tell the difference. Ask students to define safe and unsafe touches.
2. Ask, “How do you know if a touch is safe or unsafe? Tell students that their feelings are a good indicator, adding that they should listen to their feelings in various touch situations and act according to those feelings.  
Give examples: Tell the students to give a “thumbs up” sign if they would feel safe or “thumbs down” if they would feel unsafe if the following happened:
  - Mom hugs you
  - Brother hits you
  - An older kid tries to push you into his car
  - A teacher pats you on the back
  - Dad’s business partner shakes your hand
3. Ask, “What should you do if someone tries to give you an unsafe touch? Share answers. Provide some “Body Safety Rules” to follow.
  - Say “NO!” or “STOP!” in a loud voice.
  - Yell for help.
  - GET AWAY!
  - Tell someone you trust.
  - Always remember - IT IS NOT YOUR FAULT!

4. Is there such a thing as a bad secret? Unsafe secrets are secrets about what someone has done to you or you have done to someone else. You can tell bad secrets because someone needs to know about them.
5. To whom could you tell an “Unsafe Secret?” (Parents, teacher, priest, principal, police, an adult friend, or any trusted adult.)
6. Read the story, “At Slicker’s House” to the students. Discuss the story and ask the following questions.
  - Whom do you think Slicker’s mother called? (Shawn’s mother, a teacher, counselor, or priest)
  - How do you think Shawn felt after Pete hit him? (Hurt, embarrassed, angry, sad)
  - Why do you think Pete hit Shawn? (to show off in front of his friends)
  - Why do you suppose Shawn’s mother reacted the way she did? (She was frustrated with the boy’s fighting and didn’t know what to do about it)
  - Why do you think Shawn wanted to talk to Slicker’s mother?
  - Can you name the two kinds of touch used in this story? (Comforting touch by Slicker and his mother, uncomfortable touch by Pete to his brother)
  - Who do you think will help Shawn and his brother Pete? (Family, teacher, counselor, priest)

## **Processing the Experience**

### **Content Questions:**

1. What is physical abuse?
2. What should you do if you are abused or you see someone else being abused?
3. What should you do if, like Shawn’s mother, the person you tell does not believe you? (Tell someone else who might be able to help.)
4. What else have you learned about physical abuse? (Be sure to point out that even if a person does not have a bruise, if the action is constant, it is considered abuse.)

### **Questions for Personal Reflection**

1. Is it your fault if someone tries to touch you in an unsafe way?
2. What could you do to protect yourself?
3. Are secrets about private parts secrets you should keep?

## **Closure**

Write down three things you have learned about physical abuse. Write the names of three grown ups you trust and who you could tell if someone hurt you. Talk with your family about what you have learned. The lesson will end with a prayer reminding students they are temples of the Holy Spirit.

## AT SLICKER'S HOUSE

### ***Scene I: Shawn and Slicker are on their way home from school.***

It was Friday. Shawn was on his way home from school with his friend Slicker. Slicker was excited. "My whole family is going camping for the weekend. Even my brother who goes to college will be there." Shawn thought about Slicker's family. He remembered how much everyone laughed inside Slicker's house. He felt happy too, when he visited Slicker.

Shawn's brother, Pete, came riding up to Shawn and Slicker on his bike. He had two friends with him. "You better get home fast or else," yelled Pete. Shawn answered, "Okay, but I'm talking to Slicker right now." Pete got off his bike, put up the kickstand, walked over and stood very close to Shawn. He growled, "I said now, you idiot." Then Pete hit the back of Shawn's head hard. It really stung. Pete rode off in a huff with his friends. Slicker just stood there for a moment, then he reached out and touched Shawn's arm. "Are you okay?" he asked.

"Yeah. I am okay," answered Shawn.

Why did he do that to you?" Slicker asked.

"It's no big deal. I guess I just made him mad," said Shawn.

"But Shawn, he really hurt you. My mom says hitting someone like that even if it does not leave a bruise or cut is abuse. I think he was wrong to do that." Shawn looked at Slicker for a second, and then turned to walk toward his own home.

### ***Scene II: Later that night at Shawn's house.***

That night, Shawn's mother tucked him into bed. Shawn told her, "Pete hit me today and it hurt. He does this all the time to me, almost every day." Shawn's mother said, "Well, what did you do to make him mad? Do you have a mark on you?"

Shawn answered, "Mom, I felt dizzy and sick to my stomach afterwards."

Shawn's mother stood up and said, "You kids are always fighting. I get so tired of it." Then she walked to the door and said, "Boys will be boys, don't worry about it."

Scene III: *After the Weekend*

On Monday morning, Shawn walked briskly to school. He saw Slicker and a couple of other friends playing Frisbee. "Hey, I want to know everything you did camping. "It was awesome," answered Slicker. "Meet me at my house after school and I'll show you the rocks I collected." Shawn ran all the way to Slicker's house after school. Slicker was not there yet, so Shawn sat down on the front steps to wait for him. "Is that Shawn out there?" called Slicker's mother. She came out and sat down beside Shawn on the step. "I'll bet Slicker is going to show you his rocks." "Yeah! He said you went camping. I bet that was fun. I wish I could have gone too."

She laughed and hugged Shawn. Shawn felt a little silly about being hugged, but happy and special, too. "Maybe sometime this summer we'll see if you could go along, okay?" Shawn felt good and would look forward to going with Slicker's family.

Shawn remembered something Slicker had said, "Slicker told me that you said it was wrong for someone to hit someone else all the time. She answered, "Yes, I told him that."

Shawn went on, "Well, what if the person who hit you said you deserved it?" Slicker's mother looked at Shawn and said, "Shawn, no one deserves to be hit all the time."

"Even if they're not always good?" asked Shawn.

"Even then," she replied.

There was silence for a minute. Slicker's mother asked, "Shawn, is someone treating you badly?"

Shawn looked at the ground, "I don't know. My brother hits me quite a bit."

She asked him, "Have you told your parents?"

"My mom says it happens because I make him mad," answered Shawn.

"It sounds like your brother might be abusing you. That is not okay. How do you feel about it?" asked Slicker's mom.

Shawn answered, "Mad, I guess, but scared too. And sort of ... sad."

"Shawn, I care about you. I need to tell someone about this who can help you."

Quickly Shawn asked, "Will Pete get in trouble? You know, he is not always so mean. Sometimes he gives me stuff and play games with me."

"Pete needs someone to help him, too. He needs to learn how to treat people fairly. Do you feel okay about staying here while I call someone who can help you?"

Shawn felt scared, but he said, "Yeah, okay."

## Grade Level 4

# **Personal Safety Curriculum for Children and Youth A Component of the Safe Environment Education Program Diocese of Tucson**

## **Student Objectives**

The student will:

- a. Realize that all children are persons of worth and their bodies belong to them.
- b. Discuss body privacy and what steps they can take if their privacy is being or has been invaded.
- c. Verify that most correction and punishment is not abuse.
- d. Explain the importance of reporting abuse and where to go for help if they are abused.

## **Lesson Overview**

The lesson begins with a discussion of body privacy. Each person's body is a temple of the Holy Spirit and is deserving of respect. The lesson continues with the definition of abuse and options for dealing with physical abuse. Students will read various scenarios of possible abuse cases. Based on the information given, students will discuss and advise the possible victim on a plan of action. The idea that most correction and punishment is not abuse will be discussed after the scenario called "Confused in Cleveland" is read. Students will work in groups to develop a plan to deal with the issues discussed in the scenarios.

## **Background Information**

The statistics for childhood sexual assault are staggering. Nationally, one out of every four girls and one out of every eight boys are sexually assaulted. In 89 percent of reported cases of sexual abuse, the children were abused by someone they knew. Education is an important tool for decreasing these statistics. If children do not have knowledge of sexual abuse, they will not know what to do if someone tries to abuse them. In addition, lacking such information, victimized children may be too embarrassed or afraid to report the abuse. It is clear unfortunately, that students need to be prepared to deal with physical and/or sexual abuse at the hands of a family member or friend. In many states, any abuse reported to a child's catechist must be reported to the proper state agency. This is true for our state. It is the obligation of the catechist to report any suspected abuse to law enforcement (911) and Child Protective Services (888-SOS-CHILD). Telling the Director of Religious Education, the Pastor, or the principal does not take away your responsibilities.

Assess your own comfort level and biases which could affect the presentation. Not all catechists or teachers will feel enough at ease to talk with their students about sexual abuse. In such cases, a qualified resource person should be called. (The presentation is more effective, however, when done by the catechist since children are more likely to open up to a familiar person. If the catechist is not doing the presentation, she/he should remain in the room.)

Children who are empowered to make and act on choices in their lives and who have well-developed self-esteem generally are very capable of dealing with any crisis. Those victims of child abuse have difficulty identifying themselves as victims, or are prevented from making appropriate choices, are the insidious factors of these issues.

### **Catechist's Role**

Assist students in analyzing problems and developing a plan of action when dealing with physical abuse.

### **Suggested Materials**

- “Dear Chris Letters” ( Handout)
- Large sheets of drawing paper
- Markers or crayons
- Pencil and paper

### **Vocabulary**

- Physical abuse: causing bodily harm to another person

### **Teaching/Learning Activities**

#### **Activity/Experience**

Introduce the lesson by asking, “What do you think body privacy is?”

Today we are going to discuss our right to body privacy. There are times when someone needs to see or touch the private parts of our bodies, e.g. when mom or dad is helping a child get clean or if a doctor needs to examine your body. Ask students what they would do if they were in this situation: “Your Uncle Bob likes to wrestle around with you. Lately you’ve been feeling uncomfortable with the wrestling and would like him to stop.” Discuss the answers.

Do children have a right to body privacy? Why? Each person’s body is a temple of the Holy Spirit.

How can we show respect for the private parts of our and others’ bodies? (Take care of our own. Keep our private parts covered with clothing. Do not let others invade our privacy. Do not invade the privacy of others.)

1. Ask, “What is physical abuse? What can you do if someone is abusing you?”  
Have students share answers.

2. Ask, “How many of you know who “Dear Abby’ is?” Explain. Say, “Today, you are going to be an advice columnist. You will be ‘Dear Chris.’” As ‘Dear Chris,’ you will give advice to the following people: ‘Getting Fed Up in Fresno,’ ‘Confused in Cleveland,’ ‘Please Help in Hartford’ and ‘Abused in Alabama’.” We will discuss one together. For the next four letters, you will write advice in your groups, then we will compare answers as a whole class.”
3. Hand out the “Dear Chris Letters.” Have the students break into groups. Give the students time to work together and come up with their advice for each person.
4. Discuss the advice given. Correct any misinformation. Ask, “How did you know what to say? Was it easy to distinguish abuse from punishment?”

## **Processing the Experience**

### **Content Questions:**

1. How do you know if someone is abusing you? (Physical abuse includes hitting, slapping, punching, biting, kicking, scratching, hard shaking or beating. Sometimes physical abuse leaves cuts and/or bruises.)
2. What is the difference between punishment and abuse? (Punishment is less severe and is only a reminder not to do something again; abuse causes bodily harm.)

### **Questions for Personal Reflection**

1. Name people you can go to if you are abused. (Parent, teacher, principal, priest, counselor etc.)
2. What do you do if they do not believe you? (Tell another person.)
3. What do you do if a friend tells you about abuse in their home, but makes you promise not to tell? (Don’t keep that promise. Tell someone who might be able to help.)
4. Can you protect yourself against abuse? How?

### **Closure:**

In groups of two or three, make a poster of rules that children should follow to help keep them safe. The title of the poster will be:

EVERY PERSON IS SPECIAL!

## **DEAR CHRIS LETTERS**

Directions: Using the information you know about body privacy and physical abuse, write what advice you would give to these people.

Dear Chris:

I am 10 years old. Whenever I am taking a shower my older sister, who is 16, always wants to come into the bathroom to get something that she has forgotten. One time it was for her lipstick, another time it was for her hairbrush. I feel uncomfortable whenever she does this. My parents have asked me not to lock the door in case they need to get into the room. What should I do?

*Getting Fed Up in Fresno*

Dear Chris:

My dad got remarried last year to a woman named Sally. Sally is okay most of the time, but she can be really strict. Last month, she grounded me for a week when I cheated on a test in school. Yesterday, she spanked me and sent me to my room after she saw me run out in the street right in front of a car. I was lucky the car stopped in time. I want to know if stepparents have a right to discipline their kids and if spanking is considered abuse.

*Confused in Cleveland*

Dear Chris:

My baby-sitter is the daughter of my parents' friends. Sometimes, she gets really mean and slaps and hits my brother and me. I have told my mom, but she does not want to upset her friends. This is not getting any better. If Mom will not listen, who will?

*Please Help in Tucson*

Dear Chris:

About once a month, my dad comes home really drunk. Sometimes he hits me and my brother for no reason. Mom sees him, but does not do anything. I think she is afraid, too. She says not to tell anybody, since Dad is fine when he is sober. I think 12 times a year is a lot. What do I do?

|

## Grade Level 5

# **Personal Safety Curriculum for Children and Youth A Component of the Safe Environment Education Program Diocese of Tucson**

## **Student Objectives**

The student will:

- a. Discuss the concept of body privacy and respect for self and others.
- b. Define emotional abuse and name concrete courses of action to take if they experience it.
- c. Describe strategies to get out of abusive or potentially abusive situations.

## **Lesson Overview**

Initiate discussion of body privacy and review the concept of private body parts. Define sexual abuse and use examples.

The topic of emotional abuse is introduced. Information about emotional abuse is provided to help students identify examples. Students then discuss strategies for those who experience such abuses. Students focus on their own body signals that alert them to threatening situations and practice centering when feeling unsafe. Additionally, they will learn strategies for getting out of potential abusive situations.

## **Background Information**

Both forms of abuse, sexual and emotional, can have serious long-term effects. The impact of such abuse is made worse by a range of factors, including shame, keeping the abuse a secret, and blaming self for the abuse.

Victims seem to run a greater risk of perpetuating the cycle of violence by becoming abusive themselves.

Our aim is not only to help children recognize abuse, but also to give them a basis for counteracting it by reminding them of the truths of God-given human dignity and love.

Since individual instances do not necessarily constitute abuse, be careful how you present examples of abuse. It is generally best to let students generate the examples. Always emphasize that emotional abuse is a pattern of treatment over a period of time, not just once. It is also important to help students recognize reasonable physical and emotional discipline as well, even though it rarely feels reasonable at the time to a youngster.

### **Catechist's Role**

To review concepts of body privacy and sexual abuse in a context of human dignity. To explain emotional abuse and its effects and to help students identify strategies to deal with such abuse.

### **Suggested Materials**

- “First Aid for Hurting Hearts” (Handout)
- “Some Ideas for Getting Out of Potential Abuse Situations” (Handout)
- “I Can Be Safe. I Can Do Something.” (Handout)

### **Vocabulary**

Sexual abuse: When someone tricks or forces a person into sexual contact, touching, looking, undressing, or viewing pictures or movies of adults and/or children undressed and/or touching each other.

Emotional abuse: An ongoing pattern of behavior, such as intimidating, belittling or hurtful words or actions that affects one's healthy emotional development.

### **Teaching/Learning Activities**

#### **Activity/Experience:**

1. Discuss the following points:
  - a. “This is my body. God gave me this body and it is good.”
  - b. “My feelings are important. I can talk about what I am feeling.”
  - c. “I deserve to be treated with respect. Everyone does.”
2. Discuss the saying, “Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me”? Is this statement true? How do you feel when someone's words hurt?
3. Ask students to think of a time when they did not feel safe and have them write how they felt, both physically and emotionally?
4. What part of your body tells you you're not feeling safe? How does it feel?
5. Have students close their eyes and imagine being in a safe, warm, comfortable place. Have them write what they are feeling.
6. Tell students they have a right to take care of themselves in any situation that threatens your physical or emotional well-being. Distribute the handout, “Some Ideas for Getting Out of Potential Abuse Situations” and discuss.

## **Processing the Experience**

### **Content Questions:**

1. What are three steps you can take if someone tries to touch or see your private parts? (Say “NO”, Get away, Tell someone)
2. Why is it important not to keep sexual abuse a secret?
3. How does emotional or verbal abuse affect a person?
4. Why is emotional abuse and sexual abuse wrong?
5. How does your body alert you in dangerous situations?
6. What can you do when you feel scared or unsafe?

### **Questions for Personal Reflection:**

1. Have you ever felt deeply hurt by the words of someone you cared about and trusted?
2. Who are some adults that you can talk to if hurtful things are happening in your life? (Handout: “I Can Be Safe. I Can Do Something”)

## **Closure**

Complete the handout, “First Aid for Hurting Hearts.”

# FIRST AID FOR HURTING HEARTS

♥I know I'm a good and valuable person.

♥God made me and God loves me.

♥I deserve to be treated with respect.

♥I know I am someone who is good and worthwhile.

♥I can be good to myself and others.

When the words of others hit me hard and hurt, I can remind myself of these facts:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Someone I could talk to when I feel sad, hurt, angry or afraid is:

\_\_\_\_\_

Someone else I could talk to is:

\_\_\_\_\_

Other people who care about me are:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## SOME IDEAS FOR GETTING OUT OF POTENTIAL ABUSE SITUATIONS

<b>Show them you don't like it...</b>	Move away Push them away Dodge them Hide Walk or run away
<b>Tell them in words...</b>	"NO!" "Leave me alone!" "STOP!" "I'm going to tell!" "I don't like that!" "That hurts!" "Don't do that!" "Cut it out!"
<b>Leave to go...</b>	Bathroom or bedroom and lock door Friend's or neighbor's house Outside and play Grandmother's house Neighborhood safe house with symbol in the window
<b>Be gross...</b>	Spit Throw up Burp Pick your nose Pretend to be sick Tell them you have lice
<b>Distract them...</b>	Tell them someone is coming Tell them your mom wants you Tell them something is broken and ask them to fix it Turn up the TV Change the subject
<b>Use borrowed protection...</b>	"My (mom, dad, teacher, counselor) says you're not supposed to do that!"

# **I CAN BE SAFE. I CAN DO SOMETHING.**

If I am in danger or threatened by someone, I can:

Yell, kick, make a scene, \_\_\_\_\_,

Cross my arms over my chest and say “NO!” or \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Walk or run away, or \_\_\_\_\_.

I can tell \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ about it.

If they can't help, I can tell \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_.

## **BE SAFE!**

- ❖ **Don't keep secrets that bother you.**
- ❖ **Know your phone number and area code.**
- ❖ **Carry money for emergency phone calls.**
- ❖ **Know how to dial pay phones and how to call without money in an emergency.**
- ❖ **Evaluate your walking routes.**
- ❖ **Know about safety plans for kids in your area.**

## **Personal Safety Curriculum for Children and Youth**

### **A Component of the Safe Environment Education Program Diocese of Tucson**

#### **Student Objectives**

The student will:

- a. Review parts of their bodies that are considered private and to respect these in self and others, and that they are loved persons deserving of respect.
- b. Explain the importance of reporting abuse until they are believed.
- c. Define emotional abuse and name concrete courses of action to take if they experience it.
- d. Explain the consequences of false reporting of abuse.

#### **Lesson Overview**

A continuum is used to review different types of touching. The lesson proceeds with a discussion of emotional abuse. Questions emphasize the importance of honest reporting of abuse. Information is offered about child protection agencies and the consequences of false reporting. Further, students practice self-talk by using stress management techniques.

#### **Background Information**

Both forms of abuse, sexual and emotional, can have serious long-term effects. The impact of such abuse is made worse by a range of factors, including shame, keeping the abuse a secret, and blaming self for the abuse. Victims of abuse seem to run a greater risk of perpetuating the cycle of abuse. It is important to encourage students to continue to report the abuse until they are believed. With sensitivity, it is also important to emphasize that reports must be honest. Explore some of the consequences, for self and others, of making a false report. The overall goal of education at this age is not only to help children recognize, resist and report abuse, but also to give them a basis for resisting it and counteracting it by reminding them of the truths of God-given human dignity and love.

#### **Vocabulary**

**Emotional Abuse:** an ongoing pattern of behavior, such as intimidating, belittling, ignoring, corrupting, speaking or acting in ways that affect one's healthy emotional development.

### **Catechist's Role**

- Review the concepts of safe/comfortable touch and unsafe/uncomfortable touch, neglect and physical abuse. Emphasize the importance of reporting abuse to a trusted adult and the importance that reports be truthful.
- Introduce the concept of emotional abuse or maltreatment.
- Involve students in a process of identifying strategies for responding to abuse to potentially abusive situations.

### **Suggested Materials**

- “Continuum of Touching”
- “Give Me A Break”
- “How Do I Spell Relief?”

### **Teaching/Learning Activities**

#### **Activity/Experience:**

1. Use “Continuum of Touching” as a tool to discuss different types of touching or body contact (respectful and healthy touching versus hurtful or unwanted touching).
2. Ask students if they know what emotional abuse is. Explain that emotional abuse is when parents or those who are close to a child continually and consistently treat the child in cruel ways, like verbal attacks, belittling, ridiculing, shaming, terrorizing, ignoring, rejecting, degrading, corrupting or placing excessive and unreasonable demands on the child. The fairy tale, “Cinderella” may be a good illustration of this abuse.
3. Ask students the following:
  - a. What do you think emotionally abused persons might begin to believe about themselves?
  - b. What do we believe about the value of every human person?
  - c. What can a person do if he or she experiences repeated emotional abuse?
  - d. Why is it important to tell someone if either you or a friend is being physically, sexually or emotionally abused?
  - e. Why is it important to keep on telling until someone believes you and agrees to help you?
4. Explain that there are police officers and social workers in each state whose job is to protect children from being abused.
5. Explore the consequences of false reporting of abuse.
6. What is the difference between bullying and abuse? Teasing and abuse?
7. Review the concepts of personal safety and body privacy.
8. Explain and/or review the three step process of “NO! GO! TELL!”

(NO...Tell the person who is trying to abuse you; GO...Leave if you can; TELL...Tell someone and keep telling until someone believes you and helps you).

## **Processing the Experience**

### **Content Questions:**

1. What is sexual abuse?
2. What is physical abuse?
3. What is emotional or verbal abuse?
4. Why is any type of abuse wrong?

### **Questions for Personal Reflection:**

1. What are some important reminders (self-talk) for yourself if you feel confused or hurt?
2. Use the Handout “How Do I Spell Relief?” for quiet written reflection.

## **Closure**

Remind students that they know lots of ways to take good care of themselves, like relaxing, stretching, praying, etc. Using the Handout “Give Me a Break”, divide the class into small groups and have each group choose a stress-relieving technique discussed in the handout.

# CONTINUUM OF TOUCHING

No Touch	Safe [Comfortable] Touch	Confusing Touch	Unsafe [Uncomfortable] Touch	No Touch
	"Heart Touch" Caring Touch Welcomed Touch		Hurtful Touch Abusive Touch Unpleasant Touch	

Use the continuum and the points given below as a tool to discuss different types of - touching or body contact. (Note: It is best if students give the examples of touches and feelings. Always emphasize that we can listen to and trust the feelings that tell us when something is wrong or unsafe.)

1. **Ask students to name touches they like and feel good about.** Possible examples are: hugs, hand shakes, pats on the back, tickles, holding hands, kisses, mom's hand on forehead when sick, snuggling when cold or scared, arms around each other, high five, someone brushing your hair, back rub.
2. **Ask students what types of touch they think are bad, hurtful or abusive, i.e., touches they definitely do not want to receive.** Examples include: assaults, beatings, beltings, kicks, slaps, punches, scratches, tripping, pushing down, bullying, pulling hair, pinching, biting, forceful or sneaky touching of private parts. (Review meaning of "private parts," if necessary: parts of the body covered by a swimsuit.)
3. **Point out the two extremes of the continuum, which are both lack of touch.** On the negative end, this means refusing care, protection and affection, which are needed for a person to grow up healthy and happy. On the positive end, this represents people whose love and friendship is evident, but not demonstrated by much touch. People and families are different in how much touching they want to give and receive.
4. **Ask if students can think of a time when a safe [comfortable] touch began to feel like an unsafe [uncomfortable] touch -- the touching was the same, but they felt differently about it.** (Give an example of your own, such as a time when you were being tickled, but the person wouldn't stop and it was hurting you.) Other possible examples are:
  - A person you do not know (or like) very well gives you a big long hug.
  - A handshake that squeezes too hard and hurts.
  - Someone crowding too close to you, being "too friendly."
  - A hug or kiss from a person you're mad at or afraid of.
  - These touches can be confusing because they give mixed messages.

5. **Ask students what feelings alert them to these confusing touches?** Body signals include stomach tightening, feeling scared, angry, anxious, trapped, etc. - one's body says, "Uh oh, I don't like this."
6. **Stress that no one, whether stranger, acquaintance, relative or friend, has the right to force or trick them into sexual contact or activities that they do not feel comfortable about.** When anyone touches them in a way that confuses or hurts them, they can let the person know that they don't like it and they can tell what happened to someone they trust. (NO, GO, TELL)
7. **Emphasize that no one has a right to intentionally injure them or to frighten and hurt them emotionally over and over again.** They can talk about what hurts them and they can tell someone who will help them.

## HOW DO I SPELL RELIEF?

Directions: Think about some of your most stressful situations. List them in column 1. Then think of as many ways as you can handle the stress in each situation. Finally, write some positive and encouraging things to tell yourself in order to help you get through it.

<b>MY STRESSFUL SITUATIONS</b>	<b>WAYS I CAN HANDLE THIS STRESS</b>	<b>POSITIVE SELF-TALK FOR THIS SITUATION</b>
1.		
2.		
3.		

## GIVE ME A BREAK!

### *Relaxing Your Muscles, Your Mind and Your Spirit*

When you find yourself feeling anxious or tense, try some of these techniques to help you relax.

1. **DEEP BREATHING.** Sit comfortably with your feet on the floor. Take a deep breath by inhaling through your nose slowly while you count to 10. Hold your breath for a couple of seconds. Then exhale through your mouth slowly while you count to 10 again. Concentrate on how your chest, stomach and back muscles feel as you continue this slow deep breathing for a few minutes (counting slowly to 120, for example).
2. **INSTANT CONVERSATION.** Close your eyes, breathe deeply and relax every part of your body - your arms, your legs, your back, your shoulders, your neck, your jaw, your face. In your imagination, travel to your favorite natural place - a beautiful park, a seashore, a mountaintop. Feel, see, hear and smell everything around you in this beautiful and peaceful place. Notice the sun on your face, the breeze, the smell of flowers or pine trees. Hear the rustle of leaves, water, splashing, birds singing, whatever natural sounds belong in your special place. Meet Jesus in this special place. Tell him your situation and ask him what to do. Listen quietly. Enjoy being with Jesus in that place for a few minutes before returning to the present.
3. **STRETCHING.** Stand up and stretch. Yawn a few times. Take a deep breath and in through your nose and out through your mouth. Shake your arms and body with all your muscles loose and relaxed. Finally, just stand for a minute enjoying how it feels to be relaxed.
4. **MINUTE MEDITATION.** In a quiet place, close your eyes, breathe deeply and relax your body. Listen to these words that God speaks to you in the Bible. Hear God saying your name as you slowly repeat the words over and over in your mind: "I, your God, am holding you by the hand - I tell you, do not be afraid, I will help you" (Isaiah 41:13).  
Here are some other words of God from the Bible that you could use:
  - "God will be with you and will not fail you or leave you. So do not be afraid or discouraged" (Deut. 31:8)
  - "God shelters me in a tent in times of trouble" (Psalm 27:5)
  - "Give all your worries to God, for God is looking after you" (1 Peter 5:7)
5. **NECK STRETCHES.** Stand or sit up straight, but comfortable. Lower your head until your chin touches your chest. Swing your head slowly from side to side, feeling a gentle pull in your neck and shoulders. Let your head flop gently back and hold it there for a bit. Then turn to look over your right shoulder as far as you can. Bring your chin down to touch your shoulder. Feel the gentle stretch of neck and shoulder muscles. Do the same by looking over your left shoulder. Finally, relax and return to normal.
6. **UNWINDING EXERCISES:**
  - Stand with your feet about 19 inches apart. Reach upward with your right hand as if you were stretching for something. Let your right hand fall back down and

reach up with your left hand. Repeat with right hand, left hand, etc. three times. Return to starting position and raise both arms out sideways from shoulders, palms down, fingers spread. Stretch outward as far as you can.

- Bend forward and down, allowing your arms to swing and your fingers to brush the floor with your head down. Feel the stretch in your legs and back. Bounce gently five or six times. Return to starting position again, placing your hands on the back of your thighs. Lean backwards slowly sliding your hands down the back of your legs and dropping your head back. Return to standing position.

**Personal Safety Curriculum for Children and Youth  
A Component of the Safe Environment Education Program  
Diocese of Tucson**

**Student Objectives**

The students will:

- Realize that they are persons who are loved and deserving of respect
- Define verbal and emotional abuse and how they can deal with them
- Define physical and sexual abuse and learn ways to deal with them
- Explain strategies to protect oneself
- Explain importance of reporting abuse until they are believed (for self and others)
- Describe strategies to get out of abusive or potentially abusive situations
- Explain the consequences of false reporting of abuse

**Lesson Overview**

This lesson discusses the types of abuse, verbal, emotional, physical and sexual, and provides possible interventions and courses of action to take if they experience them. All forms of abuse will be reviewed through the use of videos, handouts, small group and class discussions, and role playing (See Suggested Materials listed below). Following Catechist's input and class discussion, students discuss possible examples of abuse and neglect.

**Background Information**

The guide is designed to provide useful information for the students so they are able to recognize the various types of abuse (verbal, emotional, physical and sexual) and to learn how to deal with them. Each student needs to feel he/she is a special person who is deserving of love and respect. One of the best ways to show students how they should treat one another with respect and concern is for you, the Catechist, to model the desired behavior to the students, parents, etc.

More materials are included so you can pick and choose what you believe the class needs to hear at this time. There may be opportunities during the year for curriculum integration that allows you to review prior materials in another context. Hopefully, the lesson guides and the suggested discussions and activities will make your task a little easier. The more you can involve the students the more effective the learning will be.

We are becoming more aware of abuse in our society. Individuals can be mistreated by family members, friends, or strangers. It is important to know what these abuses are so that help can be provided in time of need. Also, people need to know what to do and where to go for help.

It is clear students need to be prepared to deal with these abuses at the hands of a family member, friend or trusted authority figure. Please review the Diocese of Tucson *Code of Conduct* (for all who minister in the Diocese) so that if a student has confided a possible abuse to you, proper procedures are followed. If there seems adequate and reasonable information of abuse, report this to the Police Department and Child Protective Services.

Verbal and emotional abusive behavior may be even more difficult to deal with than those of physical and sexual abuse. Children and adults can all be hurt by the way they are treated emotionally and by what others say. Parents and Catechists who model proper adult behavior are those who can correct a child's behavior and not diminish the child's self-esteem and worth.

Children should be taught to tell the truth and understand the consequences if they are not telling the truth. It is important to stress the seriousness of reporting an abusive incident he/she or another student experienced, to a trusted adult. The student must be sure the information is reliable and not hearsay, a rumor, an attention getter or getting even. Remind the students that even reporters check at least two sources verifying information before they will report it to the public.

## **Vocabulary**

Types of Abuse:

- Physical      Being abused through physical force; unkind, cruel or unfair treatment that physically harms an individual
- Sexual        Being abused through inappropriate sexual contact. This type of behavior can include requests to allow the abuser to take photographs of the child without clothing, viewing pictures or videos of adults and/or children who are undressed and who are touching one another
- Verbal        Being mistreated or abused by the words which a person uses against another person
- Emotional    Being abused through emotional manipulation where the victim's own feelings and common sense are denied or forbidden
- Neglect       Not to attend to one's duties as a parent by not providing children with their basic needs, schooling and nurturing

## **Suggested Materials**

There are more suggestions than can be used in any one lesson. This gives you the opportunity to select those that seem more appropriate for your class.

- The Bible – The Story of Creation

- “Vignettes on Physical and Sexual Abuse” (Handout)
- “Handling Threatening Situations” “Some Ideas for Getting Out of Potential Abuse situations” (Handouts)
- “It Doesn’t Feel Good” (Handout)
- “Breaking the Silence” Video (Review the video first to be sure it is appropriate for your class.) It contains a collection of discussions and interviews, some of which may be useful to reinforce the lesson. Copies can be purchased from the Diocese of Orange. Further information is available on the Diocese of Tucson web page.

### **Teaching/Learning Activities**

Catechist’s Role: Provide a safe environment for students to discuss potentially sensitive issues. Use small group discussion, role playing, drawing, etc. to make the class interesting and more likely to be remembered.

### **Activities/Experiences**

- Review the story of creation emphasizing the fact that all God made is good. We are made in his image and likeness so we are basically good. However, we have a free will and sometimes we make decisions or choose actions that are not pleasing to God and often hurt others (Cain and Abel). You may want to have different students read short excerpts of the Creation Story for each day of creation.
- Say to the class, “Probably we have all seen films or television programs, news reports in the paper where child abuse takes many forms including verbal, emotional, physical and sexual that can have serious and sometimes fatal results.” Give one or two examples from TV or newspaper reports and then ask students if they have heard of other instances of abuse. (In order to avoid students telling an incident of abuse in which they were the possible victim, stress what they saw on TV or read about and not rumors or gossip they may have heard. Examples may be: the sixteen year old girl who committed suicide because a family member had been raping her for years; a parent charged with murder for shaking and severely beating a young son or daughter, a teacher who ridiculed a student in front of the whole class or the whole school, or when an adult or someone you thought was a friend tells you are always wrong and can’t do anything right).
- Select one (or more if time permits) of the “Vignettes on Physical and Sexual Abuse”. Since many students have computers at home and the TV news has been focusing on the widespread problem lately, “A Stranger in My House” may be a wise selection. Review the questions with the class. When you discuss question #6, stress that the truthfulness of Ashley with her parents may have saved her from sexual abuse by a sexual predator. Also, the actions of her father may have saved many others from becoming victims of the predator.
- Discuss the question, “How can I protect myself?” After students respond, select appropriate handout to reinforce the lesson. (3 possible Handouts)
- Ask students to distinguish the different types of abuse using the examples (Handout). Some may cover more than one type of abuse. Discuss.

## **Processing the Experience**

### **Content Questions**

1. What is abuse and how can it manifest itself? (verbal, emotional, physical, sexual)
2. What options does a person have when being abused? (Say no, attempt to leave, yell, tell someone nearby, call police, etc.)
3. What are the options after abuse has occurred? (Tell someone – a friend, parent, catechist, principal, priest, police, child care worker. Let people know the seriousness with which you view the problem.)
4. What are the consequences of your actions if you do not tell the truth about an incident? Perhaps you are trying to get even with someone and make up a story about him or her. How would you feel if someone did this to you and others thought you were guilty?
5. What resources do you have to locate people who will respond to an abusive situation? (Have a list prepared and available with phone numbers, etc.: Police, Child Protective Services, Child Welfare Services, parish staff, school nurse, etc.)

### **Personalization Questions**

Ask the students to think about what they would do about the following situations. Pause after each question:

1. What would you do about abuse in your home?
2. How would you respond to a friend who has been abused?
3. Who would you choose to tell?
4. What if that person didn't listen?

### **Closure**

Ask the students: How would you tell an adult about suspected abuse? Who would you tell?

(Be sensitive to anyone who needs to talk more about the issue and take appropriate steps to accommodate the student.)

As a class, pray for comfort and power for families who live with abuse. You may want to make it like the petitions at Mass with the response, "Lord, hear our prayer."

### **Possible Extension Activities**

Invite a guest speaker from a child welfare agency, police department resource person, parish staff, etc. to discuss these issues with your students.

# VIGNETTES OF PHYSICAL AND SEXUAL ABUSE

## I. TROUBLE FOR TONY

### **Scene I: *Josh is sitting on his front steps***

Josh sat on his front steps and waited for his friend, Tony, and his father to come and pick him up. He was looking forward to spending the night at Tony's house and had packed his favorite glove and his neon water pistol. Even though they'd been friends for nearly a year, this was the first time that Tony had invited Josh to his house. They always had a good time together and he was sure tonight would be no different.

He jumped up when he saw the light blue car pull up to the curb and yelled, "Bye, mom!" through the open screen door as he flew down the steps.

"Hello. Josh," Tony's dad said.

"Hi."

"Did you bring the you-know-what?" Tony asked in a whisper.

"Yep I've got it right here," Josh said as he patted the water pistol in his jacket pocket.

Tony's father eyed the boys suspiciously, but said nothing.

### **Scene II: *At Tony's house.***

Later that evening, the boys were in Tony's room looking at magazines and listening to Josh's tape when the door suddenly swung open. It was Tony's little sister, Lisa. "How many times do I have to tell you to knock before you come in my room? Tony said angrily. Then he reached for Josh's water pistol and squirted Lisa in the stomach. "Go away!"

Lisa's face turned bright red and then she burst into tears and ran out of the room. Josh and Tony looked at each other and started to laugh. "Aren't you glad I brought my enemy deflector pistol, Tony?"

"Yeah, I don't think she'll be bothering us anymore."

Just then they heard Tony's dad yelling from the living room. "Tony get out here this minute!"

Tony and Josh exchanged worried looks and then both headed for the living room.

"What's the matter, dad?"

"Do you think just because you have a friend over that you have permission to do whatever you please?" he demanded.

"No. But, I didn't hurt Lisa. It was only water."

"I don't care what it was. You know better than to pick on her just because she's younger than you."

Josh could see that Tony was getting really nervous. "I'm sorry, dad. I won't do it again, I promise."

Tony's father didn't seem to be listening anymore. He grabbed him by the shoulders and

shoved him against the wall and hit him hard on the face. By this time, Tony was crying and yelling for him to stop.

Josh didn't know what to do. His parents had sometimes gotten really mad when he'd done something wrong, but it had never been anything like this. Tony's father had hit Tony really hard, so hard that he had a bloody nose and a hand-print on his cheek.

Finally, he stopped yelling and ordered Tony to go to his room. Tony just stood there for a minute, gulped back the tears and then walked slowly to his room. Josh followed behind, not knowing what to say or do.

Once inside the room, Josh said, "Are you okay, Tony?"

I think so, but my head hurts. I guess it wasn't such a smart idea for me to use your water pistol."

"Your dad sure got mad. I was really scared when he hit you."

"Me, too. I don't try to make him mad, but sometimes I can't help it. What do you think I should do?"

#### Questions for "Trouble for Tony"

1. **How did Josh feel about spending the night at Tony's house?**
2. **Why did Tony's dad yell for him to come out into the living room that night?**
3. **What happened while Tony and Josh were in the living room?**
4. **How do you think Tony felt?**
5. **How do you think it made Josh feel to watch his friend being hit?**
6. **Do you think Tony's father physically abused him? What's the difference between spanking and physical abuse? (Abuse is "mistreatment" or "injury." Not all spanking is considered mistreatment or causes injury. Tony did get a bloody nose and a hand print was left on his cheek, so it may have been abuse.)**
7. **Discuss in small groups: What advice would you give to Tony? List all his options and choose which one you think is best.**

## II. A TOUGH SITUATION

You stay after school each night to help clean in order to pay for part of your tuition. You empty wastebaskets, clean chalkboards and run errands. You like the work a lot and want to do it because you really need the tuition money and want to stay in this school.

When you empty the full trash barrel, you need to go downstairs, where no one else usually is.

On Wednesday, four weeks ago, your supervisor, the maintenance man, came down when you were down there. He helped you empty the trash, but in doing so, got very close to you and almost pinned you to the wall, rubbing against you.

You thought it was an accident.

Three weeks ago, on Wednesday, he came down again while you were down there and not only helped you; but also when you were pinned in the corner, he held you there with his body and touched your private parts with his hands for about 30 seconds and said, "You like me a lot. Don't you?" You squirmed your way out and ran away, but didn't tell anyone.

Last Wednesday, he appeared again and touched your private parts, this time for a longer time. You screamed and he said as he touched you, "You like me a lot, don't you?" When you yelled, "NO!" and screamed louder, he said, "No one can hear you. The teachers are all in a meeting on Wednesdays. And, if you tell anyone, I'll see that you're fired! No one will believe you!"

He let you go, saying, "I'll see you next week down here and we'll have some more fun." You left very quickly.

You know that he is very well-liked by all the staff and students and that he is probably right in saying, "No one will believe you."

- What are your options?
- What resources do you have?
- What will be the consequences of each of your options? If you do something? If you don't do something?

## III. A STRANGER IN MY HOUSE

Ashley spends a lot of time on her home computer. She loves instant messaging her friends and surfing the web. One day, while surfing she found a site with an interesting chat room. Her parent's rule was that while she surfed the web, she could not go into any chat rooms. She decided that just one time wouldn't hurt. As soon as she got into the chat room, she was welcomed by "skater boy. " Skater boy said he loved to skate board and hung around the streets a lot looking for cool places to free style. They talked about skating for a while, and then music. Before she knew it they had been in the chat room for over an hour. She could hear her mom in the kitchen and knew that dinner would be ready soon. She told Skater

boy she had to go. Skater boy asked her to come back tomorrow, and that he would like to keep talking to her. She knew she shouldn't but she liked "Skater boy." He sounded a lot like her, and so she promised to join him tomorrow.

After school the next day and for the rest of the week Ashley met Skater Boy in the chat room. He was so friendly and interested in her. He asked her about her clothes, and her music, and her skating, and about her friends. On Friday, Skater Boy asked her to meet him in person on Saturday. He said "let's keep our meeting a secret." Ashley started to feel uncomfortable about that, but Skater Boy said, "Our friendship is so special, and we don't need to share it with anyone else. Come on." Ashley agreed to meet him at the Mall on Saturday afternoon, and told him she would be wearing her favorite red t-shirt.

That night at dinner she asked her Mom to take her to the Mall on Saturday. "Why do you want to go to the Mall?" asked her Mom. Ashley responded, "I want to meet some friends." "Like who?" "I don't know just some people I know." Ashley knew she was lying but she didn't want to tell her Mom she was meeting someone she met in a chat room she wasn't even supposed to go in. Her Dad looked her in the eyes, and said, "Ashley, you usually tell us who you are meeting, and I don't feel comfortable with your not telling me who you plan on hanging out with." Ashley's Dad could always get to her. Finally she admitted, "I met this guy on-line named 'Skater Boy' and he wants to meet me at the Mall." At the same time her Mom and Dad said, "No way!" Then her Mom said in her firmest tone of voice, "We will talk after dinner." They ate their dinner in silence, and her dad went to the computer. Her Mom sat her down and explained to her that sometimes people who pretend to be thirteen go into chat rooms to find young people to hurt. Ashley apologized for breaking the rules, and her Mom grounded her from the computer and the phone.

Meanwhile Ashley's dad followed the cookie trail on the computer and read all the messages in the chat room. Soon after he called a friend at the police department and told them where Ashley had planned to meet Skater Boy and told them what she had planned to wear and what she looked like.

On Saturday afternoon the phone abruptly rang. Dad answered the phone. When he returned to the living room, he sat next to Ashley and said, "Ashley the police arrested 'Skater Boy' at the Mall. They had a female police officer pretend to be you. Skater Boy is a fifty-year old man with a history of abusing young girls. I am so grateful you

told us the truth. You could have been killed!"

Her Dad hugged her and said, "I couldn't bear if anything happened to you. I love you".

Ashley cried and said she was sorry. Dad smiled and said "You know you are so grounded. "

Ashley replied, "I know."

### ***Questions about Internet Safety:***

1. *What mistakes did Ashley make?*
2. *Why are chat rooms dangerous?*
3. *Is there ever a time we should plan to meet in person people we meet on line?*
4. *Should we tell them where we live or give out our phone number? (Why not?)*
5. *How did "skater boy" fool Ashley?*
6. *What was a good choice Ashley made?*
7. *If Ashley had not told her Dad what she was up to, what could have happened?*

# HANDLING THREATENING SITUATIONS

Here are some steps you can take when your feelings and body signals tell you this may not be a safe situation:

- ❖ Take a deep, soft breath. Let it all go out.
- ❖ Think - What am I feeling? Is there danger here? What can I do?
- ❖ Ask Jesus for help.  
“Jesus, I’m scared. I don’t feel safe [comfortable]. Please be with me and help me think through what the best thing to do is. I love you and I know you love me. Please help me.”
- ❖ Ask an adult for help if you still feel confused or scared.

## REMEMBER

- You deserve to feel safe [comfortable] and to be treated with respect.
- Your needs and feelings are important. You can trust *your* feelings.
- It’s okay to tell someone you feel afraid or don’t like something.
- Your body belongs to you.
- You can decide who touches you or gets close to you.
- You can say no, even to someone older whom you know well and care about
- It’s not your fault and you are not a bad person if someone tricks you into something wrong.
- You can tell someone about it and keep telling until someone helps you.

## **SOME IDEAS FOR GETTING OUT OF POTENTIAL ABUSE SITUATIONS**

**Show them you don't like it \_ \_.**

Move away  
Push them away  
Dodge them  
Hide  
Walk or run away

**Tell them in words...**

"NO!"  
"Leave me alone!"  
"STOP!"  
"I'm going to tell!" "I  
don't like that!" "That  
hurts!"  
"Don't do that!" "Cut  
it out!"

**Leave to go to---**

Bathroom or bedroom and lock door  
Friend's or neighbor's house  
Outside and play  
Grandmother's house  
Neighborhood safe house with symbol in the  
window

**Be gross...**

Spit  
Throw up  
Burp  
Pick your nose  
Pretend to be sick  
Tell them you have lice

**Distract them...**

Tell them someone is coming  
Tell them your mom wants you  
Tell them something is broken and ask them to fix it  
Turn up the TV  
Change the subject

**Use borrowed protection...**

"My (mom, dad, teacher, counselor) says you're not  
supposed to do that!"

***TELL SOMEONE IN YOUR SUPPORT NETWORK AS SOON AS  
POSSIBLE.***

## IT DOESN'T FEEL GOOD

Match each statement below to the form of abuse it identifies. It is possible to have two marks for one statement.

	Verbal	Emotional	Neglect	None	Can't Tell
1. "You are so stupid!"					
2. "Your hair looks ugly. It always does!"					
3. Parents leave 1-and 4-year old alone at night.					
4. "You just think you're hurt. You're not really!"					
5. "You'll never amount to anything!"					
6. Child consistently comes to school without any lunch or money for it.					
7. Parent has 5-year-old make own meals.					
8. "What a dumb thing to do, Grace!"					
9. "Why aren't you as good as your brother?"					
10. "I'll tell you what you should feel!"					

**Personal Safety Curriculum for Children and Youth  
A Component of the Safe Environment Education Program  
Diocese of Tucson**

**Student Objectives**

The students will:

- Recognize that through their Baptism they are marked as Children of God making them special persons who are deserving of love and respect
- Learn to distinguish verbal abuse and legitimate correction by parents and others in authority
- Review emotional abuse and discuss concrete courses of action to take if they or one of their friends or classmates experiences it
- Define physical and sexual abuse and discover ways to avoid becoming a victim by learning and using strategies to get out of abusive or potentially abusive situations
- Explain the importance of reporting abuse until they are believed (for self and others)
- Explain the consequences of false reporting of abuse

**Lesson Overview**

Students will:

- Describe verbal abuse and distinguish it from correction
- Define emotional abuse and name concrete courses of action to take if they experience it
- Review physical and sexual abuse and investigate potential interventions
- Following Catechist's input and class discussion, study situations and determine if they are examples of abuse; brainstorm options and role-play them
- Explain importance of reporting abuse until they are believed (for self and others)
- Explain the consequences of false reporting

**Background Information**

This program is a tool for providing a meaningful experience for the students so they are able to recognize the various types of abuse and learn some strategies to deal with the abuse. Each student needs to feel he/she is a special person who deserves to be loved and respected by adults and peers. Modeling respect and concern in communicating with students, parents and other adults is the best way to teach the desired behavior.

Many of you may have only one class period to cover these topics. More materials are included so that you can pick and choose what you believe the class needs to hear at this time. You can best meet the unique needs of each class by using materials that fit the existing situation. Also, there may be opportunities during the year for curriculum integration that allows you to review the points made in this class in another context. Greater student involvement in the discussions, role playing, etc. will reap greater understanding and retention.

Unfortunately, it is clear that students need to be prepared to deal with physical and/or sexual abuse at the hands of a family member, a friend or a trusted authority figure. It is important to know what these abuses are, in order that help can be provided in time of need. Also, people need to know what to do and where to go for help. Immediate action is required to protect the student from further mistreatment. Please review the Diocese of Tucson *Code of Conduct* (for all who minister in the Diocese) so that if a student has confided a possible abuse to you, the proper procedures are followed.

Children can be hurt by the way they are treated by others. Those who are empowered to make and act on choices in their lives and who have a well-developed and proportionate sense of self-esteem are generally capable of dealing with a crisis. It is important that parents and catechists model proper adult behavior while correcting a child's behavior so as not to diminish the child's self-esteem and worth.

Often times, verbal and emotional abuse is more difficult to deal with than physical or sexual abuse. Children can be easily hurt by the way they are treated emotionally particularly by family members. Sometimes it is like putting a time-release capsule into a child's psyche. The effects may not be immediately apparent, but they will show up.

Neglect is altogether too common and too infrequently addressed. It is probably the most under-reported form of child abuse or maltreatment. Intervention now may help the family and prevent more serious harm. If you are in doubt as to whether there is a situation of neglect, seek counsel from your supervisors. When still in doubt, make the report to Child Protective Services. Also do not forget the ability and responsibility of the parish to reach out pastorally to a family that is in need, directly and/or through local social service agencies like Catholic Community Services.

Children should be taught to tell the truth and to understand the consequences if they are not telling the truth. So much damage can be done to both the victim and the accused when incorrect or false reports are made. We have all been made aware of the tragedy of persons having been imprisoned for many years for a crime he/she did not commit. Reporting abuse is a serious matter.

At the same time, it is important to remember that false reports by children are unusual. Make this a balanced presentation. Stress to the children the seriousness of making known their concerns to a trusted adult. The adult should be expected to demonstrate calm concern when faced with a report and to help the child articulate his or her concerns. If there is reasonable suspicion of abuse, law enforcement or Child Protective

Services must be called; they are the ones we rely upon to sift the evidence to come to the truth of the matter.

## **Vocabulary**

Types of Abuse:

- Physical Being abused through physical force; unkind, cruel or unfair treatment that physically harms an individual
- Sexual Being abused through inappropriate sexual contact. This type of abuse can include requests to allow the abuser to take photographs of the child without clothing, viewing pictures or videos of adults and/or children who are undressed and who are touching one another
- Verbal Being mistreated or abused by the words which a person uses against another person
- Emotional Being abused through emotional manipulation where the victim's own feelings and common sense are denied or forbidden
- Neglect Not to attend to one's duties as a parent by not providing children with their basic needs, schooling and nurturing

## **Suggested Materials:**

- The Bible – The Story of Creation
- “Situation Report” (Handout)
- “Handling Threatening Situations” (Handout-pg. 61)
- “Discussion Guide” (Handout)
- “Scenarios” (Handout)
- Bibles or copies of Psalms 34, 57, 62, and/or 76:9-10
- Breaking the Silence - Video

## **Teaching/Learning Activities**

Catechist's Role: Provide a safe environment for students to discuss potentially sensitive issues. Give students information and options for reporting known abuse.

## **Activities/Experience**

- Review the story of creation emphasizing the fact that all God made is good and we are made in his image and likeness. Humans, through free will, can make decisions/actions that are bad.
- Say to the class, “Probably we have all seen films or television programs, news reports in the paper where child abuse takes many forms including verbal, emotional, physical and sexual that can have serious and sometimes fatal results. (Give one or two examples from newspaper reports and then ask students if they have heard of other instances of abuse.)

- Select one (or more if time permits) of the “Situation Report” (Handout). Since many students have computers at home and the TV news has been focusing on the widespread problem lately, Question #4 on this handout may be a wise selection. Review the questions with the class and ask for their input.
- Discuss the question, “How can I protect myself?” (After students respond, distribute the handout, “Handling Threatening Situations”, on page 61)
- Discuss the differences between reasonable correction and abuse as well as between neglect and poverty. Use “Discussion Guide” (Handout) as recommended.
- Post the telephone numbers of local social service agencies and let students know your reporting policy, in order to help students who need to disclose the information to do so.
- Read aloud each situation from the handout entitled, “Scenarios”. Make a list of actions suggested by the students, including the person responsible morally and professionally to obtain further help for the victim.

## **Processing the Experience**

### **Content Questions**

1. What is abuse and how can it manifest itself? (verbal, emotional, physical, sexual)
2. How does a person in an abusive situation get out of it? (Attempt to leave, yell, tell someone nearby, call police, etc.)
3. What are the options after abuse has occurred? (Tell someone—friend, parent, catechist, principal, priest, police, child care worker. Let people know the seriousness with which you view the problem.)
4. What is the difference between neglect and poverty? What is the difference between reasonable correction and abuse?
5. What resources do you have to locate people who will respond to an abusive situation? (Have a list prepared and available with phone numbers, etc.: Police, Child Protective Services, Child Welfare Services, parish staff, school nurse, etc.)

### **Personalization Questions**

1. What would you do about abuse in your home? In your friend’s home?
2. What would you do if a friend complained about being neglected or abused?
3. Who would you choose to tell?
4. What if that person didn’t listen?
5. How can you empower yourself so that you aren’t victimized?

## **Closure**

Be sensitive to anyone who needs to talk more about the issue and take appropriate steps to accommodate the student.

Prayerfully reflect on one of the following Psalms – 34, 57, 62, 76:9-10. As a class pray for comfort and power for families who live with abuse.

**Possible Extension Activities**

1. Invite a guest speaker from a child welfare agency, police department resource person, parish staff, etc. to discuss these issues with your students.
2. Investigate the use of abusive techniques during the Holocaust by the Nazis. Read Anne Frank's Diary of a Young Girl or Corrie ten Boom's The Hiding Place.

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## SITUATION REPORT

1. Two girls, Hannah and Betty, are spending the afternoon together at a community center. They go to Hannah's house after school to change clothes before going to the center to go swimming. After the girls change in Hannah's room, Betty notices that the bedroom door is slightly ajar and she can see someone looking in. From the height of the person, she thinks it's Hannah's little brother, Roy.
  - What happened?
  - What should Betty do?
  - What should the girls do?
  - Is this an abusive situation?
  - Should it be reported to anyone? If so, to whom?
2. Jack and Jon are staying overnight at Ted's house. They are not looking forward to it because every time they visit Ted's house his older brother, George, tries to pick a fight. As it turns out, this time George is really angry and he punches Ted in the face, injuring his eye. Jack and Jon come to Ted's aid by yelling at George to stop and standing between the brothers. George stomps away, muttering, "Just wait 'till your little friends leave, Ted!" Ted yells at Jack and Jon, "Why did you do that? It'll just be worse when you leave!"
  - What will happen?
  - What should Jack and Jon do?
  - Is this an abusive situation?
  - Should it be reported to anyone? If so, to whom?
3. Charlotte has been so depressed lately. She cries easily, has nightmares and her grades are getting really bad. A few weeks ago, she came running over to your house, frightened because her older sister's boyfriend, Derek "said something rude to her and touched her." After a few moments she said, "Maybe I misunderstood" and went home. Now you're beginning to wonder.
  - What happened in this situation?
  - Was it abusive?
  - What will you do?
  - What should Charlotte do?
  - Should it be reported to anyone? If so, to whom?
4. James loved to play computer games and spends a great deal of time on his home computer. One day he went into a chat room looking for people to talk to who are also interested in computer games while he was in the chat room he met a guy whose screen name was "gamer". Gamer said he was in eighth grade and liked to play too. He asked if he could meet James at his house and they could exchange game codes James agreed and gave "gamer" his home address and phone number.

After hitting the send button, James started to worry about giving out his address in the chat room, and about who "gamer" might be.

- What happened in this situation?
- Did James make a dangerous choice?
- What could happen to James?
- What should James have done instead?
- What should he do now?
- Should James report this to anyone? Who?

# HANDLING THREATENING SITUATIONS

Here are some steps you can take when your feelings and body signals tell you this may not be a safe situation:

1. Take a deep, soft breath. Let it all go out.
2. Think - What am I feeling? Is there danger here? What can I do?
3. Ask Jesus for help.  
Jesus, I'm scared. I don't feel safe [comfortable]. Please be with me and help me think through what the best thing to do is. I love you and I know you love me. Please help me.
4. Ask an adult for help if you still feel confused or scared.

## REMEMBER

- You deserve to feel safe [comfortable] and to be treated with respect.
- Your needs and feelings are important. You can trust *your* feelings.
- It's okay to tell someone you feel afraid or don't like something.
- Your body belongs to you.
- You can decide who touches you or gets close to you.
- You can say no, even to someone older whom you know well and care about
- It's not your fault and you are not a bad person if someone tricks you into something wrong.
- You can tell someone about it and keep telling until someone helps you.

# DISCUSSION GUIDE

In a small group of three or four students, discuss and respond to the following questions. On a rotating basis, have each group member record a response upon which your whole group has agreed

1. What is the difference between neglect and poverty?
2. What is the difference between correcting a child and abuse?
3. Which of these strategies would be effective in dealing with true verbal and emotional abuse?

**YES/NO** \_\_\_\_\_ **WHY OR WHY NOT?**

\_\_\_\_\_ getting angry, yelling back

\_\_\_\_\_ praying for a friend who is being  
victimized

\_\_\_\_\_ telling another adult, like a priest,  
principal or catechist

\_\_\_\_\_ running away

\_\_\_\_\_ calling the police

# SCENARIOS

1. You are visiting your cousins who live out of town. Your brother indicates to you that your uncle gives him unwanted attention and has touched him inappropriately. You tell your mom, but she *says* that your brother misunderstood a friendly gesture.
  - What do you do then?
  - What if, after telling again, your mom gets mad at you and says, "Stop making things up! Your uncle would never do that!"
  - What if your brother tells you not to tell anyone, ever. He's afraid because your uncle said not to tell.
  - Should this be reported to anyone besides Mom? If so, to whom?
  - What actions should be taken?
  
2. While at school, your friend tells you that her step-father treats her roughly and you see bruises on her arms and legs. But, she has a smile on her face and quickly says, "Really, I'm kidding. I just fell a few days ago."
  - Would the situation change if your friend were the kind of person who was always seeking attention from others by exaggerating things that happen?
  - What if these things kept happening over weeks or months?
  - Should this be reported? If so, to whom?
  - What actions should be taken?
  
3. Your friend has a bad attitude toward the coach of your sports team. He says to you, "You know, that guy really bothers me. He's always saying weird things to me. Last week he invited me over to his house to see some movies. You know the kind!"
  - What would you do?
  - What if these things kept happening over weeks or months?
  - Should this be reported? If so, to whom?
  - What actions should be taken?

**Personal Safety Curriculum for Children and Youth  
A Component of the Safe Environment Education Program  
Diocese of Tucson**

**Sessions to be held:** In each high school and/or youth ministry program annually

**Introduction:**

The goals in this high school curriculum need not all be addressed in each session. A successful program will be a combination of repetition and new material. Regular repetition of material covering the basic themes of recognizing abuse, maltreatment or inappropriate behavior (whether on their part or by another), avoiding temptation and danger, responding effectively if faced with temptation and danger, and telling responsible adults rather than keeping secrets is very worthwhile. At the same time the particular content and delivery can be varied by using different segments of the DVD and the book, and by inviting outside speakers from law enforcement or social service agencies. There is enough flexibility in the material to adapt to a parish youth group or school setting with grades 9-12 together or divided into particular age groups as desired.

**Objectives:**

**The students will:**

- recognize that they are unique gifts of God deserving of respect and dignity
- learn the types of abuse and maltreatment that most commonly affect children and youth.
- recognize when an adult is grooming him or her for an inappropriate relationship.
- name behaviors or situations that make him or her uncomfortable or unsafe.
- learn to avoid dangers and, when not possible, to resist seductions, withstand peer pressure and demonstrate care for others.
- build on personal strengths so as to enhance the ability to resist temptation or more aggressive efforts to engage them in inappropriate activity.
- become confident about making reports regarding abuse or attempted abuse of self or others and to understand the obligation of others to make such reports.

**Lesson(s) Overview**

This lesson introduces and/or reinforces the idea of “personal safety” awareness and the need for effective prevention of and response to abuse or abusive situations. With guest speaker(s) or video providing pertinent information, students have the opportunity to explore and discuss the nature and definitions of abuse and appropriate responses to enhance safe environments and personal safety.

## **Background Information**

It is a goal of personal safety education and awareness to prepare young people to deal with physical and/or sexual abuse at the hands of a family member, a friend, or a trusted authority figure. It is important to know what these abuses are and how to respond so that effective help can be provided in time of need. In the event of abuse, immediate action is required to protect the young person from further mistreatment. All youth ministry personnel and high school teachers must become familiar with the Diocese of Tucson *Code of Conduct* and *Guidelines for the Prevention of and Response to Sexual Misconduct* as well as state law on mandatory reporting of abuse so that proper procedures are followed when abuse is discovered.

Children and teens who have been empowered to make good choices, act responsibly, and who have well-developed self esteem are generally more capable of dealing with a crisis. Victims of child abuse may have difficulty identifying themselves as victims and making appropriate choices. These are some of the insidious and harmful factors in abuse. It is important that teachers and youth ministers model appropriate adult behavior and guide teens in ways that keep their sense of worth intact.

With some young people, verbal and emotional abuse is more difficult to deal with than physical or sexual abuse. Adolescents can easily be hurt by the way they are treated emotionally, particularly by family members, peers, and others in authority. It is therefore important that in all sessions with high school youth, “ground rules” for respectful emotional and verbal interaction are established by the facilitator, modeled, and practiced.

### **Resource Materials:**

**(1) Video: It is not necessary to use a video, but it can make the presentation more effective. Two options are noted.**

#### ***Breaking the Silence***

*This video is a collection of discussions and interviews that is useful for educational programs with high school students. The longest segment is a group discussion among teenagers. There are additional segments that can be used to stimulate discussion of other dimensions of the problem. As such, the DVD can be used as the basis for a series of educational sessions over time.*

*The video is available for purchase from the Diocese of Orange. Ordering information can be found on the Resource Page of the Diocese of Tucson web site. The Diocese of Tucson has two copies of this video for lending available in the Office of Catechesis.*

**(2) Guest Speaker (if any)**

*It is very useful to ask experts from local law enforcement and social service agencies to present with you. Doing so builds community relationships in addition to bringing particular expertise to the parish or school presentation. Such*

*relationships are invaluable in future situations in which you may be called upon to respond to suspected abuse.*

**(3) Book**

**Creating Safe and Sacred Places (St. Mary's Press)**

*This book contains examples of several educational sessions for high school youth. It is a useful resource in planning, whether or not you use the video. It is a good resource for planning a series of programs to be conducted over several years. Ordering information is available on the Resource Page of the Diocese of Tucson web site, and the diocesan Office of Catechesis has several copies for review.*

**(4) Handouts:**

- a. *Code of Conduct for Juveniles (see sample "Conduct Covenants" for retreat)*
- b. *Summary of the Mandated Reporting Law*
- c. *Other materials as seem appropriate. Note that the video is limited to sexual abuse. This has been, of course, the major problem for our church; however, materials that address the more common maltreatment of youth (neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse) and the many other threats to youth (Internet pornography, Internet solicitation, acting out among youth, alcohol/drug abuse) are useful complements.*

**(5) Prayer Service: (from *Creating Safe and Sacred Places*)**

## **Teaching/Learning Activities**

**Role of Catechist/Youth Minister:**

- **Facilitate the presentation and discussion of information about personal safety and child abuse.**
- **Create a safe and trusting environment where these issues and questions can be openly discussed.**

**Input:** A possible initial presentation is as follows.

Welcome! [Introduce yourself and any other members of the team or guests who may be present.]

Today our focus is your personal safety. Your person has many dimensions – physical, psychological, sexual, spiritual – and each dimension has to be part of a good personal safety plan. Before we continue, let's pause to pray together.

**Prayer/Reflection (i.e. "You're Special" reading or other from *Sacred Places* book)**

**Continue with input:**

The terrible crisis of sexual abuse by clergy has been most in our minds these last years, and it is a great burden for all those affected. But it is only part of the larger

issue, only one of the many dangers that you face. And the dangers that you face are most often not while you are here at the parish, but when you are out and about in the community, with your friends and your families.

Today we want to talk about those dangers with you. We want to teach you and learn from you. We want to talk about the dangers in such a way that we do not unnecessarily increase your anxiety about the dangers or, paradoxically, lead you to adopt an unduly over confident attitude toward them. We must find a way to talk about them that will make you more aware, better able to avoid and resist them and, should danger become harm, more able to take effective action and more resilient in bouncing back.

You need not become a victim! You are strong and resilient. You can learn to resist temptation within yourself or from others. Even if the worst happens, you can with the help of others bounce back. You need not become a victim!

### ***Introduction of Video (if one is being used)***

[Frame the particular segment of the video they will see. Show the video.]

### ***Discussion/processing of video content***

1. What is abuse? Bring out the range of abuse: neglect, physical, sexual and emotional.
2. Learn the warning signs that indicate potential trouble.
3. Internet dangers: these include chat rooms, solicitation, and pornography.
4. The role of alcohol and drug use: disinhibition (how they lower inhibitions), legal age
5. Sexual acting out among peers: this includes date rape (criminal) and violations of chastity (moral). It can be posed also as an issue of respect for others.
6. Resisting illicit attentions from an adult or pressure from peers.
7. Summarize the meaning of appropriate boundaries with the leaders of the youth group, leaders of the parish, all adults and among peers.
8. Telling someone is a critical message. Youth who don't keep secret the abuse are less likely to carry shame and guilt for the long term.
9. What is the mandated reporting law? Bring out the responsibility of adults who learn of possible abuse to a minor. Discuss the reason for the law and why it makes sense for the youth to assist in bringing information forward.
10. Watching out for others is part of the Christian responsibility. Those youth who are themselves less vulnerable play an especially important role in watching out for the welfare of those who may be more vulnerable—by virtue of age, personality or other circumstances—to abuse or maltreatment.
11. Rules of conduct for the youth group should be discussed. It is possible to introduce at this point a “covenant contract” form. This form, signed by each member, is a way of marking the importance of each member’s commitment.

# Conduct Covenants

12. Role playing can be a useful way of making clear how one can either observe or violate rules of conduct

*Provide handouts (i.e., mandatory reporting statute, etc.) Local law enforcement is likely to have a great deal of material that will be useful for adolescents.*

*Thank the youth and invite feedback as to what other programs would be helpful to them.*

## *Prayer*

*After the meeting:* Remember that in any group, there are likely to be some persons who have been abused or who have otherwise experienced the impact of abuse in their family. In addition to conscious awareness of their likely presence as you choose your words during the evening, be prepared that someone may come forward for assistance after adjournment. Keep in mind the mandated reporting law, be clear from early in the session about your obligation to report, and do report if information emerges that leads you to reasonable suspicion that a minor is or has been harmed. Make referral for counseling, if needed.

## *The Ten Commandments*

- I. Thy car shall not be used during the retreat.*
- II. Thy body shall not leave the retreat grounds.*
- III. Thy body shall not be with the body of the opposite sex in the opposite sex's room.*
- IV. Thou shall not puff a weed of any kind, space out on any pills or drink any alcohol during the treat.*
- V. Thou shall report any injury immediately to the sponsor.*
- VI. Thou shall not burn any fireworks.*
- VII. Thou shall not trespass on thy neighbor's body or self-esteem.*
- VIII. Thou shall be at events on time.*
- IX. Thou shall observe all camp rules.*
- X. Thou shall be okay.*

Anyone caught breaking these rules will be talked with. After considering the severity of the transgression, the youth council has the option of asking the person's parents to come and take him or her home.

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## YOU'RE SPECIAL

YOU'RE SPECIAL. In all the world there is nobody like you. Since the beginning of time there has never been another person like you. Nobody has your eyes, your hair, your hands, your voice, your smile. You're Special.

No one sees things just as you do. In all of time there has been no one who laughs like you, no one who cries like you. And what makes you laugh and cry will never provoke identical laughter and tears from anybody else ever.

You are the only one in God's creation with your set of natural abilities. There will be somebody who is better at one of the things you're good at but no one in the universe can reach the quality of your combination of talents ideas, natural abilities and spiritual abilities. Like a room full of musical instruments, some may excel alone but none can match the symphony sound of the Body of Christ when all are played together because God set the members every one of them in the Body of Christ as it has pleased Him.

Through all of eternity no one will ever look, talk, walk, think or do exactly like you. You're special. You're rare. And, as in all rarity, there is a great value. Because of your great rare value you need not attempt to imitate others. You should accept--yes, celebrate--your differences. You're special. Continue to realize its not an accident that your special. Continue to see that God created you special for a very special purpose. He called you out and ordained you to a calling that no one else can do as well as you. Out of all the billions of applicants, only one is qualified, only one has the best combination of what it takes. That just as surely as every snow flake that falls has a perfect design and no two designs are the same, so with the Body of Christ also. No two believers are the same, and without each member the body would be lacking and Gods plan would be incomplete. Ask the Father to teach you His divine plan for your life and that it may stand forth revealed to you as it should, unfolding in perfect order in such a way as to bring the greatest glory to His name.

THAT ONE IS YOU BECAUSE YOU'RE SPECIAL!

## Parent Education

# Personal Safety Curriculum for Children and Youth A Component of the Safe Environment Education Program Diocese of Tucson

## Maintaining a Safe Environment for your Children A Program for Parents

An educational program should be offered to parents in each parish or school annually, and prior to offering the educational program for children and youth. This section presents an outline that can be used to develop such programs.

Having said that, it has proven difficult to get parents to attend these types of programs in large numbers. In the long run, it is advisable for us all to determine exactly why parents are not coming. In the short run, we recommend that you find other ways to reach parents. Some alternatives include short programs at the same time as parents are gathered for other essential activities such as registration, handouts (such as the one published as a resource document of this curriculum) that can be given out at such times independent of a program, and general communications in the bulletin or from the pulpit.

### Goals:

- To clarify the distinction between parents as “primary educator” and parents as “only educator” of their children.
- To help parents understand what will be taught to their children.
- To help parents build on what has been taught by the parish or school.
- To help parents create a safe environment in the home.
- To educate parents about the law that requires reports to be made when there is a reasonable concern that a child may have been harmed (mandated reporting law).
- To give parents the opportunity to “opt out” of the personal safety education on behalf of their children.

### Resource Materials:

1. Video: It is not necessary to use a video, but it can make the presentation more effective. Two options are noted.

#### *A) What Do I Say Now?*

*This video is most appropriate for parents or grandparents of younger children. It can be used with parents of older children as a more general discussion starter. It is a practical introduction to sexual abuse and presents both the rationale for educating their children in personal safety and a model for creating a safe environment in the home. It should be made clear to the parents that the video offers examples of common situations. It portrays one way of responding in those*

*situations, and it does so from a secular perspective. The purpose is not to dictate how each parent should respond, but to stimulate thinking so that all parents can develop their own plan for responding in a manner that is right for their family, before the need arises. The important thing is that parents are attentive to signs or trouble, recognize when their child wants to talk and know how to create an environment that facilitates discussion.*

*Review the video before showing it to identify the points at which your local community might need reassurance that the video is not intended to dictate to the parent what should be said to the children.*

*The video is available in English or Spanish. Ordering information is available on the Diocese of Tucson web site.*

#### *B) Breaking the Silence*

*This video is a collection of discussions and interviews that is used for educational programs with high school students. The longest segment is a group discussion among teenagers. This segment can be a useful part of the presentation for parents. Listening to it will increase awareness of and stimulate thinking about the perspectives of youth on sexual abuse of minors.*

2. Handouts: (a) Summary of the Mandated Reporting Law, (b) Guidelines for Parents. Other materials may be used as appropriate. In this vein, note that the suggested videos are limited to sexual abuse. This has been, of course, the major problem for our church; however, materials that address the more common maltreatment of children (neglect and physical abuse) and the many other threats to youth (Internet pornography, Internet solicitation, bully or sexual activity among youth, emotional abuse, alcohol/drug use) are useful complements.
3. Guest Speaker
4. Prayer Service
5. Summary of the Guidelines
6. Youth Code of Conduct

**Length of Presentation:** No longer than 90 minutes.

#### **Outline of Presentation**

##### ***Prayer***

***Input:*** A possible initial presentation is as follows.

Welcome! [Introduce yourself and any other members of the team or guests who may be present.]

We are meeting with you tonight to discuss an issue near and dear to all our hearts, keeping our children safe. This is a big subject; we will not exhaust it tonight. The terrible crisis of sexual abuse by clergy that has been such a burden for our church is only part of the larger issue, only one of the many dangers to children and youth that affect not only our parish [and school] but our entire community and society at large.

The task that faces us as parents and grandparents is both difficult and important. We must find a way to educate our children about the dangers, but to do so in a way that does not unnecessarily increase their anxiety or otherwise disturb them. To find that middle path is not easy, yet neither is it effective to do nothing.

We are here tonight to consider the following subjects.

You are the persons ultimately responsible for the well being of your children. We, as religious educators, want to work collaboratively with you for the same goal. For that reason, it is important that we communicate clearly regarding what we will be teaching about personal safety to your children in religious education.

For our part, we want to be sure that we are, as much as possible, “in sync” with you. For your part, we hope that you can build on what we offer in class through discussions at home; if you can do so, the impact of the education will be so much greater.

It is for all these reasons that we want to share with you tonight some information about the safety education program. Nevertheless, we also want to be clear that if you decide on the basis of what you learn that you do not, for whatever reason, want your child to participate in personal safety education, we will respect your wishes. You need only make it known to me in writing.

In a similar vein, we understand that you want to create a safe environment in your home. The most important elements necessary to create such an environment are vigilance and openness. Vigilance means that you not only are paying attention to what your children are doing, but also that you know what to look for. It is important that you know the signs of possible abuse or other dangers. Openness means that you communicate your readiness to listen when you children want to talk with you, and that they are confident you will not jump to conclusions or act rashly, either against them or anyone else. These are qualities that must be cultivated over time. Any person will have difficulty becoming such a parent, one who sees clearly and responds with maturity.

Finally, it is important that you know and understand the law of the State of Arizona as it pertains to child abuse. All of us who are responsible for the care of a child must make a report to law enforcement or Child Protective Services if we have a reasonable suspicion that a child may have been harmed.

We have all been concerned very much with the sexual abuse of children because of the recent experience of our church, coming to terms with the awful reality that a small percentage of our priests and deacons had done great harm to many children in the form of sexual abuse. But sexual abuse is only one type of abuse, and not the most common one. And abuse by clergy is not nearly as common as abuse in our very own neighborhoods and families. The violence within families, between adults, is terribly disruptive of the sense of well being we would wish for our children.

We all must be vigilant and receptive to receiving a report of any type of abuse or domestic violence, no matter where it may have occurred. We must have the courage to obey the mandated reporting law, wherever it applies, and to use the resources of our parish and civic communities to do what is necessary to prevent and stop violence against our children and within our families.

***Introduction of Video (if one is being used)***

***Discussion of Video:***

Be sure to bring out the various types of abuse that are not covered by the video. The most common types of abuse are neglect and physical abuse. Emotional abuse is often overlooked. The most common location of abuse is in the home.

As children grow, the variety of dangers expands markedly. Bring out the range of dangers, including solitary activity on the Internet and acting out among juveniles. Emphasize the desire of our Catholic community to help young people grow into mature adults who are capable of leading moral lives in the face of pressures to the contrary and who believe it their responsibility to look out for the welfare of those who may be less able to take care of themselves.

Allow for open discussion and make your points as you are able, working from the comments and questions that are raised.

Reiterate the essence of the mandated reporting law in the State of Arizona. Parents should understand that all parish [and school] personnel operate under this law. The hope is that if a report must be made concerning their child or a child they know, the sense of betrayal will be mitigated by knowledge of the law that mandated the report.

***Review the personal safety education to be given to the children***

1. Emphasize the difference between personal safety education and sex education.
2. Emphasize that the education offered will be appropriate to the age of the children and their maturity.
3. Make clear that personal safety education will be presented within the context of formation in the Faith.

4. Name the core elements of the personal safety education, including the child's right to resist behavior that makes them feel uncomfortable or that hurts them and the encouragement to the child to tell a trusted adult about the behavior that makes them uncomfortable or hurts.
5. Note that the personal safety education of children is just one element in the overall Safe Environment Program.
6. Discuss how the parents can build on what will be presented to the children.
7. Make clear how parents can "opt out" of the personal safety education for their children, if they wish. The refusal should be in writing.

***Provide handouts, including material on the personal safety education to be provided. Provide information regarding how to make a report of suspected child abuse. If appropriate, give information regarding the nearest children's or family advocacy center.***

***Let parents know that they are welcome to make an appointment to review the curriculum in greater depth.***

***Thank the parents and distribute a form on which they can make suggestions regarding the evening's program or the personal safety education in general.***

### ***Prayer***

***After the meeting:*** Remember that in any group, there are likely to be some persons who have been abused or who have otherwise experienced the impact of abuse in their family. In addition to conscious awareness of their likely presence as you choose your words during the evening, be prepared that someone may come forward for assistance after adjournment. Keep in mind the mandated reporting law and follow it if there is a report of possible abuse. Make referral for counseling, if needed.

***For those who do not attend:*** It is not unusual that parents are the most difficult population to reach in a parish or school. It is not usual that many parents will not attend a scheduled presentation such as the one proposed in this curriculum. For these reasons, it is important to have materials available to give to parents at opportune moments. One such moment is at the time parents register their children for religious education, youth group activities or school.

The following document can be copied and provided to parents at such times.

# APPENDIX

## **Guidelines for Parents**

### **Maintaining a Safe Environment for your Children**

We sponsor educational programs on child safety for parents at least once per year. We hope that you will make it a priority to attend the session when it is scheduled. In the meantime, we hope these points will be helpful to you in talking to your children about personal safety. Please do ask about any point that you would like to discuss.

During the course of the year, we will provide education to your child about how to be safe. This education will be done in a manner appropriate to the age of the children and in the context of our faith. In the annual education for parents, we will talk more about the program that will be offered to your child. When you understand what we are doing, we think you will appreciate very much the value of personal safety education. Please ask for as much detail as you desire. Nevertheless, if you do not want your child to participate in personal safety education, all you need do is give us in writing your instruction not to provide personal safety education to your child. We will honor your instruction.

#### **Teaching young children in the home about personal safety**

1. Focus on safety rules rather than concepts. Remember all the different areas of safety—traffic, fire, bicycle and the like.
2. Your child will understand the difference between touches or other contacts with adults or other children that feel safe and comfortable and those that feel unsafe or uncomfortable. Reinforce the difference by using examples.
3. A comfortable way to talk about unsafe touches is to teach your child about “private parts.” Private parts can be described as the parts of the body that are covered by the bathing suit. Private parts are touched only by parents or others charged with the care of the personal needs or health of the child.
4. Children sometimes think it is wrong to “say no” to an adult. Let your child know that he or she can “say no” if he or she feels unsafe or uncomfortable, even if the adult is one of the above. A good person will welcome the child’s expression of discomfort, treating it as important feedback and something to talk about.
5. Be sure that your child knows that “saying no” applies to anyone. Most child abuse or maltreatment is perpetrated by someone the child and you know and trust. It is worth repeating, a good person will welcome the child’s expression of discomfort, treating it as important feedback.
6. Children can also understand the rule, “get away,” when you feel unsafe or uncomfortable with what another person is doing. It is a rare situation in which the potential molester will physically confine or restrain a child who wants to leave.
7. Finally, let your child know that it is important to tell a trusted adult if he or she feels uncomfortable or unsafe with an adult. Teach the child that there is never a good reason to keep secrets for an adult about something that feels unsafe or uncomfortable. Help your child name trusted adults and encourage him or her to talk to them until someone takes his or her report seriously.

8. Have these conversations regularly. They will help you build a relationship with your child in which he or she is likely to bring up whatever is troubling. You don't want to be "the last to know."

### **Teaching older children and teenagers in the home about personal safety**

1. As children reach the fourth and fifth grades, they are more able to understand concepts.
2. They are also more vulnerable to being lured in more subtle ways by harmful persons. These lures are often very attractive; those who would take advantage of children are very sensitive to their needs and wants.
3. As they get older still, especially when they reach high school, the number of dangers multiplies, as do the problems our children can get themselves into.
4. Those who would take advantage of older children and teenagers are very good at identifying what will attract or win over the targeted child. They see what the child needs or wants and they try to provide it.
5. At these ages it is even more important to have in-depth discussions and to invite persons from the community with special expertise to help with these discussions.
6. In-depth discussions are important because you do want to develop a relationship with your child in which he or she will feel comfortable to come to you with concerns.
7. Other persons from the community are important because in our rapidly changing world parents are often unaware of the type and nature of the dangers young people face. Internet traps are one very clear example of such new dangers.
8. The basic messages are the same. Help your older children trust their instincts and their consciences.
9. When they feel uncomfortable or unsafe, when they know that they are being asked to do something wrong, remind them that they can be assertive and refuse to go further. They can get away from the situation and they can talk to you or another trusted adult.

### **General information**

1. The mandated reporting law requires any member of the parish or school team to make a personal report to Child Protective Services (CPS) and/or law enforcement if there is reasonable suspicion that is being, has been or is in danger of being harmed.
2. Our personnel are required to make that report regardless of who may have harmed the child. CPS or law enforcement will investigate to sort out the facts of the situation as fairly as possible.
3. All involved realize the trauma for a family at such a time and, within limits necessary for the investigation, will provide support that you may need. Ask for help for your child or the rest of the family.
4. If your child reports abuse to you or to another trusted adult, your reaction is very important. As much as possible at such a difficult time for you as well as for your child, try to remain calm. Do not rush to judgment; neither deny the truth of what your child has reported nor make an interpretation of the facts that might turn out

- to be wrong. Focus instead on supporting your child for making the report and cooperate with law enforcement or CPS in sorting things out.
5. One of the most damaging thoughts a child can hold in the case of abuse is the belief that it was his or her fault. We know that a child is not held responsible for abuse or maltreatment by an adult, but the child may assume just the opposite. There will be time later for further education about safety rules or (for older children) avoiding dangerous situations; in the immediate aftermath of a report, focus on simply being there with and for your child.
  6. You cannot protect your child from every danger, but you can teach him or her about personal safety. You can collaborate with your parish or school to reinforce that teaching.
  7. You can form a relationship with you child in which he or she will have confidence that you are a person who can listen and offer counsel worth heeding.
  8. You can, if you have reasonable suspicion of danger, make a report yourself to law enforcement.

*Revised May 15, 2006*

**Refusal of Permission Form  
for  
Personal Safety Education of Children and Youth  
(please print)**

Parent(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Child/Children:	Name	Age
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____

Check all that are applicable:

\_\_\_\_\_ I/we do not wish to have my/our child/children participate in the Personal Safety Education class.

\_\_\_\_\_ I/we will have a conversation regarding personal safety with my/our child/children in an age-appropriate manner in the home.

\_\_\_\_\_ I/we have received an educational handout from the parish or school religious education program regarding creating a safe environment for my/our child/children.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please return this feedback sheet to the parish or school office.*

# Internet Usage Contract

The Internet can be an unsafe place. I am making this agreement with my parents to help keep me, my family, and my friends safe:

1. My parents and I will decide when I am allowed to use the computer and the Internet. I promise not to ask or fight for more computer time. I will only do things and visit places that they say I can.
2. I will never tell anyone online or post online that I am home alone. I won't give out my last name, my home address or telephone number, the name of my school or teachers, where my parents work or their telephone numbers without getting my parents' permission. I will never give out my friends' screen names, e-mail addresses, name, addresses and telephone numbers and I will remind them to keep mine a secret.
3. If anyone online does anything that bothers me, I will tell my parents. I will never use bad language, say bad things about other people, or send mean messages in an e-mail, text or instant message, chat room, blog, or on a web site. I will tell my parents if someone does that to me. If I use "secret" or "code" words online, I will tell my parents what they mean.
4. When I use instant messaging, e-mail, chat rooms or web sites where people put information about themselves, I will never send or post a picture of myself or my family. If I set up a blog or an online profile, I will tell my parents where it is and how they can read it.
5. I WILL NEVER, EVER MEET WITH ANYONE I'VE TALKED TO ONLINE WITHOUT FIRST TALKING WITH MY PARENTS.
6. If my parents ask me for my password, I will give it to them. I will NEVER give out my passwords or any of our family's passwords to anyone, not even my friends or other family members.
7. If I want to download any games, movies, music, or programs, I will ask for permission. I know I must pay for most of these things. If I take them, that is stealing.
8. I will not try to win free things or buy things on the Internet without my parents' permission. If I get a message that telling me that I won something, I will show it to my parents. If I receive an e-mail asking for passwords or other secret stuff, I will ask my parents.
9. I will not open any of my parents' files. I will not change any settings or install any new software without my parents' permission.
10. I give my parents permission to look on the computer to see where I have gone on the Internet, the e-mail and text messages I have sent and received, or what I do in a chat room. If my parents installed programs that track what I do on the computer or limit where I go online, I promise not to turn those programs off.

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Child's Signature

I have read the above and agree to follow these rules. If I do not, my parents can take away the privilege of using the Internet.

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Parent of Caregiver's Signature

I agree to let my child use the Internet so long as these rules are followed.

UPDATED ARIZONA REPORTING STATUTE 13-3620: Duty and authorization to report nonaccidental injuries, physical neglect and denial or deprivation of necessary medical or surgical care or nourishment of minors: duty to make medical records available: exception: violation: classification

Any physician, hospital intern or resident, surgeon, dentist, osteopath, chiropractor, podiatrist, county medical examiner, nurse, psychologist, school personnel, social worker, peace officer, parent, counselor, clergyman or priest or any other person having responsibility for *the care* or treatment of children whose observation or examination of any minor discloses reasonable grounds to believe that a minor is or has been the victim of injury, sexual abuse pursuant to section 13-1404, sexual conduct with a minor pursuant to section 13-1405, sexual assault pursuant to section 13-1406, molestation of a child pursuant to section 13-1410, commercial sexual exploitation of a minor pursuant to section 13-3552, sexual exploitation of a minor pursuant to section 13-3553, incest pursuant to section 13-3608 or child prostitution pursuant to section 13-3212, death, abuse pursuant to section 8-201 or physical neglect which appears to have been inflicted on that minor by other than accidental means or which is not explained by the available medical history as being accidental in nature or who has reasonable grounds to believe there has been denial or deprivation of necessary medical treatment or surgical care or nourishment with the intent to cause or allow the death of an infant less than one year of age protected under section 36-2281 **shall** immediately report or **cause** reports to be made of this information to a **peace officer or to child protection services in the department of economic security**. A clergyman or priest who has received a confidential communication or a confession in that person's role as a clergyman or a priest in the course of the discipline enjoined by the church to which the clergyman or priest belongs may withhold reporting of the communication or confession if the clergyman or priest determines that it is reasonable and necessary within the concepts of the religion.

*This exemption applies only to the communication or confession and not to personal observations the clergyman or priest may otherwise make of the minor.*

A report is not required under this section for conduct prescribed by sections 13-1404 and 13-1405 if the conduct involves *only* minors age fourteen, fifteen, sixteen or seventeen and there is nothing to indicate that the conduct is other than consensual. Reports shall be made forthwith by telephone or in person forthwith and shall be followed by a written report within seventy-two hours.

The report shall contain:

1. The names and addresses of the minor and the minor's parents or the person or persons having custody of the minor, if known.
2. The minor's age and the nature and extent of the minor's injuries or physical neglect, including any evidence of previous injuries or physical neglect.
3. Any other information that the person believes might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injury or physical neglect.