



Catholic Safe Environment Curriculum for Elementary

2014/2015

Doctrinal Connection (CCC 1931)

1931 Respect for the human person proceeds by way of respect for the principle that “everyone should look upon his neighbor (without any exception) as ‘another self,’ above all bearing in mind his life and the means necessary for living it with dignity.”

No! Go! Tell!

Risky situations are a natural aspect of child development. Every child has to learn how to protect themselves and others at all times. The ability to say no effectively, the knowledge of where to go for help, and having the bravery to tell is essential for keeping kids safe.

1. No! – There are many ways to express “No” to another person and children are the masters of “No!” Use the following examples to teach children when they need to say “NO!” Read each statement, have the group firmly say “No” together. Use clapping, snapping, or other hand gestures to engage your group.
 - Someone wants you to get in their car without your parents’ permission.
 - Someone wants you to cheat on a test or homework.
 - Someone wants to take pictures of you and tells you to keep it a secret.
 - Someone wants you to come into their home without your parents’ permission.
 - Someone asks you for money in an email.

- Someone asks you to be their “secret friend.”
 - Someone touches you and you know they should not do that.
 - Someone tells you to use bad words.
 - Someone tells you they are going to hurt you or your family.
 - Someone wants you to hurt an animal.
 - Someone want you to be mean to another person.
 - Someone makes fun of you or bullies you.
2. Go! – When a child needs help they need to go to a safe place. Safe places surround us. Have the children identify safe places (not people) at your school, church, neighborhood, or community areas (malls, stores, etc). Answers will vary. Guide the children answers that are safe choices. Remind children that safe places are open areas with people around. Closed in places, like bathrooms, or hiding spots are not safe for children to go because no one can help them if they are alone or hiding.
 3. Tell! – Children need to know who to tell when they need help or another person needs help. Safe adults are who children need to tell. Safe adults wear name tags at schools/churches. Safe adults follow the rules. Safe adults can help. Telling is not tattling. Telling is the ability to clearly communicate the problem or the needs of a person in crisis. Children often have a hard time telling an adult when they really need help. Some children are embarrassed, afraid, or unclear on how to tell. Reinforce the message that telling is when someone needs help. Telling is when someone is hurt or being hurt, physically or emotionally. Telling is when someone is missing. Telling is when someone is asking a child to keep secrets from their parents. Telling will not get the child in trouble, telling helps the child stay safe.

Respect

Respect is a hard concept for most children to comprehend. Respecting the rules, respecting personal space, and using respectful language keep kids safe and enforce our faith.

1. Respecting the Rules – There are many rules that children must follow to stay safe at school, home, and in the community. Remind children that rules are for everyone, everywhere, and at all times. Rules are made to help everyone stay safe and enjoy their time. Rules have to be followed or people can get hurt. Rules may be a little different in homes, but the rules their parents make for them are the rules they need to follow. Rules at school that keep them safe need to be followed when at school. Rules at church that keep them safe need to be followed while attending church events. Rules in the community that keep them safe need to be followed while enjoying community functions and visiting community businesses.

- Ask your group to name some rules that keep them safe at school or church.
 - Ask your group to name some rules they have at home that keep them safe.
 - Ask your group to name some rules they have seen at the pool, park, play area that keeps them safe.
2. Respecting Personal Space – Personal space is often referred to as the “bubble.” Most kids have a personal feeling of how much space they need between themselves and another person that makes them feel comfortable. Personal space also changes depending on the relationships. Best friends might be stand very close to one another while classmates may give one another a few inches of space. When in the proximity of a stranger, the recommended space is about 3 feet or the length of an arm.
- Invite your group to stand up and space out around your area. Have them outstretch their arms to their sides and give each other the “Stranger Space.”
 - Now, have your group line up as if they would to go outside. Notice the difference between the “Stranger Space” and the “Friend Zone.”
 - Next, have the children sit down and give themselves a hug as if they were hugging their best friend, parent, grandparent, etc. Have them notice the differences between the personal space boundaries.
3. Respectful Language – Practicing respectful language helps ensure the children have a plethora of words to use to express their feelings. Respectful language is more than just manners. Respectful language sets the tone for an interaction. Children may struggle with always being respectful. Adults should always use respectful language around children. Talk with your group about how safe adults speak to children, low tone of voice, kind words, and so forth. Reiterate the Golden Rule: Do unto others as you would want done unto you. Speak to others as you want to be spoken to. Remind the children that if an adult is not using respectful words, it is time to say no, go to a safe place, and tell a safe adult.

Confidence and Courage

Building confidence and courage in children is an ongoing task that can take a lifetime. Confidence is the cornerstone for children to have the courage to report unsafe activity or an unsafe adult. Confidence can be built and encouraged by positive praise from safe adults and peers. Use the following to help encourage positive praise from the children in your group.

1. Strike a Pose – Choose a leader to begin the game. Each child will have a turn to be the leader. The game begins by the leader striking a pose that shows confidence or courage. The rest of the group copies the pose. Hold for a few seconds, choose a new leader, repeat. Encourage each child to have a different pose, this can be challenging but fun to see what the children

come up with. Continue until all group members have had an opportunity to be the leader. Without pointing out a “favorite” pose, praise all poses.

2. Breathe! – It can be very frightening for a child to have to tell a safe adult that they need help or that someone is threatening or hurting them or another person. Children often forget to breathe or become physically unable to speak and begin to cry with they need help. Teaching a child how to calm down, breathe, and tell can help them clearly, confidently, and courageously communicate if they need help.
 - Everyone stands with both feet on the floor
 - Arms dangling at their sides
 - Deep breathe in – hold for 2 – breathe all the way out, bending at the waist
 - Do a body shake
 - Deep breathe in – hold for 2 – breathe all the way out, bending at the waist.
 - Slowly have the group stand up straight and tall.
3. No! Go! Tell! Chant – The group is familiar by now the “No, Go, Tell” concept. Being able to chant it, yell it, or sing it helps build confidence and courage to say it when needed. Decide if your group will simply repeat the “No, Go, Tell” in a chant with varying tones, if they will simply yell it out, or if your group wants to create a tune and “sing” the words. Once decided, practice a few times and then finish with a strong “NO, GO, TELL!”

Cyber Safety

Children spend an extraordinary time using devices and communicating in cyber space. Safety encompasses not only real life situations, but has to address online activity as well.

1. Apps – A lot of applications are harmless and fun. Children need to identify safer apps and avoid unsafe and questionable applications. Ask your group what apps are their favorites. Remind them that then always need parent permission BEFORE downloading anything onto any device. Remind your group that most apps will have reviews and they should look for words like “virus” or “scam” and avoid those apps. Remind your group that not all apps are free. Parents need to read the terms and conditions prior to downloading.
2. Online Purchases –Parents will be responsible for charges on their accounts even if they did not give permission. Children cannot authorize purchases. Children MUST have parental permission to spend any money online for any applications, downloads, game, shopping, music, movies, upgrades, or any other pop up, spam message, email, or chat request.

3. Live Games – Gaming can be very fun, educational, and entertaining. Most games are single player games and have very low risk. While others, like MineCraft and Clash of Clans, are multi-player games and need to be monitored. Xbox Kinect and Wii Live are game consoles that allow players to connect on line with others around the world. Remind children to only play with people that they know in real life and to always ask permission from a parent before playing or inviting someone onto their world.
4. Pop ups – Advertisements or questionnaires pop up on screens during most apps and games. Turning on the “pop up blocker” helps prevent these and can help save a device from being spammed or sent a virus. Remind your group to always “X” out of a pop up. Remind them that pop ups that state “you won” are scams and dangerous. Remind your group to never click on the “OK” button or “Accept” button.
5. Email/texting – Children of all ages are texting and emailing at young ages. Take a little survey of your group and ask them who uses texting or emailing. Texting and emailing is a fantastic form of communication but has to be used properly. Remind your group to reread any message BEFORE they press send. Remind your group that a lot of other people could be reading what they send. Remind your group that they need to always use kind and respectful words. Remind your group to always have a parent permission before texting or emailing. Remind your group to NEVER send pictures without showing it to a parent first. Remind your group that emails and texts can be hacked and they should ALWAYS tell their parents if a stranger is contacting them or if someone is being mean, bullying, or asking for personal information about their home, school, sports, family, or themselves.

Optional Activities

1. Distribute the cartoon pages or coloring page. Have the children color or write captions or information they have learned during this class onto the pages. Have them take home the cartoons and teach their families how to stay safe in real life and on line.
2. During class time have groups make posters to display around the buildings using the coloring sheet or cartoons. Ask permission to display the posters.
3. For older groups – distribute the cartoons. Assign small groups. Have the children create simple skits based on the characters and information in their cartoon strip. Invite them to perform their skit for the group.