



Catholic Safe Environment Curriculum

Late Elementary (3rd – 5th)

2015/2016

Note to Teacher/Catechist: Begin and end the lesson with the suggested prayer that is derived from the Catechism of the Catholic Church. This is a great opportunity to introduce your group one of the doctrine documents of our faith. You can display a copy of the Catechism of the Catholic Church as a visual aid.

Opening Prayer Doctrinal Connection (CCC 1881, 1185, and 2492)

(Have the children repeat each sentence after you.)

+ Dear God,

We are a community. Help us to follow the rules to keep us safe. Help us to remember that through our baptism we are in a sacred and safe space when we gather together. Help us to remember to protect our personal space. Amen. +

Safe Rules

CCC: 1881 Each community is defined by its purpose and consequently obeys specific rules.

Safe Rules

There are 3 basic rules for staying safe. Say “No” then “Go” to a safe place and “Tell” a safe adult.

Create 3 groups. Assign each group a safety rule (No, Go, Tell). Ask each group to brainstorm different ideas based on their assigned safety rule.

- a. How many ways can you express “No” with respectful and appropriate words and actions?

- b. How many safe places can you “Go” for help? (remind this group that safe places are areas that have doors, windows, and safe adults that can help them. Safe places are NOT hiding places)
- c. Who can you “Tell” if you need help? (Remind this group that safe adults follow laws and rules, care about the child, are not “creepy” or “shady” people, and don’t ask kids to keep secrets from their parents.)

Give the groups a few minutes to brainstorm and then ask each group to share their ideas with the rest of the children.

Safety Rules Scenarios

Use the following scenarios to ask the children to talk about times when they might have had to follow the safety rules. Select a few children to answer each scenario.

1. I yelled “STOP!” when.....
2. I said “no” when.....
3. I told someone when.....
4. I walked away when.....
5. I asked for help from.....
6. When I needed help I went to.....

On the board or a poster, print the safety rules: NO, GO, TELL. Ask the entire class to chant the rules with you. Start quietly and progressively get louder then progressively quieter. Then, give a count of 3 and everyone proudly and confidently states the rules together. End with applause.

Safe Space

CCC: **1185** The gathering of the People of God begins with Baptism; a church must have a place for the celebration and fostering of the baptismal promises. A church must lend itself to the expression of repentance and the reception of forgiveness, which requires an appropriate place..... A church must also be a space that invites us....

Personal Space

Personal space is simply the distance between people. Personal space varies from person to person and is commonly referred to as the “personal bubble” or a comfort zone. Have your group stand up and put their hands on their hips so their elbows are bent. (<>) If any child can move their elbows and they touch another child, everyone needs to spread out. Remind the group that 3 feet is the usual distance between them and a stranger, but elbow space is appropriate between two people that know one another. As everyone spreads out and remains standing, ask the following questions for a brief discussion.

- a. How do you feel when someone you know “pops” your personal space bubble? How about if a stranger gets too close?

- b. How do you feel when someone touches you in a harmful way?
- c. How do you feel when you see someone else being touched in a harmful way?
- d. What can you say and do? (follow the safety rules: Say NO, GO away, TELL a safe adult.)

After the questions, encourage the children to return to their seats.

Safe Places

Safe places can be found anywhere, at school, in your neighborhood, or even out in public. Remind the group of the answers from the first section of this lesson. Expand on their ideas of safe places. Ask for examples of safe places at school (offices and rooms with teachers or volunteers). Ask for examples of safe places in their neighborhoods and in public (home, friends house, neighbor if they know them well, police station, fire station, store). Praise all answers. Remind them again that safe places have safe adults who can help. Safe places are not hiding places. Assign the children into 4 or 5 groups. Distribute paper and pencils. Ask the groups to come up with clever slogans of where other kids can go for help. Give them several minutes to brainstorm and then invite sharing. (Example: GO to the office, Yelp can't help.)

Safe “Surfing” and “Gaming”

CCC: **2492** Everyone should observe an appropriate reserve concerning persons' private lives.

Cyber surfing and gaming is a factor that is prevalent in most children's lives. Apps, games, videos, shopping, and socializing are all done on various devices. Ask your group to raise their hands if they have any of the following devices (do not be surprised when everyone has their hand up).

Cell phone, ipad, tablet, ipod, laptop, desktop, Wii, Xbox, Play Stations

Ask the children to share with you what types of activities they do on these devices. Allow for sharing. (watch videos, listen to music, play games, do homework, social media, etc)

Ask the children to raise their hand if they have ever.....

- a. Been sent a request by someone they do not know in real life
- b. Had a pop up of “one of those” pictures that are not for kids
- c. Been asked to go to a private chat room
- d. Clicked on a video that they thought was OK, but turned out NOT to be
- e. Have been sent messages from people they do not know
- f. Have been hacked

Cyber “Stranger Danger” - There are NO boundaries on the Internet!

Online strangers can be as dangerous as talking to a stranger in real life. People that are online can be posing as another person, sometimes as a child, to gain your trust. Cyber-strangers need to be avoided. Do not “friend” strangers on apps or games. Always follow the rules of the sites. Ask permission BEFORE you buy or download anything online. Never answer emails from strangers. ALWAYS tell your parents if someone is acting shady on line or asking for you to give them personal information.

Cyber Privacy – Protect It!

Children often are asked for private information on games sites, apps, shopping sites, etc. Many times kids do not even think before they enter information or press “accept” and “download.” Teach the ASK rules to your group. On the board print the letters ASK vertically....for each letter give the rule of protecting their privacy online. It should end up looking as follows:

A – Always get permission – for apps, games, friends, purchases

S – Stay on Safe Sites – age appropriate, locked sites (closed lock icon)

K – Know who you are playing with....only real life friends

Option: Distribute note cards or magnetic cards and markers. Have the children make a magnet or card to display at home with the Cyber Privacy rules and include the NO, GO, TELL personal safety rules as well.

Option: If time allows, your group can make posters for the school or office with the personal safety rules (NO, GO, TELL) and the Cyber Privacy rules of ASK.

Closing Prayer

Gather the children in the prayer space. The following prayer can be used as a guide or you may choose to use your own similar prayer. Have the children echo after you. Then, give each child the take home activity sheet to follow up as a family.

+ Dear God,

Sometimes we have challenges. Sometimes we are scared. Sometimes we question what to do. Help us to live by Your rules. Help us to live by the safety rules. Help us to protect ourselves in real life and online.

AMEN +