

Lesson 1 for Grades K, 1 & 2

Physical Boundaries

PRINCIPLE

Children must learn tools to protect themselves from people who may harm them through physical touch (sexual or otherwise) to prevent / reduce the risk of sexual abuse and boundary violations.

CATECHISM / SCRIPTURE

Of Benjamin he said: The beloved of the Lord, he abides in safety beside him; He shelters him all day long...
—Deuteronomy 33:12

OBJECTIVES

Through this lesson the adult lesson leader reinforces the parent's message about touching safety and protecting private body parts. After Lesson 1, children should be better able to:

- Identify safe and unsafe touches
- Repeat and understand the physical boundary touching rules:
 - Say "No!" when someone tries to touch them in an unsafe or uncomfortable way
 - Try to get away from the situation
 - Tell an adult as soon as possible
- Technology Component: Understand similar boundary rules apply for Online activities, too:
 - Say "No!" if someone shares unsafe or inappropriate material / images
 - Leave the situation
 - Tell an adult as soon as possible
- Begin to understand that if anybody does give them an unsafe touch or shows them inappropriate material, it isn't the child's fault

Background for Lesson Leaders:

While adults are the chief protectors of children, there are still items that we can teach children to be able to better protect themselves when faced with tough situations. Personal boundaries are established during our early years, and adults must help children to create their own proper boundaries, and respect the ones that are in place—understanding that children will model adult behavior. Some boundaries are "non-negotiables" for children (such as touching/physical boundaries), but others are unique and are impacted based on the youth's individual perceptions, personal history, values, goals, culture and concerns.

The more we learn about boundaries and safety issues, the more we will be able to protect ourselves and others. Parents and guardians are the primary educators of their own children and thus teaching children the actual names of private body parts is their responsibility. That learning process should begin when the child is approximately 18 months old. Therefore, children should know the names of their private body parts by the time they get to kindergarten.

The Lesson Leader should not teach children the names of their private parts, but can explain that the areas covered by bathing suits are our "private parts" and are kept covered and private for a reason—to keep us safe and healthy. Also, the word "no" is an extremely powerful word in every language. Using our voice, and the word "no" are effective ways to establish a boundary. Sometimes children may not be aware that they're allowed to say "no" to an adult. Additionally, children must understand the importance of trying to remove themselves from any situation where they feel uncomfortable or unsafe, or where their boundaries have been violated, and then tell an adult as soon as possible.

During this lesson, it's extremely important that the Lesson Leader avoids saying that touches that *feel* good are "safe, loving or show someone loves you." Rather, a safe touch is a touch that isn't intended to confuse, scare or deliberately harm the child.

This age group: Dealing with the primary age—key concept is "activity"

Young children have lively and vivid imaginations, are growing less self-centered, and are becoming more conscious of others. Their attention span is short—approximately 20 minutes. They build on concrete experiences, love to learn, and are highly inquisitive. However, they rely almost entirely on others to define good and bad, and safe versus unsafe behavior—but they do understand "rules." Parents should make every effort to create an environment where children are free to ask questions about life and their own bodies. This early experience of honesty and trust will set the stage for each child's life-long relationships with others.

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE LESSON—A Map for Lesson Leaders

1. **Complete the VIRTUS Children's Programs Lesson Leader Orientation and Certification Training.** This training module will provide the foundational knowledge necessary for any Lesson Leader to successfully lead a safe environment lesson. For access to this training, please communicate with your diocesan coordinator.
2. **Review the *Teaching Boundaries and Safety Guide: Safe Environment Guide for Caring Adults, Parents and Guardians*.** This document (also available in module format) gives a wealth of information regarding boundaries. While adults are the main protectors of children, there are skills children can learn to better protect themselves and each other when faced with tough situations where caring adults aren't present. For access to this resource, please communicate with your diocesan coordinator.
3. **Review the Key Vocabulary Words for Lesson Leaders to Know** (below). These key words and concepts should be woven throughout the entire lesson. The lesson leader should read through and understand these terms and apply them to each activity.

Key Vocabulary Words for Lesson Leaders to Know and Be Able to Communicate

Private body parts—those body parts covered by a bathing suit.

Saying “No”—to say “no” means to refuse, deny, reject or express disapproval of. This word is used to express a boundary and communicate that you do not want something to happen or continue. [\[Let children know It's OK to say “No” to an adult if they make you feel scared or uncomfortable, or if they touch your private body parts.\]](#)

Rules—a prescribed guide for conduct or action. We follow the rules to make sure we are safe—just like how we have a seatbelt rule to keep us safe in the car, or the safety rules before we cross the street. [\[For example, teach the child a simple rule for what to do if someone tries to touch him / her in an unsafe way, which is to say “No!”, try to get away, and tell an adult as soon as possible.\]](#)

Safe touches—touches that have a good purpose, aren't intended to hurt and should be familiar. They're safe and can also be meant to keep you healthy, even if the person isn't known well, as long as the touches are appropriate for the particular relationship—such as when mom kisses your forehead at night, when you high-five your teammate, etc. [\[Avoid saying safe touches that feel good are “safe, loving or show someone loves you” since sometimes touches are safe and necessary, but can also hurt—although they hurt for a good reason to keep children safe, such as stitches, a doctor shot or dental cleanings.\]](#)

Unsafe touches—touches that are inappropriate, could be meant to hurt or scare, or are contrary to the touching rules. If unsure about a touch, ask a parent. Examples are hitting, punching, tripping, kicking, spitting, touching private parts, etc.

Secret—something kept hidden, never told or unexplained. Secrets exclude others and have potential to harm, sometimes causing the person involved to feel frightened or uncomfortable. [\[For example, let children know that there are no secrets when it comes to personal and physical safety. Tell children that it's wrong for an adult or another child to ask a child to keep a secret about safety—especially unsafe touches—because that's a way for people to get hurt. If an individual tries to make a child keep a secret or makes him / her feel frightened, the child must know to communicate this information right away to a parent or caring adult—and be reassured that the child will be protected regardless of threats or seeming consequences of “telling”.\]](#)

DURING THE LESSON

Each lesson should begin with a prayer (of your choice) and the Introductory Video. Following the video, you are able to choose which activity options you would like to do with your class. There are multiple activities from which to choose, and you may choose to do one, or all, of the activities. Each activity can also be tailored to the needs and grade level of your students.

STEP 1: Play Introductory Video

The introductory video for youth in this age range is designed to open a simple discussion about personal boundary safety. The brief video is not intended to be a substitute for the lesson itself. It's merely an introduction designed to “break the ice” and assist the transition of completing the interactive Lesson Activity Options. If the video is shown as an optional activity, please use in conjunction with one of the additional activity options, because discussion and practice are critical components needed to teach youth how to protect themselves. They learn best by “doing,” not just listening. Please communicate with your coordinator to obtain video access.

ACTIVITY OPTION #1: Rules for personal safety “OK”/“Not OK” corners and spaces

Background: In this activity, you are assessing children’s recognition of personal boundaries and helping children to learn basic rules for personal safety.

Activity: Lesson Leaders will announce a statement, and children will identify if it is “Not OK” or “OK” by moving to specific spaces.
(Developmental components also include identifying/contrasting differences, effectiveness for memory work, simultaneous participation, etc.)

Preparation: In advance, gather and label the colored papers with large, bold visible letters that say the following: red paper will have the words, “Not OK,” and the green paper will have the words, “OK.”

Lesson Leaders will identify respective OK / Not OK Corners in the room. Choose corners of the room that are easily accessible. Clear the pathways to the two corners so that children can get to them quickly. If corners are unavailable within the room, or if the activity is being completed outside, then choose two appropriate areas. For older children, consider involving them in the corner/space selection process to increase their autonomy and engagement—though keep your timeframe in mind and limit these types of decisions when time is limited. Whichever space is selected, remember to label them accordingly by posting one set of the red and green signs. One set of the colored papers will be affixed to the respective spaces, while the other set of colored green/red papers will be in your hands. If it is a windy space, or if there is no ideal place to affix the signs, consider posting the signs in advance so that you do not lose time by attempting to post the signs.

This activity works best when children can move around; in this way, we want to incorporate as much movement into the lesson as possible to help children stay engaged and learn better. If you are incorporating this movement into the lesson, you will also need to have a neutral, “middle” space where children will return to when they are hearing the “statement” that you give them (statements are shown below). However, if the group is large, you may need to have children “sit” in their seats while you read the statement to them, then stand near their seats, and point to the corner they’re choosing once they are ready to react—though, this is the less ideal option.

Directions: Tell the children that you’re going to do a fun activity. First remind children about their safety rights. **Say:**

- You are in charge of your own bodies and you have a right to be safe.
- If someone wants to hug or kiss you, or give you an unsafe touch anywhere on your body, and you don’t want them to—you can say, “no!” or “stop!”
- Whenever you feel unsafe or uncomfortable about something that is happening to your body, you can always speak up about it and say, “no!” or “stop!” and move away, and safe adults and safe friends should listen.
- This also happens with our friends or siblings. If we want to hold our friend’s hand or give them a hug, and they don’t want that and show with their words or body that they don’t like it, we show kindness and respect by listening to their, “no!” and we stop.

Then, explain the paper concepts to the children by holding up each paper and reading the words (remember, one set will be affixed to the spaces, and the other set will be used to explain the concepts in your hands). **Say:** “red” means “not OK.” It can also mean “No!” or “stop!” Green means, “that’s OK,” or “yes.”

Then quiz the children by asking each of these questions separately, and waiting for their response before continuing to the next question. **Say:**

1. Which one means “not OK?”
2. Which one means, “that’s OK?”
3. Which one might mean, “No” or “stop”?
4. Which one might mean “yes”?

SUPPLIES

2 large green papers
2 large red papers
Tape, or a hanging instrument (clip, hanger, magnet, etc.)
1 writing utensil

Note: As an option, consider the book, *Please Stop! Go Tell!* By Michelle Brown, LCSW or other suitable book that you have in your school or parish library that illustrates safety rules. Read the story to them before the activity to provide prior knowledge, or wait until after, and perform the activity to assess growth in their knowledge of the material.

Then, show them where the two spaces are located by walking to each space. Make sure the other set of signs are affixed to these spaces in easily visible locations for children. If you'd like, you can have them practice by inviting them to go into the spaces, helping them accordingly. Children will return to a general "neutral" area after you complete each statement). **Say:**

- Let's remember to walk, and be mindful of being kind to one another—no pushing.
- Let's practice! If something is "not OK," to which corner will you go? Go ahead and go to the space! Great!
- Ok, now let's go back to our starting (neutral) point.
- Now, if something is "OK," to which area will you go? Perfect.

They can return to the neutral space while you read the next example. This time, you're going to give them an actual statement to which they will react—another practice turn. **Say:**

- This time, I'm going to announce a statement (a statement is an example that you will read from your sheet).
- Everybody will listen very closely.
- After I read it, everyone will be allowed to scramble to take a stand in one of two designated corners of the room.

Say a reminder: "this corner is the *OK Corner*," and that one is the *"Not OK corner."* Here's the practice statement: *"What if we... eat Ice-cream for breakfast, lunch and dinner? Do we go to the 'OK' space or the 'Not OK' space?"*

Continue the activity using a variety of safe environment statements (below) to adequately assess student learning of the Safety Rules. Make notations of responses for future classes/discussion.

Taking it one step further:

- Call on *OK / Not OK* children (as a group) to state why they think what they do. Acknowledge their answers, and then confirm the appropriate answer. Students remain standing or can be asked to sit "crisscross-applesauce" while the discussion is held. Teacher should guide the ensuing discussions, validating statements children make while correcting any mistaken perceptions. **Note:** The specific, correct answers are under each statement. If the child cannot articulate these statements, then you can communicate them as a Lesson Leader. Older students within this age group will be able to articulate the answers more than younger children.
- To help children feel safe with disagreeing, or better about having the answer that is "against the grain," encourage a "scramble" where you invite every single person to get up again and have a second chance to go to the appropriate section of the room.
- Help make the connection between "not OK" and "unsafe." **Say:** Sometimes things that are "not OK" are also unsafe. And when something is unsafe, we need to tell our safe adult. Like our teacher, school counselor, mom or dad!

List of possible "statement" prompts for the activity: Say, each time: "What if we..."

Note: Some of the statement examples are "silly," to help keep younger children engaged during a serious topic.

1. *Eat ice cream for breakfast, lunch and dinner?*
 - **Answer:** Not OK! Because, this wouldn't be the healthiest option to help us to grow bigger and stronger!
2. *Say "no!" to someone when it comes to your safety?*
 - **Answer:** OK! Because, it's OK to say "no!", even to an adult when it comes to our safety!
3. *Get a hug from Mom?*
 - **Answer:** OK! Because, moms can be our special safe adults!
4. *Get pushed and hurt by a neighbor?*
 - **Answer:** Not OK! Because, this wouldn't be kind or safe, and we would need to tell a safe adult right away!

5. Get sat on by a dinosaur?
 - **Answer:** Not OK! Because, this wouldn't be kind or safe, and we might get hurt! We would need to tell a safe adult right away!
6. Get a gentle pat on your shoulder [mime the behavior] by a teacher?
 - **Answer:** OK! Because, a gentle pat on our shoulder is usually a safe touch.
7. Get touched on your private parts by a friend?
 - **Answer:** Not OK! If someone touches the parts covered by a bathing suit, this generally wouldn't be a safe touch, and we would need to tell a safe adult right away!
8. Get picked up by an eagle and flown to the tippy top of a very tall tree?
 - **Answer:** Not OK! This might sound fun, but it probably wouldn't be safe, because we might get hurt and we would need to tell a safe adult right away!
9. Get shoved at recess by another student?
 - **Answer:** Not OK! Because, this wouldn't be kind or safe, and we would need to tell a safe adult right away!
10. Get a vaccine shot that might hurt, to protect us from illness?
 - **Answer:** OK! Because, the purpose is to keep us healthy, even though it doesn't feel good.
11. Get a "Fist Bump" from a buddy [mime the behavior, gently, with a student]
 - **Answer:** OK! Because, a fist bump is generally a safe touch, as long as it doesn't hurt.
12. Get kicked by a brother/sister?
 - **Answer:** Not OK! Because, this wouldn't be kind or safe, and we would need to tell a safe adult right away!
13. Get a "High Five" from a friend?
 - **Answer:**
14. Get a kiss on the cheek from Grandma?
 - **Answer:** OK! Because, a kiss on our cheek from grandma is generally a safe touch.
15. Get touched on your butt?
 - **Answer:** Not OK! Because, when it comes to our private parts, or areas that are covered by a bathing suit, we are always allowed to say "no"—even to an adult. Then, try to get away if you can, and tell a safe adult about what happened as soon as possible.

Conclusion: Once you have gone through all of the scenarios, invite children back to their seats and tell them the following.
Say:

- Remember, you are in charge of your body.
- You have a right to be safe, and you have a right to say "NO" or "STOP" when you feel uncomfortable or unsafe, or when something is "NOT OK."
- And, we listen to our friends and family when they say, "NO," too.
- Most people and most touches are safe and healthy.
- When another kid, or an adult touches us in a way we don't like, or when they touch our private parts, or areas that are covered by a bathing suit, we are always allowed to say "no"—even to an adult. Then, try to get away if you can, and tell a safe adult about what happened as soon as possible. These are our "personal boundary safety rules!"

ACTIVITY OPTION #2: Learning to name the body parts singalong

Preparation: In preparing for this activity, review the *Teaching Boundaries and Safety Guide: Safe Environment Guide for Caring Adults, Parents and Guardians*. Help children to see that they have a say in what happens to their bodies, and that they have a right to be safe.

Directions: Reiterate to children their regular body part names by using the following song:

*Head and shoulders, knees and toes, knees and toes.
Head and shoulders, knees and toes, knees and toes.
Eyes and ears and mouth and nose,
Head and shoulders, knees and toes, knees and toes.*

Note: Touch each part of your own body as you sing it and invite the children to touch their body parts and sing along. Repeat several times, gradually increasing the tempo / speed each time.

Talk with children about the difference between these “regular” body parts and “private” body parts. **Say:**

- We treat private body parts as “special” by keeping them covered. One reason is to help keep our private body parts clean and healthy.

Ask children what to do if someone wants to touch their private body parts or if an adult asks a child to touch the adult’s private body parts. **Say:** These are called the “Personal Boundary Safety Rules”:

1. Say “No!”
2. Try to get away from the person.
3. Tell a parent, or safe adult what happened as soon as you can.

Note: Each of the examples below would require the “Personal Boundary Safety Rules” because the action is unsafe, makes the child feel uncomfortable or is against the rules.

Give children examples of situations that might come up, and talk about what to do in each situation. **Say:**

- What if an adult offers you a present or a treat to keep you from talking about a touch involving private body parts or any other kind of touch that might upset your parents?
- What if a grownup gives you a present and asks you to keep it a secret?
- What if an adult isn’t touching your private body parts, but is doing something else that makes you feel uncomfortable?
- What if the person who is trying to touch your private body parts is another kid, and not an adult?
- What if a grownup tells you that no one will believe you if you tell? Or says they’ll hurt someone you love, like your family or your dog?
- What if the grownup who makes you feel uncomfortable is someone you really like, someone your family knows and likes, or even someone in your family? Where do you go for help?

Conclusion: Once you have gone through all of the examples, tell them the following. **Say:**

- You are in charge of your body—of your head, shoulders, knees and toes—and every other body part. There are also safe adults and special safe adults who help you to be safe and healthy with your body.
- You have a right to be safe, and you have a right to say “NO” or “STOP” when you feel uncomfortable or unsafe.
- And, we listen to our friends and family when they say, “NO,” too.
- Most people and most touches are safe and healthy.
- When another kid, or an adult touches us in a way we don’t like, or when they touch our private parts, or areas that are covered by a bathing suit, we are always allowed to say “no”—even to an adult. Then, try to get away if you can, and tell a safe adult about what happened as soon as possible. These are our “personal boundary safety rules!”

ACTIVITY OPTION #3: Passport to touching safety

Background: Just as adults carry a passport when they travel in foreign countries, children can design and carry a “passport” as a reminder to keep them safe when they travel to or from home, school, church or any other places they go. Children should think about safe touches they have received from safe friends and safe adults. Within this activity, the pages will illustrate safe touches and help children understand the meaning of safe adults and *special* safe adults.

Preparation: Lesson Leaders will need to print out the worksheets and gather the supplies necessary for artwork and crafting.

Activity: Children will complete the cover of the Passport and will begin working on pages 2 and 3. They are encouraged to complete pages 2 and 3 at home.

Directions: Instruct children to fold the pre-printed paper in half to form a Passport booklet.

The front cover includes the words “MY PASSPORT” in large letters. The child will personalize the passport by drawing his / her picture and decorating the cover however they’d like. On the line beneath the picture, the child will write his / her name.

The inside of the Passport includes the following pages:

- One page for drawing and coloring original artwork to illustrate safe touches.
- One page for drawing and coloring original artwork to illustrate safe and *special* safe adults.
- The back cover lists the touching safety rules.

Discussion: While the children are creating their Passports, the Lesson Leader should use the opportunity to again reinforce the touching safety rules. **Say:**

- Private body parts are the parts on our body that we cover with a swimsuit.
- No one has the right to touch a your private body parts except to keep you clean and healthy—and then, only a few *special* safe adults have that right (like mom or dad, and as designated by the child’s parents.)
- If someone tries to touch a child’s private body parts or wants the child to touch their private body parts, the child should follow the “Personal Boundary Safety Rules”:
 1. Say “No!”
 2. Try to get away from the person.
 3. Tell a parent or safe adult what happened as soon as you can.

Note: The worksheet template is included in the downloaded set of materials at the end of this packet.

SUPPLIES

8.5 x 11 copier-type paper (for printing)
Printer
Writing utensils
Crayons (optional)
Colored pencils (optional)
Markers (optional)
Scrapbooking stickers / stamps (optional)

ACTIVITY OPTION #4: Online Activities and Safety Rules—Connect the Dot.com

Background: In this activity, you are helping the children to know that the safety boundary rules also apply to online activities.

Preparation: Print the Connect the Dots Activity Worksheets for each student, and read through the lesson. The children will need to be able to count up to the number 36 to complete the activity—but if they cannot, you may help (see “Note” box below).

Directions: Pass out the worksheet so that each child has one. Help the children know to find and start with the #1, then draw a line to the next number, and so on. If all the numbers are followed in the correct numerical order, a picture will emerge from the dots.

Note: The Connect the Dot worksheet template is included in the downloaded set of materials at the end of this packet.

SUPPLIES

8.5 x 11 copier-type paper (for printing)
Writing utensils (i.e., crayons, colored pencils or markers, etc.)
Printer

Discussion: Facilitate a discussion with the children in a large group activity with the following questions and tasks:

- **Ask** for examples of activities they like to do online or on the Internet. (Examples can include: playing games, video calls with friends / family, school projects, etc.)
- Use the Connect the Dots Activity Worksheets to highlight some of the different devices used for these activities. Name any others that aren't included. (Examples: computers, tablets, cell phones, gaming systems, game controllers, etc.)
- **Ask**, have they ever felt unsafe with any interactions using one of these devices? In what ways?
- **Ask:** What should they do if they feel unsafe or uncomfortable? What are the safety rules online if someone shows the child scary pictures or pictures with uncovered private body parts?



Remember to follow the “Personal Boundary Safety Rules”:

1. Say “No!”
2. Try to get away from the situation.
3. Tell a parent or safe adult what happened as soon as you can.

Note: Depending on the child’s age and development, they may have difficulty knowing the chronological order of numbers. They may need additional assistance, which could be verbal help, or visually shown on a board through writing the numbers out.

ACTIVITY OPTION #5: Netsmartz “Know the Rules” Rap Video: Be Safe Online and Offline, too!

Background: This short 2-minute video is shared with permission from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, and can be played for children as part of an activity. It is designed to open a simple discussion with children about boundaries and safety.

Description: Watch Clicky rap his way into teaching you the 4 Netsmartz rules for real-world safety. Lyrics include: “Check first; take a friend; tell people “NO”; tell a trusted adult; now you’re ready to go!”

Click here for the link: <https://www.missingkids.org/netsmartz/videos>

End the lesson with a prayer

The Lesson Leader may invite the children to create their own prayer, he/she may lead a prayer, or may use the suggested prayer below.

*Dear God,
Sometimes when things happen, I get scared. Sometimes I just get mixed up—like when a person I care about does something that makes me feel uncomfortable or scared. When that happens, help me remember that I am special and give me courage to tell another adult what happened. Thank you for loving me and for giving me safe adults who want to keep me safe and happy. Amen*

Boundary Touching Rules

Only your special safe adults have permission to touch your private parts. Your special safe adults may only touch your private parts to keep you clean and healthy.

If someone tries to touch you in an unsafe or uncomfortable way, or wants you to touch their private parts, you should:

- Say, "No!"
- Try to get away from the situation.
- Tell your parents or another safe adult what happened as soon as possible.

My Passport

Me



Here are some examples of safe touches.

1. Daddy rubbing my back at bedtime.
2. Mommy dancing with me to fun music.
3. Grandpa hugging me as we twirl in circles.
4. My brother and me giving each other a high-five.
5. Holding grandma's hand really tight when we ride the roller coaster.

Draw a picture of your favorite safe touch in this box.

Draw a picture of one of your safe adults in this box.

Draw a picture of one of your special safe adults in this box.

Lesson 1 for Grades K—2

Physical Boundaries

ACTIVITY OPTION #4: Online Activities and Safety Rules—Connect the Dot.com

Background: This activity and discussion helps children to know that safety boundary rules also apply to online activities using the computer, tablet, phone, video game or any other device. In class, children discussed whether they had ever felt unsafe online, and what they should do if they ever feel unsafe in the future: to follow the "Personal Boundary Safety Rules":

1. Say "No"!
2. Try to get away from the situation
3. Tell a parent or safe adult what happened as soon as you can

Instructions: Find the "start dot" that begins with the number 1, then draw a continuous line to the next number, and so on. If all the numbers are followed in the correct numerical order, a clearer picture will emerge from the dots.

