

# *Keeping Kids Safe*

## **Lesson Plan for Grades 6, 7, & 8**

### **Prayer**

Dear Blessed Mother Mary, please obtain God's grace, protection and spiritual health for my family and for all families. Make our homes safe and pure, a home which recognizes the kingship of Jesus - a sanctuary of peace, joy, and love. Help us to image in our family the Holy Family of Nazareth - Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. Help us to know and live out the truth of Christ's love for us and for all people, and to realize that the more we live chaste, pure lives, the better we will know and live out the truth.

Bring us God's grace to always respect and defend human life, which is so precious a gift from the Father. Intercede for us with Jesus, that we may be granted the grace of living holy lives and of going to heaven one day to live eternally in happiness with the Holy Trinity, with you, Our Blessed Mother, and with all the saints. Amen.

### **Introduction**

“October is Respect Life month. What does it mean to respect life?”

(Objective: Understand that “I am unique and created by God. I deserve respect and give respect to others. My body is a temple of the Holy Spirit.”)

### *Safety*

Use the *Family Time* handout to discuss cautions or rules their parents have given to protect them. Cover the points below.

- Safe, unsafe and unwanted touch: Safe touch makes us feel safe and good. An unsafe touch makes us feel scared and bad. We have the right to say no to touches that do not make us feel safe. Unsafe touches cannot be openly shared with others. This usually makes us feel bad. We should report any unwanted or unsafe touch to a parent or trusted adult.
- Respect for ourselves: how we talk, act, and live. We need to know the difference between respectful and disrespectful language and actions, and avoid anyone who disrespects us. The private parts of our body (those which are covered by shorts and tee shirts) are not to be violated.

### *Secrets*

- “Who can name a good secret?” (surprise party, a special trip, a Christmas present)
- “A good secret is something that will be shared later.”
- “Who can name a bad secret?” (Answer: one that cannot be shared with a trusted adult. We may want to hide a mistake or something someone else did wrong. If someone has hurt us and tells us not to tell, it must be told to a trusted adult. We want to be happy and safe).
- Why would be it be difficult to share a bad secret? (fear, embarrassment, thinking I’m in trouble or it’s my fault)

## *Friendship*

“Can anyone share characteristics of a good friend?”

Good friends help us to understand God, others, and ourselves. Good friends help us to be good and to be safe. A good friend will never pressure us into doing something we don't want to do.

“Can anyone share characteristics of a false friend?”

False friends mistreat or take advantage of our trust and friendship. They can hurt us psychologically, emotionally, spiritually and even physically. People who manipulate or misuse our friendship are not true friends.

## *Bullying*

“What would our world look like if we all looked the same, acted the same, dressed the same, spoke the same way, liked the same things, and were equally successful in sports?”

“What a wise God we have to create each of us with so many different gifts, looks, languages, and interests! Unfortunately, not everyone respects our differences. People who bully others are looking for power and respect by belittling and making others feel bad.”

“Can anyone share any examples of bullying?”

Physical, emotional, social desire to gain power over another.  
Pushing, hitting, teasing, name calling, gossip, intimidation.

“Can anyone share any examples of cyber-bullying?”

Online, internet, cellphones, cameras, email, chatrooms, Facebook, any electronic device  
Posting unkind messages/pictures, writing blogs  
Spreading lies/rumors about someone online

Why do bullies bully?

- Someone else is picking on them.
- They are looking for attention.
- They feel bad about themselves and want other people to feel bad too.
- They have no friends and feel lonely.
- They want the people around them to think they are strong and tough.

“Review with the youth the internet code of conduct found below, ask if anyone has anything they wish to add to the code of conduct.”

### *Internet Code of Conduct*

1. Always keep personal information (name, phone number, school, age, address, etc.) private when chatting online.
2. Think before you post, if you wouldn't do it on the field/court or in the classroom, don't do it online.
3. Take action against cyber-bullying.
4. Use the computer in a common area of the house, under the supervision of a parent or guardian.
5. Never meet in-person with someone you've met online.
6. If someone is being inappropriate online, stay away from the person, block them from your social media site, and tell a trusted adult about the incident.
7. Keep your passwords to yourself.
8. Never file share or open online documents without parental permission.

“We've spent some time talking about online safety, bullying and other safety issues. Let's practice! Ask for volunteers, read a “what if” to the student and ask him/her what he/she would do in that situation. Practice saying “NO” or “STOP” and walking away from the situation.

### *“What If” Activity (appropriate grades 5 & 6)*

*Show what you could or would do if...*

- You were walking to your next class and a boy came up to you and put his arm around you and pushed you toward the locker.
- A neighbor invited you into his or her house and you felt uncomfortable with that invitation.
- A stranger asks you to help him find a lost pet.
- You're on the Internet and someone you don't know wants to chat with you.
- You see a classmate take something from a new student (smaller student, younger student).
- You're at a friend's house and your friend wants you to watch movies that you know your parents wouldn't approve of.
- Your friends want to get together and do something you know is wrong.

## ***“What If” Activity (appropriate grades 7 & 8)***

*Show what you could or would do if...*

- Your brother’s friend spent the night with your brother and you woke up in the night and found the friend in your room touching you.
- You started to walk home from school and a friendly stranger came up and put his or her arm around your shoulder.
- A relative came over and you felt very uncomfortable with his or her hug/kiss.
- A neighbor invited you into his or her house and you felt uncomfortable with that invitation.
- A friend of your cousin offered you a ride home and instead of taking you to your home, he started to take you to an unfamiliar place.
- You see or hear of kids “ganging up” on someone in your class.
- You see or hear of kids sending inappropriate messages/photos on their cell phones to other students.
- You hear another student bragging about cheating, bullying, or sending a mean message to other students or teachers.
- Another student demands your lunch money or your homework answers.

### ***Conclusion***

On the *Family Time* sheet, list 3 trusted adults besides your parents to whom you can go for help.

Have the children take the *Family Time* handout home with them and have them share their trusted adult list with their parents.

### **Closing Prayer**

Hail Mary, full of grace.  
The Lord is with thee.  
Blessed art thou among women,  
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb,  
Jesus.  
Holy Mary, Mother of God,  
pray for us sinners,  
now and at the hour of our death.  
Amen.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Family Time*

We are all created in the image and likeness of God. My body is a temple of the Holy Spirit.

Our families and trusted adults and teachers share concern for our safety.

We learn to differentiate between safe, unsafe and unwanted touch. We are called to chastity and we have a responsibility to avoid or immediately report any unwanted or unsafe touch to a parent or trusted adult.

We show respect for ourselves and others by how we talk, act, and live. We must identify respectful and disrespectful language and actions, and avoid anyone who fails to respect us. In particular, the areas of our bodies covered by shirt and shorts are private and must not be violated.

God gives us the gift of free will. All actions have consequences. We must learn how to discern the implications of the choices we make every day. When we experience the bad choice of others, we must report the offense and get help.

The virtue of chastity helps us understand and identify actions or behaviors which are wrong or sinful. Children, young adults, and adults must avoid actions, experiences or behaviors which offend against chastity.

Secrets can be very harmful to us physically, emotionally and spiritually. Always question secret play and secret games and determine how the secret may cause great harm.

There are many different kinds of friendship. Healthy relationships and friends can help us to understand ourselves, God and others. We sometimes meet false friends who mistreat us or take advantage of our trust and friendship. Poor relationships and false friendships can deeply harm us psychologically, emotionally, spiritually, and even physically. People who manipulate or misuse friendship are not friends. We must report any relationship which can be harmful to us.

Good communication with parents and family members helps keep me safe. I can also help keep younger siblings and others safe by being observant and concerned.

My parents, family members, and other trusted adults will listen to me and help me. My parents and I choose three trusted adults I may go to for help:

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# KNOW THE RULES...

## GENERAL TIPS FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS TO HELP KEEP THEIR CHILDREN SAFER

While many parents and guardians feel they are faced with new and unprecedented challenges when trying to keep their children safer in today's fast-paced and increasingly global society, the [National Center for Missing & Exploited Children®](#) offers these commonsense, general safety tips to help families put these challenges into perspective.

- 1. Make sure you know where each of your children is at all times.** Know your children's friends and be clear with your children about the places and homes they may visit. Make it a rule for your children to check in with you when they arrive at or depart from a particular location and when there is a change in plans. You should also let them know when you're running late or if your plans have changed to show the rule is for safety purposes and not being used to "check up" on them.
- 2. Never leave children unattended in a vehicle, whether it is running or not.** Children should never be left unsupervised or allowed to spend time alone or with others in vehicles as the potential dangers to their safety outweigh any perceived convenience or "fun." Remind children to **never** hitchhike, approach a vehicle or engage in a conversation with anyone within a vehicle they do not know and trust, or go anywhere with anyone without first getting your permission.
- 3. Be involved in your children's activities.** As an active participant you'll have a better opportunity to observe how the adults in charge interact with your children. If you are concerned about anyone's behavior, take it up with the sponsoring organization.
- 4. Listen to your children.** Pay attention if they tell you they don't want to be with someone or go somewhere. This may be an indication of more than a personality conflict or lack of interest in the activity or event.
- 5. Notice when anyone shows one or all of your children a great deal of attention or begins giving them gifts. Take the time to talk to your children** about the person and find out why the person is acting in this way.
- 6. Teach your children they have the right to say NO** to any unwelcome, uncomfortable, or confusing touch or actions by others and get out of those situations as quickly as possible. If avoidance is not an option, children should be taught to kick, scream, and resist. When in such a situation, teach them to loudly yell, "This person is not my father/mother/guardian," and then immediately tell you if this happens. Reassure them you're there to help and it is okay to tell you anything.
- 7. Be sensitive to any changes in your children's behavior or attitude.** Encourage open communication and learn how to be an active listener. Look and listen to small cues and clues indicating something may be troubling your children, because children are not always comfortable disclosing disturbing events or feelings. This may be because they are concerned about your reaction to their problems. If your children do confide problems to you, strive to remain calm, noncritical, and nonjudgmental. Listen compassionately to their concern, and work **with them** to get the help they need to resolve the problem.
- 8. Be sure to screen babysitters and caregivers.** Many states now have a public registry allowing parents and guardians to check out individuals for prior criminal records and sex offenses. Check out references with other families who have used the caregiver or babysitter. Once you have chosen the caregiver, drop in unexpectedly to see how your children are doing. Ask your children how the experience with the caregiver was, and carefully listen to the responses.
- 9. Practice basic safety skills with your children.** Make an outing to a mall or park a "teachable" experience in which your children practice checking with you, using pay telephones, going to the restroom with a friend, and locating the adults who may be able to help if they need assistance. Remember, allowing your children to wear clothing or carry items in public on which their name is displayed may bring about unwelcome attention from inappropriate people looking for a way to start a conversation with your children.
- 10. Remember there is no substitute for your attention and supervision.** Being available and taking time to really know and listen to your children helps build feelings of safety and security.





# About CHILD SAFETY

1-800-THE-LOST® (1-800-843-5678)

www.missingkids.com



**OJJDP** Office of Juvenile Justice  
and Delinquency Prevention  
Office of Justice Programs ♦ U.S. Department of Justice

## What are the most important things parents and guardians should know when talking to their children about this issue?

- Don't forget your older children. Children 11-17 are equally at risk of being victimized. At the same time you are giving your older children more freedom, make sure they understand the important safety rules as well.
- When you speak to your children, do so in a calm, nonthreatening manner. Children do not need to be frightened to get the point across. Fear may actually work at cross-purposes to the safety message, because fear can be paralyzing to a child.
- Speak openly about safety issues. Children will be less likely to come to you if the issue is enshrouded in secrecy. If they feel you are comfortable discussing the subject matter, they may be more forthcoming to you.
- Do not confuse children with the concept of "strangers." Children do not have the same understanding of who a stranger is as an adult might. The "stranger-danger" message is not effective as danger to children is much greater from someone they or you know than from a "stranger."
- Practice what you talk about. You may think your children understand your message, but until they are able to incorporate it into their daily lives, it may not be clearly understood. Find opportunities to practice "what if" scenarios.
- Teach your children it is more important to get out of a threatening situation than it is to be polite. They also need to know it is okay to tell you what happened and they won't be a tattletale.

## What are the most important things parents and guardians should tell their children about this issue?

- Children should always **check first** with you or another trusted adult before going anywhere, accepting anything, or getting into a vehicle with anyone. This applies to older children as well.
- Children should not go out alone and should always **take a friend** with them when they go places or play outside.
- It's okay to say **no** if someone tries to touch them or treats them in a way to make them feel scared, uncomfortable, or confused and get out of the situation as quickly as possible.
- Children need to know they may **tell** you or another trusted adult if they feel scared, uncomfortable, or confused.
- Children need to know there will always be someone to help them and they have the right to be safe.

## What is the biggest myth surrounding this issue?

The biggest myth is dangers to children come from strangers. In the majority of cases the perpetrator is someone the parents/guardian or child knows, and that person may be in a position of trust or responsibility to the family.

## What advice would you offer parents and guardians who want to talk to their children about this issue?

Parents and guardians should choose opportunities or "teachable" moments to reinforce safety skills. If an incident occurs in your community, and your children ask you about it, speak frankly but with reassurance. Explain to your children you want to discuss the safety rules with them so they will know what to do if they are ever confronted with a difficult situation. Make sure you have "safety nets" in place so your children know there is **always** someone available to help them.

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