

Intermediate Level, Grades 3, 4, 5 (ages 8 to 11 years)

Lesson Plan: Touching Safety Rules—Safe Friends, Safe Adults, and Safe Touches

- Principle:** Children must guard against those who may harm them through touch (sexual or otherwise). Children must respect their own health and safety and the health and safety of others.
- Goal:** To assist educators, catechists, youth ministers, and other caring adults in teaching children how to prevent or reduce the risk of sexual abuse.
- Objectives:** Through this lesson the catechist, teacher, or youth minister reinforces the parent's message about touching safety and protecting private body parts. Upon completion of this lesson, children should be better able to:
- Recognize that we treat private body parts as “special” by keeping them covered. One reason is to help keep our private body parts clean and healthy.
 - Stand up for themselves more effectively.
 - Say “No!” when someone tries to touch them in a way that is uncomfortable or otherwise inappropriate.
 - Name their safe friends and safe adults.
 - Identify special safe adults
 - Respond in an appropriate manner to unsafe situations

Dealing with the intermediate age—Healthy questioning

These children are away from home more often than earlier in life and they need to start recognizing that safety issues can arise when they are off with friends or at other events and locations. Caregivers can be more effective when dealing with this age by including them in the discussion while establishing rules or guidelines.

Children at this age are beginning to ask about and understand their own physical growth. They want to discuss some of the virtues essential to friendship such as loyalty, communication, and responsibility. They are interested in the proper terminology related to body parts and wish to have trusted adults in their lives to discuss basic physiological processes with in a non-threatening way. Since children are influenced by what they see and hear in the media, it is important that caregivers talk with their children about the values and attitudes that are portrayed.

Vocabulary words:

- Private body parts
- Touching safety
- “No!” or other words and phrases that mean “no”
- Secret
- Safe Friend
- Unsafe Friend
- Safe touch
- Unsafe touch
- Safe adult
- Unsafe adult
- Special safe adult
- Respect

Note: Teachers should use this opportunity to talk about the grooming process and to point out that it is unlikely someone would start out by immediately trying to touch your private body parts. Child molesters take some time to gradually move toward the abusive behavior. Remind kids that any time they feel uncomfortable with an adult, they have the right to ask the person to stop what they are doing and to walk away. It is important to talk about this subject in a way that gives the child the information needed but does not scare the child unnecessarily.

Activity:

Discuss the ways an adult might try to trap or trick a child:

Use the warning signs of a child molester as the basis for this discussion:

- Allows children to do things their parents would not allow.
- Gives gifts without permission from the child's parents.
- Asks children to keep secrets from their parents or guardians.

Practice ways of saying "No!"

- Say, "No! I don't like that, and I don't want to be touched!"
- Say, "Stop it!" very loudly.
- Say, "Don't do that!" and run away.
- With hand on hips, yell "No!"
- Say, "No!" and run away.