SAFE ENVIRONMENT LESSON: Grades 3 - 5 (Lesson #3 & 4)

We will teach this on Sunday, February 10th to grades K – 8. The lesson will be based on “boundaries”. Please remember this not a sex education lesson. If a child begins to ask or discuss issues that are not appropriate for this lesson please remind them their concerns are valid, however, these are questions that they need to discuss with their parents.

**\*Teachers: You may choose any or all exercises below to teach.** Depending on the discussion you have with the students please do not feel pressured to get all the exercises completed. Diocesan policy is to complete at least one exercise. We would just like a healthy and informative discussion for the students.

**LESSON PLAN:**

1. Introduce vocabulary
   1. **Boundaries** – the limits that define one person as separate from another or from others. There are boundaries you can see (like a fence around a yard) and boundaries you can’t see with your eyes (like the comfort zone around us that we call our “personal space”). Boundaries vary depending on the relationship with the other person. For example, a boundary between a child and a grandparent is different than the boundary between a child and a teacher or coach.
   2. **Limits** – The point or edge beyond which something cannot go. The furthest edge of something.
   3. **Secret** – Something that is hidden from others or that is known only to one or to a few.
   4. **Trust** – To place confidence in or depend on.
   5. **Safe adults and friends** – People who won’t hurt, confuse, or scare a young person intentionally or without a good or honorable reason. Safe friends and adults also respect young people’s wishes and the rules of their parents and guardians.
2. **Exercise 1: Hula Hoop exercise** - using a hula hoop you can “show” kids literal boundaries and personal space. Have kids stand on either side of hula hoop and ask how they feel. Have two kids stand inside hula hoop and ask how they feel. Most will feel that their “personal space” is being invaded and they should rely on their own instincts with boundaries. Remind them that some people are allowed into their personal space (i.e. mom, dad) and that they will feel comfortable with this.
3. **Exercise 2**: Boundary Worksheet attached (one for the teacher and one for students)
4. **Exercise 3:** Safe Adult discussion: If time is available….. Teacher worksheet (Learning when and who to tell) attached for oral discussion with students.

**BOUNDARY WORKSHEET - teacher**

**Open the Boundaries discussion with the students by asking them if they know what a “boundary” is. Create some scenarios that will give them ideas about “boundaries” and “limits” and ask them to share the boundaries and limits they have in their lives.**

For example:

1. What kind of rules must be followed at your house?
   1. What are your family rules regarding when your homework must be completed? Are there other activities that aren’t allowed until your homework has been completed?
   2. How long and how late are you permitted to be on the telephone?
   3. Where are you allowed to have food in your house?
   4. What are your family’s rules regarding computer access?
   5. What are your family’s rules regarding video games?
2. Does your family limit who can come into your room and when they are allowed to be in your room?
3. Do you expect your best friend to sit next to you at lunch every day?
4. Do you want your parents to pretend that they don’t know yu when you are together at a party or at the mall?

**Explain to your students that these are examples of boundaries. They are limits placed on us by our own instincts and by the rules established by others in our homes, our schools, and in our society.**

**Engage the students in a discussion of this issue by discussing the following :**

1. **Why are boundaries good?**
   1. Boundaries define us as individuals and bring order to our lives.
   2. Boundaries determine how we allow others to treat us.
   3. Boundaries determine how we treat others.
2. **How are boundaries different for different people in your life? (example: friends, parents, teacher, new friend?**
   1. Boundaries between best friends are different from boundaries between people who we just met.
   2. Boundaries between children and parents are different from boundaries between children and teachers.
3. **Give examples of boundary lines that people break.** Now , ask the students to give examples of boundary violations. These violations could be simple things such as, “My sister won’t stay out of my stuff”.Here are some examples of boundary violations that can help stimulate the discussion.
   1. Jessica told Mary the secret that Tammy told her.
   2. You listen in on a private conversation between your brother and his girlfriend.
   3. Someone behind you copies your test answers

**Now, ask the students to think of ways to deal with someone who violates boundaries. Use the following examples of ways we can protect ourselves.**

1. Speak up and let the person know that you want them to stop what they are doing.
2. Get away from the person.

**Strengthening our boundaries and taking action to stop someone who is violating them protects us from other people’s ignorance, their thoughtlessness, and their malice. We deserve to be protected from these things.**

**Most people will respect our boundaries if we explain them clearly. However, some people will push the limits of our boundaries, violate them, and then expect us to go along – or at least not to tell on them. With these people, we must *actively* defend our boundaries.**

**BOUNDARY WORKSHEET – Student**

**Answer the following questions:**

1. What kind of rules must be followed at your house?
   1. What are your family rules regarding when your homework must be completed? Are there other activities that aren’t allowed until your homework has been completed?
   2. How long and how late are you permitted to be on your cell phone?
   3. Where are you allowed to have food in your house?
   4. What are your family’s rules regarding computer access?
   5. What are your family’s rules regarding video games?
2. Does your family limit who can come into your room and when they are allowed to be in your room?
3. Do you expect your best friend to sit next to you at lunch every day?
4. Do you want your parents to pretend that they don’t know you when you are together at a party or at the mall?

**Give examples of the following statements.**

1. Why are boundaries are good?
2. How are boundaries different for different people in your life? (example: friends, parents, teacher, new friend)
3. Give examples of boundary lines that people break.
4. What should you do when someone breaks a boundary line?

**LEARNING WHEN AND WHO TO TELL – oral discussion**

Remind your students that these lessons are designed to give them the tools to protect themselves when difficult or even dangerous situations arise. Tell them you will be talking about *when* to disclose a dangerous event or situation and *who*  to tell when something bad, uncomfortable, scary, or confusing happens to them. Remind them that knowing what to do when someone intrudes upon their boundaries or violates the touching rules can mean the difference between staying safe and getting hurt.

One of the essential elements your students must learn is the touching rule that states: you must tell a trusted adult if someone violates the touching safety rules.

Sometimes reporting this type of inappropriate behavior is the hardest part.

**Ask your students why disclosing this sort of behavior is so difficult.** Here are some sample answers you may receive.

1. I don’t want to get anyone in trouble.
2. I think I can deal with it myself.
3. I don’t want to upset my parents and teachers.
4. I’m not sure exactly what happened.
5. The person asked me not to tell and I don’t want to be the one to say anything.

**After students have given a number of reasons, continue the discussion by making the following points:**

1. Telling a safe adult about someone’s inappropriate behavior does not get the person into trouble. The person’s own inappropriate behavior is what gets them into trouble.
2. Even if you can deal with the way the situation affected you, telling a safe adult means that the violator has to deal with his or her own inappropriate behavior. And, perhaps, by revealing an incident, you’ll be helping to protect someone else from harm.
3. The people who love you will always be upset when bad things happen. It is not your job to protect the adults in your life from being upset. They’re no upset at you. They’re upset because they love you and someone did something to you.
4. Even if you don’t know for sure what happened, it is important to tell an adult you trust.

**The next question for students is…..Who do you tell?** Ask your students to name some of the adults in their lives who they trust. Next, have them consider the following points to help them figure out who to tell when something like this happens.

1. People who have proven themselves trustworthy in the past.
2. People respected and trusted to behave honorably by their family.
3. People who listen to them and treat them with respect.
4. People who respect their wishes and their parent’s rules.
5. People who they know have their best interests at heart.

It is important for students to begin to confront the challenge of speaking up when something like this happens – regardless of how threatened or uncomfortable they feel. In situations like this, the adult will work very hard to make the victim believe that he or she is responsible and that nobody will believe the child if he or she speaks up.

**Note:** Many children believe that when it is their word against that of a teacher or another adult, the adult will always be believed. It is extremely important that you help dispel this myth and help foster an environment where children feel empowered to report this sort of behavior when it first occurs.