

Year-1 Lesson for Grades K, 1 and 2

- Preparation:** Educators, catechists, youth ministers, and other caring adults (instructor/catechist) should prepare by reviewing the first page of the lesson plan and by reading *Teaching Touching Safety: A Guide for Parents, Guardians, and Other Caring Adults*. Then, follow the instructions to complete as many of the activities as possible in your allotted amount of time.
- Activity #1:** Play the introductory video
- Activity #2:** Review and discuss the vocabulary words and definitions
- Activity #3:** Learning the names of the non-private body parts and understanding the meaning of “private”
- Activity #4:** Review and discuss the touching safety rules
- Prayer:** Three suggested (optional) prayers are provided at the end of the lesson. If you wish, you may use any of these prayers to conclude this lesson with your students.
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Preparation for completing this lesson:

- 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 safety of others. These themes provide the core message of this lesson plan.
- Catechism:** The following cites from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* are provided to help instructors/catechists consider the power of the Church's teachings in helping us rid society of child sexual abuse.
- Because the Holy Spirit is the anointing of Christ, it is Christ who, as the head of the Body, pours out the Spirit among his members to nourish, heal, and organize them in their mutual functions, to give them life, send them to bear witness, and associate them to his self-offering to the Father and to his intercession for the whole world. Through the Church's sacraments, Christ communicates his Holy and sanctifying Spirit to the members of his Body. — #739¹*
- Respect for the human person considers the other “another self.” It presupposes respect for the fundamental rights that flow from the dignity intrinsic of the person. — #1944²*
- Goal:** To assist instructors/catechists in teaching children how to prevent or reduce the risk of sexual abuse.
- Objectives:** Through this lesson the instructor/catechist reinforces the parent's message about touching safety and protecting private body parts. Upon completion of this lesson, children should be better able to:
- Repeat and understand the touching rules.
 - Describe safe touches.
 - Name their safe friends and safe adults.
 - Identify “special” safe adults.
 - Say “No!” when someone tries to touch them in a way that is uncomfortable or otherwise inappropriate.

Dealing with young children—key concepts are “curiosity” and “activity”

Parents and guardians are the primary educators of their own children. Teaching children the names of their private body parts is the responsibility of parents. That learning process should begin when the child is 18 months old. Therefore, children should know the names of their private body parts by the time they reach kindergarten. Young children have a natural curiosity about body parts. They 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 for them. Parents and teachers 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 significant adults.

¹ Liberia Editrice Vaticana (1997) *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (2nd ed.) Washington D.C. United States Catholic Conference.

² Ibid.

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Activity #1: Play the introductory video:

The introductory video for grades K through 5 is designed to open a discussion with children about touching safety and personal boundaries. The video is approximately five (5) minutes long and is not intended as a substitute for the lesson plan. It is merely an introduction designed to “break the ice” among those in the group and to get everyone talking about the relevant issues. The video will help get the students focused on the topic matter and allow the teacher to concentrate on the other activities within the lesson.

Activity #2: Review and discuss the vocabulary words and definitions:

Private body parts—The parts of the body that are normally covered by a bathing suit.

Boundaries—The invisible limits that separate one person from another and provide a sense of “self” as an individual that is different from others.

Rules—Statements that describe the approved or appropriate course of conduct.ⁱ

Secrets—Something concealed or hidden from others.ⁱⁱ A situation that is kept private or withheld from publication or public knowledge.

Respect—The state of being regarded with honor or esteem—being appreciative.ⁱⁱⁱ An attitude of admiration, honor and friendship.^{iv} Respect for oneself and others means assuming that each person has value and dignity.

Safe adults or 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.^v

Unsafe adults or friends—People who intentionally hurt, scare, and confuse young people in order to satisfy their own personal needs, wants, and desires. Unsafe friends and adults disregard the wishes of the young person, the potential danger of various activities, and the also the family's rules about appropriate behavior. They may be safe at some times and unsafe at other times.^{vi}

Special safe adult—People who may see or touch a child's private parts, but only for the purpose of keeping the child clean and healthy. For this age group, that will most certainly be limited to a physician or other healthcare professional, and that person needs to have another adult present during any examination.

Safe touch—A touch that has a good purpose, is not intended to hurt, and is familiar and safe.

Unsafe touch—Any touch that can hurt or scare someone. Or, any touch that, although it starts out safe, becomes uncomfortable, confusing, or scary.

Using the word “No!”—Having the right to express an unequivocal refusal or denial.^{vii}

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Activity #3: Learning the names of the non-private body parts and understanding the meaning of "private":

Directions: In preparing for this activity, review *Teaching Touching Safety: A Guide for Parents, Guardians, and Other Caring Adults*. Help children to see that they have a say in what happens to their bodies.

- Teach children body part names by using the following familiar children's song. Touch each part as you sing it:

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,

Head and shoulders, knees and toes, knees and toes.

(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:
 - These are the parts covered by a swimsuit. We treat private body parts as "special" by keeping them covered. One reason is to help keep our private body parts clean and healthy. The other reason we keep them private is because ... they're private.
- 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 "No!"
 - Run away.
 - Tell a safe adult what happened.
- Give children examples of situations that might come up, and talk about what to do in each situation:
 - What if a grownup asks you to keep a birthday present a secret?
 - What if a grownup offers you a present or a treat to keep you from talking about touching private body parts or any other kind of touch that might upset your parents?
 - What if a grownup is not touching your private body parts, but is doing something else that makes you feel kind of icky?
 - What if the person who is trying to touch your private body parts is a bigger kid, and not an adult?
 - What if a grownup tells you that no one will believe you if you tell?
 - What if the grownup who makes you feel icky is someone you really like, someone your family knows and likes, or even someone in your family?

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Activity #4: Review and discuss the touching safety rules:

Directions: These exercises are intended to empower young people to begin to think about safety issues and to be their parents' partner in making sure that the child has the tools needed to resist the overtures of a potential child molester.

- Safe Adults are people who touch only in ways that are safe.
 - People who don't hurt without a good reason (e.g., if a nurse gives a child a shot, it will hurt—but, the shot is for a good reason).
 - People who don't confuse or scare you on purpose without a good reason (e.g., if someone tells you that there's a fire in your house and helps you escape—but, warning you about a fire and helping you escape is a good reason to scare you).
- Safe adults respect your wishes and your parent's rules.
- Remind children that most touches are safe.

Begin Activity: Listen carefully so you can be ready to "hoot and holler." If I name a safe touch, raise your fist in air and yell rah, rah. On the other hand, if I name an unsafe touch, do a "thumbs down" and shout boo, hiss, boo.

- Your mother gives you hug when you wake up.
- Your father gives you a kiss after tucking you into bed.
- Tommy gives you a "high five" when you win the game.
- Someone says they want to touch your private body parts—or, they try without even asking.
- Your cat purrs and rubs around your leg.
- Someone at school says they want to take you down a dark hallway to show you something.
- The stranger behind you in church tries to shake your hand during the peace greeting.
- Your friendly dog is wagging its tail and licking your face.
- The next-door neighbor child pushes you down on the sidewalk.
- Someone is running down a hallway at school and a teacher reaches out and puts a hand on the person's shoulder to stop them from running and possibly falling.

Ask each child to add an example of a good touch and a bad touch.

Special Safe Adults

Talk about "special safe adults." A child's life may include a number of safe adults, but there are only a few select people who have the right to touch a child's private body parts. Special safe adults are the only people who may see or touch a child's private body parts, and only for the purpose of keeping the child clean and healthy.

Parents or guardians will tell you who, of the adults in your life, are special safe adults—and when these special safe adults have permission to touch your private body parts. No one has the right to touch your private body parts except these special people and they can touch your private body parts only under certain circumstances—to keep you clean and healthy.

Special safe adults are those who have permission to help you take a bath, go to the bathroom with you if you need help, to help you put clothes on or change clothes, or to help you when you are sick.

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Suggested (optional) prayers to end the lesson:

Sometimes things happen to me that are confusing or frightening.
When I am confused or feel scared, help me remember what I have learned today.
Help me remember the touching rules so I can protect myself from anyone who might want to hurt me—even if it is someone I like.
Thank you for my parents or loved ones and my teachers who are teaching me how to keep myself safe and healthy.
Remind me that I am special and that you are always with me.

Amen

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 creeped out.
When that happens, help me remember that I am special and that I should tell someone what happened.
Thank you for loving me and for giving me teachers and parents who want to keep me safe and happy.

Amen

Dear God,

Even though we are each special and different, there are ways that we are alike because you made each of us in your image.
Help me to remember to respect myself just as I want others to respect me.
Help me to live as you have commanded me to live, and guide me in times of confusion and uncertainty.
And, help me to remember, God, that in your loving presence I will always be safe and protected.

Amen

References:

- Liberia Editrice Vaticana (1997). *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (2nd ed.). Washington DC: United States Catholic Conference.
- United States Catholic Conference (1990) *Human Sexuality: A Catholic Perspective for Education and Lifelong Learning*. Washington, DC: Office for Publishing and Promotion Services.
- http://www.virtus.org/virtus/pgc-Parent-Handbook_05-03.pdf retrieved March 5, 2004.

ⁱ The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition, Copyright © 2000, Houghton Mifflin Company.

ⁱⁱ Ibid.

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid.

^{iv} WordNet © 2.0, © Princeton University.

^v *Teaching Touching Safety*, © 2004 National Catholic Services, LLC. Page 5.

^{vi} Ibid. Pages 5-9.

^{vii} The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition, Copyright © 2000, Houghton Mifflin Company.