



Diocese of Joliet

Safe Environment for Children Touching Safety Instruction

GRADES 5-8 – VIDEO

“BREAK THE SILENCE: KIDS AGAINST CHILD ABUSE”

**FULL-LENGTH LESSON
(see shorter REVIEW LESSON)**

***NOTE TO TEACHER:** This video contains several scenarios involving physical abuse and child neglect as well as the required content on child sexual abuse. This lesson plan is for that required content only, located on the tape between 07:39 and 21:21 on your counter. (There are two scenarios – the sexual abuse of a 10-year-old girl, beginning when she was 7, and the abuse of a boy, now 12, whose abuse began when he was 4.) The other content may be viewed, but this study guide only covers the part on sexual abuse. Because this video may be used with younger or older children, please adapt the language of the general portions of the lesson as needed.*

WELCOME: Today we are going to help you learn to keep yourself safe from unwanted and unsafe touches. We in your school/religious education program care very much about you and don't want you or anyone you love to be a victim of abuse of any kind. God, who made you in his image, cares deeply about your health and safety, too. Let us pray:

OPENING PRAYER:

Have someone read aloud from the Bible: Psalm 16 (Keep me safe, O God...)

Let us pray ... (short silence)

God of love, you watch over us and help us each day,
So that we might fulfill the plans that you have for us.
We thank you for the care your Church has for us,
That its members want us to learn and grow safely.
Help us to listen with open ears, to understand with open minds,
To care with open hearts, so that we may protect ourselves
And our families and friends.
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

INTRODUCTION TO THE VIDEO:

Now we are going to learn about what happens when people touch children in ways that are not proper or safe. In this video, you will meet a girl and a boy who will tell you their stories – how their abuse happened and how they have been able to heal and be happy again with the help of caring adults who listened to them. Watch and listen, and later we will talk about this.

Show the 14 minute section beginning at 07:39

AFTER THE VIDEO:

- How did the story of the girl make you feel?
- How do you think she felt when her stepfather came into her room every morning?
- How do you think she felt when her mother would not believe her when she finally did tell?
- What about the boy – how did you feel about him?
- Why do you think he was not able to tell someone, but had to wait until his mother caught the abuser in the act?

(Additional in-depth questions for older children – Grades 6-8)

- What happened to the girl and the boy to change them from being too confused and afraid to tell anyone about the abuse to being willing and confident when speaking about what happened to them?
- If you were ever in a situation like this, what help and support would you need to be able to deal with the issues?
- How does confronting a problem and getting help enable a person to move on and deal with life in a more healthy way?

(For all ages)

There are many ways we can be touched that are safe and good – like hugs from friends or family, or the touch of a doctor or nurse to keep us healthy. Then, there are touches that are unsafe or confusing. These include touches on a person's private body parts. Do you remember where your private body parts are? Yes, that's right; they are the parts of the body covered by your bathing suit. When a child under age 18 is touched on the private body parts by someone older, it is called sexual abuse, and it is a crime. Children who are touched in that way should always tell.

- If someone touched or tried to touch you in a way that made you uncomfortable or confused, would you tell someone you trust?
- Who are some people you might tell?

It is also important to tell if someone you know is being touched in an unsafe way, especially if he or she is younger than you are. Maybe that person is afraid to tell or does not know how to tell. Jesus asked us to love and to take care of each other, so we should not be afraid to help that person to tell.

If someone tries to touch you in an unsafe or unwanted way:

- Say "no" or words that mean "no." (What are some words that mean "no"?)
- Yell, kick, make a scene.

- Walk or run away.
- Be “gross” – pretend to be sick, spit, burp, throw up or tell them you have lice.
- Distract them: tell them someone is coming, that you have to leave, change the subject, or, if you are watching TV, change the channel.
- Use “borrowed protection” – “My (mom, dad, or teacher) says you’re not supposed to do that”.

If someone has tried to touch or has touched you:

- Don’t keep secrets about touching.
- Always tell about a touching problem even if it has gone on for a long time.
- Keep telling until someone believes you.

What have you learned today that was new or surprising?

AFTER DISCUSSION:

Let us pray.... (short silence)

Dear God

Today we learned how to be strong for ourselves
in order to keep ourselves safe and to deal with unpleasant situations.

Help us stand up for ourselves

and for others who may be too young or confused to tell.

Give us the wisdom to know when it is important to say what we don’t want,

To tell someone when something bad has happened to us
and the faithfulness to do everything in You.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, Amen.