

KEEPING GOD’S CHILDREN SAFE LESSON
LEVEL 4

For the Catechist:

Background Information about the Lesson

Scripture

Jesus said to them, “Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven. Thus they persecuted the prophets who were before you... Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have not come to abolish but to fulfill.” (Matthew 5: 12, 17)

This scripture passage follows Jesus’ discourse on the Beatitudes. Jesus teaches that His Way fulfills the Old Testament. The Beatitudes interiorize the commandments and guide the believer to a deeper spiritual journey to God.

Catechism

The Beatitudes depict the countenance of Jesus Christ and portray his charity. They express the vocation of the faithful associated with the glory of his Passion and Resurrection; they shed light on the actions and attitudes characteristic of the Christian life; they are the paradoxical promises that sustain hope in the midst of tribulations; they proclaim the blessings and rewards already secured, however dimly, for Christ’s disciples; they have begun in the lives of the Virgin Mary and all the saints. (Catechism of the Catholic Church, #1717)

Guidelines

Jesus gave us the Beatitudes as the template for a life of charity and virtuous living. The Beatitudes express a natural desire for happiness and respect for self and others. The safe environment lesson relates to the Beatitudes by identifying trusted adults who teach children about respect for life and safety rules which can protect them.

Age Group

Children in this age are growing more social and forging peer relationships. Best friends are common and often are confidants. They have a keen sense of “right and wrong”, “fair and unfair” and expect others, particularly those in authority, to follow the rules. They have opinions which they can argue and debate. While establishing rules or guidelines, caregivers can be more effective by including children of this age group in the discussion

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LESSON PLAN

Objectives

- Gain a better understanding of touching safety and protecting private body parts.
- Identify trusted adults and safe friends.
- Learn the rules for safe touch.
- Learn appropriate responses to unsafe situations.

Vocabulary

Safe touches, appropriate, inappropriate, trusted adult

Materials

Vocabulary on chalk or poster board (page 2)
T-Chart on Chalk or Poster Board (page 3)
Blank piece of paper for trusted adult activity (page 4)
Ending prayer handout for duplication (page 6)

LESSON

Opening Prayer

We praise you, God,
For you have made us wonderfully good and in your image and likeness.
Help us always to honor you and respect ourselves and others. Amen.

Instruction

Having taught the Beatitudes, the catechist might recall with the students:

- The dignity of all people as God's sons and daughters
- The respect owed to God, others and self
- The expectation of charitable and just living

The review of these faith facts can provide a natural transition to the Keeping God's Children Safe Lesson within the Religious Education setting.

Ask students to give some examples of a possession that they highly prize.

List five or six examples on the chalk or poster board.

Pick two prized possessions from the children's answers.

Discuss with the entire class the importance of appropriate and inappropriate handling of each prized possession. Explain that the word appropriate means suitable, proper, fitting or correct.

Ask the students to:

- Describe a safe (appropriate) way to handle each item
- Describe an unsafe (inappropriate) way to handle them.

Ask the students why our bodies are good and sacred.

Ask the children why it is important that they take care of their bodies?

Emphasize to the students that no one has a right to:

- show disrespect to them
- touch the student's body without his/her permission
- touch his/her body, especially the private body parts, unless it is for care and safety, and only if the student is not able to do so by his/herself.
- touch the student's body inappropriately, especially private body part.

Remind the students that in previous years they learned private body parts were covered by their bathing suits.

Explain to the students the T-Chart below. The students will:

- listen to an example about a touch of the body
- answer if it is an appropriate (safe) touch or an inappropriate (unsafe) touch.

Read the examples below the chart and ask the children to respond, "appropriate or safe" or "inappropriate or unsafe".

APPROPRIATE OR SAFE TOUCH	INAPPROPRIATE OR UNSAFE TOUCH

- Your grandmother or grandfather gives you a good-bye kiss. (SAFE)
- Your mother gives you a hug when you wake up. (SAFE)
- A friendly person wants to see your underwear.(UNSAFE)
- The stranger behind you in church wants to shake your hand during the sign of peace. (SAFE)
- Your doctor wants to check your temperature because your Mom brought you to the doctor's office because you didn't feel well. (SAFE)

Add the examples to the chart in the appropriate column if time permits.

Ask students what they would say to a person who was touching them inappropriately. Lead them to make the declarative statement: "NO!"

Remind them that no one has the right to disrespect them.

Explain to the students that sometimes adults and children can go out of bounds and touch children in areas of the body that are not appropriate and without permission.

Tell the students that there are safe touch rules about their bodies.

These special rules can help them if someone is touching them inappropriately.

Remind the children that these are the same rules of safety which were taught in previous years.

Recall the safe touch rules with the children.

If someone tries to touch your private body parts,

- **NO**--say, "No!" to that person. Other ways to say "no" are: "Stop that!", "Leave me alone!" or "Don't do that!"
- **GO**--you go away if someone makes you feel uncomfortable or tries to touch your private body parts. Move or run away from him/her and try to go to another place.
- **TELL**--a trusted adult if someone tried to touch your private body parts or in an inappropriate way.

Ask the children to repeat the rules.

NO

GO

TELL

Ask the children:

- Do you understand these rules?
- How can these rules help if someone from harming you?
- Why is it hard sometimes to tell an adult to stop touching you?
Accept appropriate answers. Remember that the real issue is the power of the adult over the child.
- Why is it hard to tell an older child or peer, "No"?
- What are different ways that you can say "No!" to someone?
Some suggestions are: "Leave me alone!", "Don't do that!"
- Why is it important to tell an adult whom they trust if someone tries to touch them inappropriately?

Define a trusted adult.

A trusted adult is a safe adult who would never intentionally hurt, confuse, or scare them.

A trusted adult is someone who respects their wishes and those of their parents, guardians, and caregivers.

Brainstorm with the children the characteristics of a trusted adult.

Write answers on chalk or poster board. Some suggestions are loyal, fair, protective, truthful, kind, helpful, kind, understanding.

Activity

On a blank piece of paper have the children:

- name two to three adults who model the characteristics of trusted adult
- list two characteristics from the brainstorming activity next to the trusted adult's name

Conclusion

Let's all repeat the rules of safety together:

No

Go

Tell

Ending Prayer

Leader: Jesus, when you walked this earth you showed that you loved little children.

Children: Jesus, we know that you love each one of us.

Leader: Jesus, it is hard for us to hear that some people hurt children by their words and actions and do not treat children with love the way you did.

Children: Jesus, we know that you love each one of us.

Leader: Jesus, please help those who hurt others.

Children: Jesus, we know that you love each one of us.

Leader: Jesus, bless our parents, teachers and all those who work to keep us safe.

All: Amen.

Leader: Jesus, when you walked this earth you showed that you loved little children.

Children: Jesus, we know that you love each one of us.

Leader: Jesus, it is hard for us to hear that some people hurt children by their words and actions and do not treat children with love the way you did.

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All: Amen.