

SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

DIOCESE OF DODGE CITY

Instructions for Catechists

and

School Personnel

- Every person has the right to be safe. Children have the right to be protected from anything and anyone who may harm them. Adults have the responsibility to make the environment in which children live as safe as possible. That includes teaching children and young people proper adequate coping and safety skills that will enable them to be safe and healthy.
- Parents, teachers and catechists have the responsibility to assist children to identify a number of people in their lives to whom they can talk openly and honestly. Children must be taught that if help is not received to keep telling other trusted adults until someone helps them.
- Give each student a copy of the age-appropriate safety guidelines.
- Review them with your students.
- Send the copy home for students to discuss with their parents.

N.B. MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD AT

www.dcdiocese.org/safe-environment/safe-environment-religious-education-curriculum

**Acknowledgement: The original resource for these Safety Guidelines
came from the Archdiocese of Mobile.**

Who are Trusted Adults?

A trusted adult is someone who you and your parents can trust. It is someone who will take care of you and not hurt you. A trusted adult can be your parents, teacher, principal, counselor, aunt, uncle, grandparent, police or a good neighbor. You should discuss with your parents who the trusted adults are in your life.

Safety Guidelines to Review with Younger Students

Safety at Home

- If you are afraid of being alone or staying alone at home, tell your parent that it makes you feel uncomfortable.
- If you are going to be alone at home, be sure you have phone numbers of someone you can call if you can't reach your parents.
- Know the rules of being alone. Know what you can and cannot do such as watching TV, using the computer, talking on the phone, inviting friends over, making snacks.
- If you are home and your parents are not there and someone comes to the door, don't answer it. Only answer the door **if** the person is a trusted family friend or relative, **if** you feel comfortable being alone with that person, and **if** the visit has been pre-approved by your parent.
- Never tell anyone who calls on the phone that you are home by yourself. If someone calls, tell the caller, "My mom/dad can't come to the phone right now, she/he asked me to take a message."

Safety on the Way to or from School

- When walking or riding a bike to and from school, always take a brother, sister or friend. It is safer and more fun.
- Walk or ride in well-lit areas and never take shortcuts.
- Stay aware of your surroundings and observe all traffic rules.
- Talk to your parents about your route to and from school.
- If anyone bothers you or follows you on your way to or from school, get away from that person and tell a trusted adult.
- Do not walk or play alone on the way home. Know the "safe places" that you can go along the way to and from school.
- Once you are in the house, lock the doors behind you.
- Check in with your parents to let them know you have gotten home safely.

Safety at School

- If you see a stranger hanging around school, tell a trusted adult.
- Never leave school or class area without telling someone.
- If your parents don't come to pick you up after school or an activity, stay there. Know what to do; discuss this with your parents before hand. Stay with your teacher or another trusted adult until they come to get you. Don't start walking home.

Safety in your Neighborhood and your Town

- Never leave your home or yard without telling someone.
- Never go places alone. Always go with a friend.
- Never go into a public restroom by yourself.
- If you are separated from your parents at the mall, a store or some other large place, go to a clerk or someone who works there and say you have lost your parents.
- Be careful where you play. Stay away from pools, canals and other bodies of water
- Don't play near busy streets or deserted areas.
- If you see a stranger hanging around your neighborhood, tell a trusted adult.
- If a car pulls up near you, walk away quickly in the opposite direction that the car is traveling. Run away from danger, never toward it.
- If someone you don't know or someone who makes you feel uncomfortable offers you a ride, say "No!" Never accept a ride from someone unless your parents have told you that it is okay.
- Yell, scream and kick if someone tries to take you somewhere. Shout, "This is not my mom/dad!"
- It is okay to say "No" to an adult who makes you feel scared, uncomfortable or confused. Tell your parents or another trusted adult if anything happens that makes you feel that way. Trust your feelings.
- Just because someone calls you by name, does not mean that they know you. Your name could be somewhere on your jacket, bag or shirt.
- Never accept gifts from anyone until you have checked first with your parents. Tell someone immediately if someone gives you a gift, especially if it supposed to be a secret.
- Let someone know if someone tells you a secret and doesn't want you to tell anyone. A good secret is one that will eventually be told like giving a surprise party.
- Your body is special and private. No one should ever touch you on the parts of your body that your underwear covers. If anyone ever does this tell a trusted adult right away.
- Never give personal information over the internet and never agree to meet someone in person that you met on the internet.
- Share this paper with your parents and ask them to help you identify three adults you can go to when needed. Write these names and their phone numbers and put them on the refrigerator at home.

Safety Guidelines to Review with Older Students

Don't go out alone

- Avoid situations that put you at risk.
- There is safety in numbers.
- Walk with confidence and purpose in public.
- Be alert and aware of your surroundings. Trust your instincts.

Always tell an adult where you are going

- Never go somewhere with someone you don't know. This includes hitching rides.
- Get information about where you are going. Leave an address and phone number of where you are going. If you get into trouble, your family and friends will know where to start looking for you.
- Talk to your parents or another trusted adult about having a plan of what to do if you are ever in an uncomfortable situation and need a ride home.
- Never do anything with your peers that you would not do if your parents were present or if you were alone. "Group think" is usually not wiser than an individual's independent thinking.

It's your body

- You have the right to reject any unwanted and inappropriate teasing, bullying, and touching.
- Dating should be a fun experience and you should never allow yourself to be coerced into doing anything you know is wrong.
- Just because you are on a date does not mean that you cannot say, "No." When you say, "No," that response should be respected. "Date rape" accounts for the vast majority of teenage rapes.
- Don't let peer pressure influence your decisions about drugs and sex.
- Never leave a cup or can of soda or any other drink someplace where you can't see it. If you start to feel sick or dizzy, have a friend call your parents immediately.

Say "No" if you feel threatened and tell a trusted adult

- Don't be afraid to stand up for yourself.
- If your friends are making bad decisions, you don't have to.
- It is okay to be rude to someone who is trying to get you to do something that is wrong.
- Perpetrators rely on our tendency to avoid making a scene in public; it is okay to make a scene to stop someone from taking advantage of you.
- Never give personal information over the internet and never agree to meet anyone you have met through the internet.
- Share this paper with your parents and ask them to help you identify three adults you can go to when needed. Write these names and their phone numbers and put them on the refrigerator at home.