

Lesson 1 for Grades K, 1, and 2: Touching Safety Rules

Getting started with Lesson 1:

Principle: Children must guard against those who may harm them through touch (sexual or otherwise).

Catechism: *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*

Goal: To assist educators, catechists, youth ministers, and other caring adults in teaching children how to prevent or reduce the risk of sexual abuse.

Objectives: Through this lesson the catechist, teacher, or youth minister 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.
- Say "No!" when someone tries to touch them in a way that is uncomfortable or otherwise inappropriate.

Dealing with the primary age—key concept is "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. Young children 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 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 Libreria Editrice Vaticana (1997) *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (2nd Ed.) Washington D.C. United States Catholic Conference.

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Activity #1: Play the (optional) introductory video to begin the lesson:

Note to Teacher: The introductory video for grades K through 5 is designed to open a simple discussion with children about touching safety and personal boundaries. The video is approximately six (6) minutes long and is neither created nor intended as a substitute for the lesson itself. It is merely an introduction designed to “break the ice” among those in this age group and to get everyone talking about the relevant personal boundary and personal safety issues. Importantly, the video will get children focused on the topic matter, which will help the teacher to facilitate an easy transition into the interactive activities within the lesson. These interactive activities are the critical components where children have a real opportunity to learn how to protect themselves.

We recommend that you watch the video in advance at least a couple of times prior to showing it to your students, so you'll be able to more easily anticipate when the video will end. The video really needs no introduction. Just put it into the machine, and hit “play.” If you're using a DVD version of the video, you'll select the English or Spanish version and the appropriate age group from a menu screen. If you're using a VHS version of the video, you'll need to “cue” the tape to the correct version prior to your class time.

Activity #2: Review and discuss the vocabulary words:

- **Private body parts**—those body parts that are covered by a bathing suit.
- **Secret**—something kept hidden or unexplained. [Note to Teachers: Let children know that there are no secrets when it comes to personal and physical safety. Tell children that it is wrong for an adult or another child to ask a child to keep a secret about safety—especially unsafe touches—because that is a way for people to get hurt. When a child knows that he or she doesn't have to keep a secret—and that no matter what the molester says, the child will not be in trouble for telling what happened—he or she is more likely to reveal boundary violations.]
- **Rules**—a prescribed guide for conduct or action. [For example, teach your child a simple rule for what to do if someone tries to touch him or her in an unsafe way. The child must send a clear signal to any child or adult whose behavior is unsafe—a signal that unsafe behavior will not be tolerated and will be reported.]

Activity #3: Learning to name the body parts

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 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:
 - We treat private body parts as “special” by keeping them covered. One reason is to help keep our private body parts clean and healthy.
- 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:

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- 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 a touch involving 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?

Activity #4: Passport to Touching Safety

Directions: This is an activity that the children will start during this lesson and finish during Lesson 2. Just as adults carry a passport when they travel in foreign countries, children can design and carry a “passport” as a reminder to keep them safe when they travel to or from home, school, church, or any other places they go.

Supplies: 8½ x 11 or 9 x 12 sheets of construction paper
Crayons, colored pencils, and felt tipped markers

Background: Children should think about safe touches they have received from safe friends and safe adults.

Making the Passport:

Note: Teachers should download the passport template from the VIRTUS *Online* website. Go to www.virtus.org and log in with your user id and password. Then, click the “Educators” tab at the top of the screen. Follow the instructions in the main (white) area of the screen to select your age group (K-2), this lesson plan (Lesson 1), and click forward through the successive screens until you reach the screen titled **Touching Safety — Supporting Materials**. At the bottom of that screen (beneath the instructions about the saint), you’ll find a place to download and print the template for the passport. Print the two-page template on the front and back of 8½ x 11 construction paper or white “copier type” paper.

Children will personalize the Passports by folding the pre-printed paper in half to form a Passport booklet, by drawing their own picture in the front “cover” of the Passport, and by drawing and coloring on the inside pages that illustrate safe touches and safe adults. The first page of the Passport is for the child’s picture and his or her first name. The second and third pages (the “inside” pages) are for illustrating safe touches and to help the child understand the meaning of *safe* adults and *special safe* adults.

For the purpose of Lesson 1, children will complete only the cover of the Passport and will begin working on pages 2 and 3. They will complete pages 2 and 3 during Lesson 2.

The front cover includes the words MY PASSPORT in large letters. The child will draw his or her picture and decorate the cover to make it attractive. On the line beneath the picture, the child will write his or her name.

The inside of the Passport includes the following pages:

- One page for drawing and coloring original artwork to illustrate safe touches.
- One page for drawing and coloring original artwork to illustrate *safe* and *special safe* adults.

The back cover lists the touching safety rules.

Discussion: While the children are creating their Passports, the teacher should use the opportunity to again reinforce the touching safety rules:

- No one has the right to touch a child’s private body parts except to keep him or her clean and healthy—and then, only a few *special safe* adults have that right—as designated by the child’s parents.

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- If someone tries to touch a child's private body parts or wants the child to touch their private body parts, the child should:
 - Say "No!"
 - Run away.
 - Tell a parent or other *safe* adult what happened.

Remember: Because this activity will continue in Lesson 2, you'll need to collect the Passports from your students and keep them in a safe place until time to finish them during Lesson 2.

Suggested prayer to end the lesson:

Dear God,

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

Alternate prayer:

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 creepy or scared.

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

Touching Safety Rules

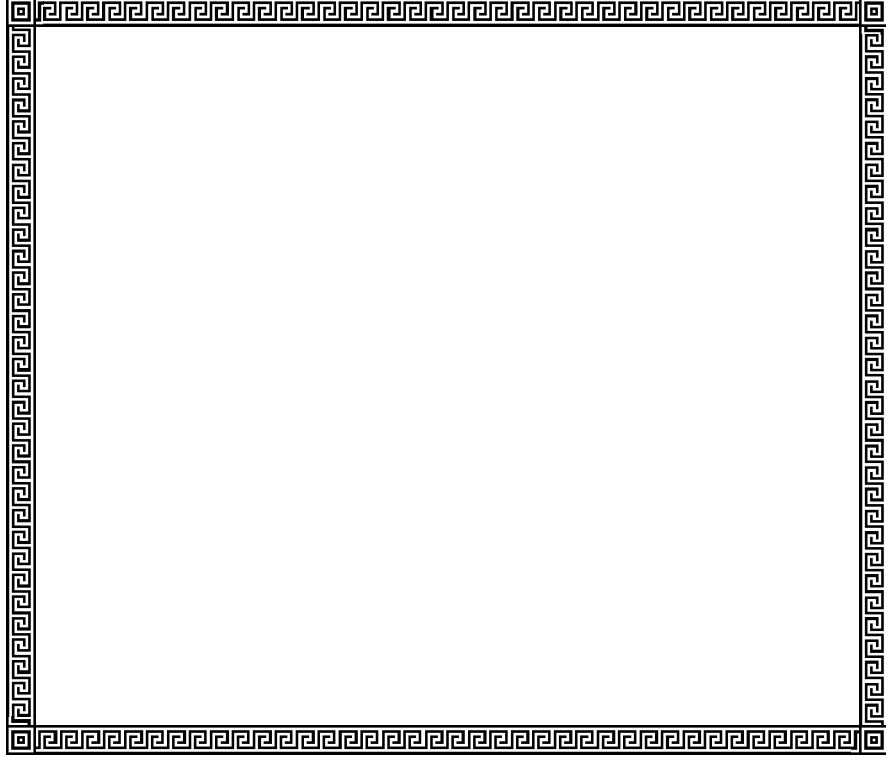
Your special safe adults are the only people who have permission to touch your private body parts. Your special safe adults may touch your private body parts only to keep you clean and healthy.

Ask your parents to tell you who your special safe adults are.

If someone tries to touch your private body parts or wants you to touch their private body parts, you should:

- Say "No!"
- Run away.
- Tell your parents or another safe adult what happened.

My Passport

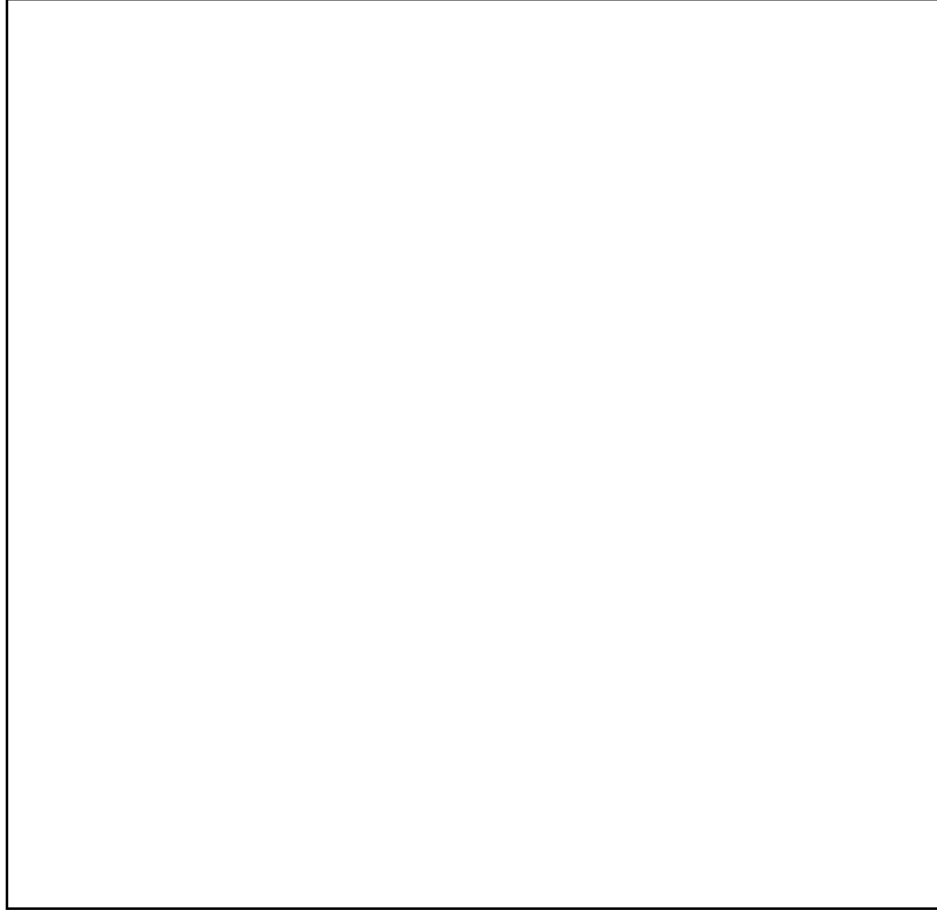


First Name: _____

Here are some examples of safe touches.

1. A friend giving you a "high five" when you win a game.
2. Mommy dancing with you to fun music.
3. Grandpa hugging you as the two of you twirl in circles.
4. Your friendly dog wagging its tail and licking your face.
5. Holding grandma's hand really tight when you ride the roller coaster together.

Draw a picture of your favorite safe touch in this box.



Draw a picture of one of your safe adults in this box.



Draw a picture of one of your special safe adults in this box.

