

Lesson 5 for Grades K-2

Partnering with Parents & Guardians for Safety: *Being a Safe Friend*

PRINCIPLE

Children must know that being a friend means that we “do the right thing” when it comes to healthy friendships with their peers: meaning we recognize unsafe situations, intervene (when possible) and get the information to a safe adult.

OBJECTIVES

After lesson 5, children should be able to:

- Participate in healthy friendships
- Recognize that they can do something to help themselves and their friends when confronted with unsafe situations
- Respond appropriately to unsafe situations involving themselves or their friends:
 - Say “No!” if involved in an unsafe situation
 - Try to leave the situation if they feel uncomfortable
 - Tell a safe adult as soon as possible (even if it happened to a friend)

CATECHISM / SCRIPTURE

“Faithful friends are a sturdy shelter; whoever finds one finds a treasure. Faithful friends are beyond price, no amount can balance their worth.” —Sirach 6:14-1

“Do not be a foe instead of a friend.” —Sirach 6:1

Background for Parents and Guardians:

In preparation for teaching this lesson and to lead the activities, review the *Teaching Boundaries and Safety Guide: Safe Environment Guide for Caring Adults, Parents and Guardians*.

Before sitting down with your child(ren) and beginning the activities, read through this entire lesson and view the video. Choose the activities that you are most comfortable with first and gradually moving to the others. You will find it is helpful to have the *Teaching Boundaries and Safety Guide* handy to navigate the lesson material. These activities are intended to empower young people to think about safety issues with you as their partner.

Considerations for the age group—

Grades K-2 Young children have lively and vivid imaginations, are growing less self-centered, and are becoming more conscious of others. Their attention span is short. They build on concrete experiences, love to learn, and are highly inquisitive. They rely on others to define good and bad, and safe versus unsafe behavior—but they do understand “rules”. Children need an environment where children are free to ask questions about life and their own bodies.

Activity #1: Introductory Video

Directions: View and discuss the introductory video with your child. The introductory video for all grades is designed to open a simple discussion with children about personal boundaries and touching safety. The video is approximately six minutes long and is neither created nor intended as a substitute for the activities. It's merely an intro designed to “break the ice” and assist the transition into completing the interactive Lesson Activity options. It can be used in to introduce any of the following activities. Discussion and practice are the critical components needed to teach children how to protect themselves. They learn best by “doing”; not just listening or watching.

Grades K-2 Video links:

English K – 5: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/As5weSqt9Jw>

Spanish K – 5: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/-ELCTmNKsw4>

Activity #2: Review and Discuss Vocabulary words in an age-appropriate way with your child

Private body parts—those body parts covered by a bathing suit.

Saying “No”—to say “no” means to refuse, deny, reject or express disapproval of. This word is used to express a boundary and communicate that you do not want something to happen or continue. [Let children know it’s OK to say “No” to an adult if they make you feel scared or uncomfortable, or if they touch your private body parts.]

Rules—a prescribed guide for conduct or action. We follow the rules to make sure we are safe—just like how we have a seatbelt rule to keep us safe in the car, or the safety rules before we cross the street. [For example, teach the child a simple rule for what to do if someone tries to touch him / her in an unsafe way, which is to say “No!”, try to get away, and tell an adult as soon as possible.]

Uncomfortable—experiencing discomfort that leaves one feeling uneasy, sometimes causing anxiety or feelings of nausea. [It might be a feeling in the “pit of your stomach” or it could be the hairs standing up on the back of your neck. You may freeze, want to fight or feel like running away from the situation.]

Confusing—is something that is hard to figure out because it doesn’t make sense, it is unclear or puzzling. To cause confusion is to cause an inability to think clearly or to be misleading. [An example is a big, messy knot—it can be confusing because it’s hard to figure out where each part goes how to straighten it all out.]

Respecting boundaries—we should have respect for ourselves, and respect for others. Respect for ourselves means we understand our dignity and value as a person, and work to create or maintain boundaries to protect ourselves. We feel upset or uncomfortable when someone doesn’t honor our own boundaries, and we communicate with the right person if we need help. Respecting another’s boundaries means you care about them, and won’t do anything that would bring them harm, and that you communicate with the right person to get them help if they are being harmed by someone else. [Give children examples of respecting others, i.e. not calling people mean names, not hitting others, following rules at school or at home, stopping an activity when someone asks, letting an adult know when someone is in pain or hurt, etc.]

Safe friends and safe adults—safe people won’t hurt you without a good reason and won’t intentionally confuse you. They listen to and consistently respect boundaries, and follow the rules. [Explain that a child may have many safe friends and adults. Give children examples of adult behavior that could hurt them, but may be necessary for the child’s safety, i.e. medical exams, vaccinations, throat swabs, removing splinters, stopping a child from running into the road, etc.]

Unsafe friends and unsafe adults—unsafe friends and unsafe adults put a child at risk for emotional, spiritual and physical harm. These are people who place a child in danger for their own purposes without concern for the welfare of the child. They also do not consistently listen to the parents’ wishes or the child’s boundaries. [Tell children we can know when someone is unsafe if they do not follow the rules or listen to our boundaries.]

Safe touches—touches that have a good purpose, aren’t intended to hurt and should be familiar. They’re safe and can also be meant to keep you healthy, even if the person isn’t known well, as long as the touches are appropriate for the particular relationship, such as when mom kisses your forehead at night, when you high-five your teammate, etc. [Avoid saying safe touches that feel good are “safe, loving or show someone loves you” since sometimes touches are safe and necessary, but can also hurt— although they hurt for a good reason to keep children safe, such as stiches, a doctor shot or dental cleanings.]

Unsafe touches—touches that are inappropriate, could be meant to hurt or scare, or are contrary to the touching rules. If unsure about a touch, ask a parent. [Unsafe touches include hitting, punching, tripping, kicking, spitting, touching private parts, etc.]

Secret—something kept hidden, never told or unexplained. Secrets exclude others and have potential to harm, sometimes causing the person involved to feel frightened or uncomfortable. [For example, let children know that there are no secrets when it comes to personal and physical safety. Tell children it’s wrong for an adult or another child to ask to keep a secret about safety—especially unsafe touches—because that’s a way for people to get hurt. If an individual tries to make a child keep a secret or makes him / her feel frightened, the child must know to communicate this information right away to a parent or caring adult—and be reassured that the child will be protected regardless of threats or seeming consequences of “telling”.]

Rude—describes behavior where someone inadvertently or accidentally does or says something hurtful. Rudeness is usually unplanned and not intended to hurt. [Examples include social awkwardness, such as burping into someone’s face, cutting someone off, behaving narcissistically, having poor manners, bragging about an accomplishment, etc.]

Mean—describes behavior where someone says or does something hurtful on purpose, once (maybe twice). The aim is to intentionally hurt and is often motivated by anger. [Examples include putting someone down so the mean person looks/sounds better, making fun of how the person dresses or looks, insulting person’s skills or intelligence or saying / behaving in an unkind way after a disagreement, saying things like: “why would you wear that, it looks terrible on you” or “you’re so dumb, you should quit.”]

Bullying—is different from being rude or mean. It is cruel; the intentional, repeated exposure of negative and aggressive behaviors to a targeted person over time. The bully will say or do something intentionally hurtful, and keep doing it, without a sense of remorse. A key aspect is the ongoing pattern, involving an imbalance of power where the bully has more control or influence. [Examples include physical, verbal and emotional aggression, in-person and online; social exclusion, hazing others, spreading rumors or inappropriate content, cyberbullying, etc.]

Activity #3: Sign Up for Safety

- Activity:** Children will have an opportunity to evaluate different scenarios and will lift up colorful signs to denote whether they are safe or unsafe. A discussion will ensue.
- Preparation:** In preparing for this activity, have (1) green and (1) red sign available for your child to use and lift up in response to safety questions. You can have them create colored plates, or to save time, you could have them already available. The quickest option would be to utilize plastic, disposable plates that are already the green and red colors. If no green or red plastic plates are available, utilize construction paper on top of paper plates, or simply color/paint paper or pieces of cardboard. They can lift the plates “as is,” or a popsicle stick (or something similar) can be attached to make an actual sign.
- Directions:** Read the scenarios below to your child and ask them to raise their signs. Green means “Safe” and Red means “Not Safe”
- Discussion:** **Ask:** When we are riding in a car and see a traffic light, what does green usually mean? (Response should be: “GO!”) What does red usually mean? (Response should be something along the lines of: “Stop!” Or, “Don’t go!”)
- Explain:** Red is also a color that means “No!” Explain the game instructions for the children: We will now play a safety game. I’m going to give you examples of safety stories. If I tell you a safety story that sounds safe, lift up the green sign for “GO” to say it is OK. So, put your green sign UP for safety! Then, if I tell you a safety story that is not safe, lift up the red sign for “NO” to say it is not OK. We will then talk about each of them. Give practice time: Let’s practice. Repeat after me and hold up your sign. Show me which sign you will lift up for something that is SAFE (expect the green sign, and for them to say “OK!”). Now, practice lifting up your sign for something that is NOT safe (expect the red sign, and for them to say “NO!”).

Begin scenario component by relaying these scenarios and asking the questions; First ask: “Do you understand how to play? Let’s begin! Listen carefully.”

Scenario 1

Say: “Your friend has been running (instead of walking) into their classroom, ran into a desk that someone was sitting in, and accidentally hurt the person’s hand. He says not to tell anyone about it, or that he’ll run into you, too. Is this being safe?”

Action: RED SIGNS UP!

Ask: Why? (Answer: The friend is not being safe. He is breaking the rules, he hurt someone, and then he acted in a mean way when he threatened you and told you not to tell.)

Ask: What do you do as a safe friend? (Answer: Tell a safe adult.)

Scenario 2

Say: “The doctor gave you a shot with me in the room, and it hurt your arm. Is this being safe?”

Action: GREEN SIGNS UP!

Ask: Why? (Answer: Safe adults need to keep you safe and healthy. That was a safe touch, because even though it hurt, it was with your parent, and, it was to keep you safe and healthy.)

Scenario 3

Say: “You need to cross the street, and ask to hold a safe adult’s hand. Is this being safe?”

Action: GREEN SIGNS UP!

Ask: Why? (Answer: Safe adults need to keep you safe and healthy. Holding a safe adult’s hand to cross a street is a safe thing to do! The adult’s job is to keep you safe, so they will often want to keep you close when you cross a busy street. When you are older, the safe adult will tell you when you can cross the street without holding an adult’s hand.)

Scenario 4

Say: “Your friend is playing with a ball outside and the ball accidentally rolls into the street. Your friend runs into the street to get it, even though it’s against the rules. Is this safe?”

Action: RED SIGNS UP!

Ask: Why? (Answer: The friend is not being safe. He is breaking the rules by running into the street; he could get hurt because drivers might not see him.)

Ask: What do you do as a safe friend? (Answer: It's safer to ask an adult for help when this happens. Tell a safe adult; ask for their help.)

Scenario 5

Say: "It is after school and your friend's mom is waiting in the car. Your friend sees her in the car and runs in between the parked cars. Is this safe?"

Action: RED SIGNS UP!

Ask: Why? (Answer: The friend is not being safe. He is breaking the rules by running into the parking lot; he could get hurt because drivers might not see him.)

Ask: What do you do as a safe friend? (Answer: It's safer to ask an adult for help when this happens. Tell a safe adult; ask for their help.)

Scenario 6

Say: "Someone in your neighborhood wants you to come with them to help them find their lost kittycat, and says you need to come right now. You want to help, and you say, 'no, I need to check with my mom or dad, first' and run to find them before going anywhere with anyone." Are you being safe?

Action: GREEN SIGNS UP!

Ask: Why? (Answer: You are being safe because it's important to always check with an adult first before going anywhere with anyone. It's your safe adult's job to keep you safe and healthy, they need to know where you are and where you're going.)

Ask: What do you do as a safe friend, if you see your friend going off with someone without their parents knowing? (Answer: It's safer to ask an adult for help when this happens. Tell a safe adult; ask for their help.)

Scenario 7

Say: "Someone sent your friend a video that they know is against the rules. Your friend looked at it and doesn't know what to do now but feels uncomfortable. Your friend told you about it but asks you to keep it a secret. You promise to keep it a secret but aren't sure if this is the best thing to do." Is this being safe?

Action: RED SIGNS UP!

Ask: Why? (Answer: This is unsafe because you know that your friend feels uncomfortable, and we don't keep or make secrets when it comes to someone's safety.)

Ask: What do you do as a safe friend? (Answer: When you know your friend feels uncomfortable about something that could be against the rules, or about any interaction, you have to tell a safe adult about it, even if you promise your friend. It's safer to ask an adult for help when this happens. Tell a safe adult; ask for their help.)

Scenario 8

Say: "A friend keeps pushing you, and says mean things that don't make you feel good. You feel upset and uncomfortable. But, you feel scared and don't say anything to anyone about it." Is this safe?

Action: RED SIGNS UP!

Ask: Why? (Answer: This is unsafe because this person is behaving unsafely by pushing you, and saying mean things. You have a right to be safe and *feel* safe, too.)

Ask: What do you do as a safe friend? (Answer: Sometimes we have to be a safe friend to ourselves, too! That means, standing up for ourselves when we feel uncomfortable, or getting the information to a safe adult. The fact that you feel upset and uncomfortable is a good sign that you have to do something about it! When someone is hurting you or making you feel uncomfortable, regardless of whether it's from a friend, and regardless of what they've said to you to try and get you not to tell, you have to tell a safe adult about it as soon as you can.)

Scenario 9

Say: "Your grandmother tucks you in and asks if you want a goodnight kiss. You say no, and tell her you want a hug instead. She says, OK, and gives you a big hug. You feel safe when you are around your Grandma." Is this actually safe?

Action: GREEN SIGNS UP!

Ask: Why? (Answer: You are being safe because you are communicating your boundaries, and that is very important to say what you do or do not want, especially when it comes to your body. You might have many safe friends and adults.

Ask: What if this happened to your friend, and they told you they did NOT feel comfortable with how their family member kissed or hugged them? (Kids have a right to be safe. If your friend is communicating that they feel uncomfortable based on what a family member is doing to them, you can communicate that information to your own safe adult.)

Scenario 10

SAY: "You saw something on the computer/cell phone that made you feel scared. But, you don't want to tell anyone because you weren't supposed to be playing on the phone. So, even though you are upset, you don't tell anyone what happened." Is this safe?

Action: RED SIGNS UP!

Ask: Why? (Answer: This is unsafe because you aren't communicating to a safe adult when you feel scared and uncomfortable about something that happened. You have a right to be safe and *feel* safe, too.)

Ask: What do you do as a safe friend? (Answer: Sometimes we have to be a safe friend to ourselves, too! That means, standing up for ourselves when we feel uncomfortable, or getting the information to a safe adult, even if we fear that we might get into trouble. The fact that you feel upset and uncomfortable is a good sign that you have to do something about it! When someone is hurting you, showing you inappropriate things or making you feel uncomfortable, regardless of whether it's from a friend, and regardless of what they've said to you to try and get you not to tell, you have to tell a safe adult about it as soon as you can).

Conclusion statements to share with the youth: You did such a wonderful job identifying safe and unsafe situations! Sometimes we might encounter these types of scenarios when we leave our lesson, and it might be confusing. When you feel confused or uncomfortable, it's always OK to talk to a safe adult. You have a right to be safe. If you're in a situation where you don't feel right, or you feel scared or uncomfortable, or confused (or nervous, anxious, humiliated or embarrassed) listen to your intuition! If someone is asking you to do something you don't like or know to be "unsafe," it is ALWAYS OK to say "no." Then, try to get away and tell a safe adult as soon as you can. If your friend is showing or saying that they feel this way because of something that is happening to them, communicate that information to a safe adult, too!