

Diocese of Davenport Children and Adolescents Protection Program

Parent Meeting Packet

Elementary and Secondary Plan

Prepared by the Diocese of Davenport
Faith Formation Office
2004

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**DIOCESE OF DAVENPORT
CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS PROTECTION PROGRAM**

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Diocese of Davenport

Children and Adolescents Protection Program

Parent Meeting Agenda

1. Opening Prayer - found in this packet
2. "I'd like to begin with a scripture reading, as we are called to do what Jesus modeled for us": Luke 18:15-17
3. Introduction - found in this packet
4. "Let's test our knowledge about abuse." Handout "Myths about Child Abuse." Facilitator may refer to a few of the statements and ask people to think in their own minds whether these statements are myth or fact rather than actually giving out the quiz. Give them time to reflect or write.
5. Go over the Principles for the Children and Adolescent Protection Program found in parent brochure.
6. "Please look in your brochure for some ways to help you protect your child." Go over these with your group and use the information provided in this packet to supplement your discussion.
7. **For elementary age:** "Your children will come home with a form that looks like this (hold up samples, found in this training packet). They will ask you to help them name three trusted adults to whom they can go for help. Work with your children and answer any questions they may have.
8. **For secondary age:** Give parents the handout "Statement to High School Adolescents," and say "This is part of what will be given to your students."
9. "If you have a pen, please write these numbers in your brochure (a place for them has been provided). These are the numbers for you to call should you want to report an incidence of abuse." Have these numbers ready for your meeting; they can be found in the trainer's packet. It may be a good idea to have them written on a poster or overhead to show at your meeting.
10. Closing Prayer

SAMPLE MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

In the pastoral effort to respond to the need for the protection of our children, the Diocese of Davenport has enhanced its Safe Environment Program and developed additional curriculum entitled *Children and Adolescents Protection Program*. As a part of this program, all children in grades Pre-K through 12 in schools and faith formation programs will be given strategies on how to protect themselves. Since parents are their children's primary teachers, an integral part of the program will be to provide parents with information to help their children remain safe. Come and learn with us!

Topic: How to Keep Our Children Safe
Date:
Time:
Place:

PRESENTATION INFORMATION

It may be important when you present the following lessons that you have another trained adult with you. Sometimes children will want to tell about their past experience with abuse or they may want to discuss a recent experience. These children should be gently removed from the class so that they can share their experience in privacy. At this point, you may want to enlist the help of a school counselor, administrator or parish program director.

Before beginning this curriculum, a discussion on how to contact parents about this program should be held with your school principal or parish catechetical leader. A sample note about a parent meeting is included below.

SAMPLE LETTER

Date:

Dear Parent,

In the pastoral effort to respond to the need for the protection of our children, the Diocese of Davenport has enhanced its Safe Environment Program and developed additional curriculum entitled *Children and Adolescents Protection Program*. As a part of this program, all children in grades Pre-K through 12 in schools and faith formation programs will be given strategies on how to protect themselves. Since parents are their children's primary teachers, an integral part of the program will be to provide parents with information to help their children remain safe.

We are sending home information for you to read and discuss with your children. We will be presenting this program...

In addition, your children will bring home a bit of homework to be shared with you. Please look for it and talk to your children about their personal safety.

Sincerely,
(Principal, Youth Minister or DRE signature)
(Pastor Signature)

Parent Session Opening Prayer

Leader: As we begin, we turn to our Father, source of our hope and strength.

Reader: A reading from Paul's letter to the church at Ephesus:

Ephesians 1:15-21
(Reflect together silently)

Antiphon: Psalm 103
(adapted, *The Message: The Bible in Contemporary Language*, 2002)

Response (ALL): God's love endures forever!

Left side: O my soul, bless God.
From head to toe, I'll bless his holy name!
O my soul, bless God, don't forget a single blessing! (Response)

Right side: He forgives your sins every one
He heals your diseases every one.
He redeems you from hell...saves your life!
He crowns you with love and mercy...a paradise crown. He wraps
you in goodness-beauty eternal.
He renews your youth, you are always young in his presence. (Response)

Left side: God makes everything come out right;
He puts victims back on their feet.
He showed Moses how he went about his work,
opened up his plans to all Israel.
He is sheer mercy and grace;
Not easily angered, he is rich in love.
(Response)

Right side: As parents feel for their children,
God feels for those who fear him.
God's love, though, is ever and always, eternally present, making
everything right for them and their children as they follow
his covenant ways.
Bless God, all creatures, wherever you are everything and
everyone made by God.
And you, my soul, bless God!

(Response)

Leader: May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, grant you a spirit of wisdom and insight to know him clearly. And so together we pray...

ALL:

O God, source of all parental love, we thank you for the many gifts you give us through our children.

Help us, O Lord, to see your presence in their actions.

Grant us patience and wisdom as we strive to direct them in your ways.

Strengthen us so that we may be examples of your love.

Help us, our Comforter and Provider,
to look to you as our model of Motherhood and Fatherhood.

And dear God, make our families wellsprings of your infinite Love.

We ask this through Jesus, the Lord made flesh, and our brother. Amen

Introduction

In a pastoral effort to respond to a heightened need for the protection of our children, the Diocese of Davenport is requiring a catechesis be given to children in all grades of our Catholic Schools and Faith Formation Programs. This catechesis should take place in later September/October but may be completed during Respect Life Week, each school year. Principles for Child Protection Catechesis, Teaching Objectives for Parents and Teachers and Learning Objectives for Students form the foundation for lessons to be taught in the classroom to support parents in providing the education and guidance children need to be safe.

All priests, deacons, school administrators, teachers, youth ministers, parish catechists, support personnel, coaches and volunteers will be required to attend training in the prevention and recognition of abuse against children. In addition, parents will be given information to help provide their children the guidance needed to be safe. Finally, all persons who work on a regular basis with children in the Diocese of Davenport will be required to have background checks.

In their pastoral letter entitled "Walk in the Light: A Pastoral Response to Child Sexual Abuse," our Catholic bishops expressed their desire to share the following words with children.

"Dear Children,
When Jesus walked on the earth, he loved little children. Our Holy Father has said, 'How important children are in the eyes of Jesus!' Jesus treated children with kindness and respect. He understood when they were hurt. Like Jesus, we care when you hurt, especially when a grown-up has caused your hurt. We know that you are God's very special gift. God loves you, and we love you. You are our hope for the future."

The welfare of children, their well-being and safety, is our rationale for catechesis to enable them to protect themselves.

Sexual Abuse & Assault: Fact or Myth Quiz

Test your knowledge:

1. Child molesters typically use physical force and/or threats to gain compliance from their victims.

Fact? Myth?

2. Most child molesters find their victims by frequenting such places as school yards and playgrounds; therefore all parents should be extremely concerned for their children's safety in such places.

Fact? Myth?

3. Most child molesters are "dirty old men."

Fact? Myth?

4. Child molesters are only attracted to children, and therefore, are not capable of engaging in appropriate sexual relationships with consenting adults.

Fact? Myth?

5. Victims of child molestation are harmed only when offenders use force to make victims have sex with them.

Fact? Myth?

6. Children often lie by making up stories about sexual abuse.

Fact? Myth?

7. If a child doesn't tell anyone about the sexual abuse, then she/he must have liked it.

Fact? Myth?

8. Children generally recover from the effects of sexual abuse on their own. It is best to keep the abuse a secret, so that they don't have to endure talking to anyone else about it.

Fact? Myth?

9. A rape offender commits his offense for sexual gratification.

Fact? Myth?

10. Offenders could stop their sexually offending behavior on their own, if only they really wanted to stop. All it takes is the desire to do so.

Fact? Myth?

11. Men who rape do so because they cannot find a consenting partner.

Fact? Myth?

12. Some men rape because they are under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Fact? Myth?

13. If a rape victim doesn't fight back, then she/he must have enjoyed it.

Fact? Myth?

14. If a rape victim does not say "no" then she/he must have enjoyed it.

Fact? Myth?

Fact or Myth Quiz Answer Sheet

All fourteen questions/statements from the quiz are myths.

1. Child molesters typically use physical force and/or threats to gain compliance from their victims.

2. Most child molesters find their victims by frequenting such places as school yards and playgrounds; therefore, all parents should be extremely concerned for their children's safety in such places.

3. Most child molesters are "dirty old men."

4. Child molesters are only attracted to children, and, therefore, are not capable of engaging in appropriate sexual relationships with consenting adults.

5. Victims of child molestation are harmed only when offenders use force to make the victim have sex with them.

6. Children often lie by making up stories of sexual abuse.

7. If a child doesn't tell anyone about the sexual abuse, then he/she must have liked it.

8. Children generally recover from the effects of abuse on their own. It is best to keep abuse a secret, so that they don't have to endure talking to anyone else about it.

9. A rape offender commits his offense for sexual gratification.

1. Only 10-15% of child molesters use force or threats.

2. Most child molesters offend against children they know and/or with whom they have a relationship.

3. Majority of sex offenders are men, typically in their late 20's/early 30's and lead average life styles.

4. Most child molesters fall into 2 categories: Regressive offenders are primarily interested in adults but regress and seek inappropriate comfort from a child. They represent the majority of molesters. Fixated child molesters (about 35%) are attracted to children as their primary sexual interest.

5. Victims can suffer many forms of physical and emotional harm including fear, shame, guilt, embarrassment, and rejection.

6. Cases of children making up stories are rare.

7. Children won't tell because they are ashamed, afraid, protective of parents, afraid they will be blamed.

8. The level of trauma that is incurred is based on many factors. With appropriate support, children can work through their trauma.

9. Rape is not about sex, but rather, anger, control, and power.

10. Offenders could stop their sexually offending behavior on their own, if only they really wanted to stop. All it takes is the desire to do so.

11. Men who rape do so because they cannot find a consenting partner.

12. Some men rape because they are under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

13. If a rape victim doesn't fight back, then she/he must have enjoyed it.

14. If a rape victim does not say "no", then she/he must have enjoyed it.

10. Sex offenders are not able to stop their offending on their own.

11. Most rape offenders are married or have relationships with consenting adults.

12. Some offenders may be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol which may lower their inhibitions, but it cannot be blamed or used as an excuse for rape.

13. Many victims do not fight back out of fear.

14. Victims often do not say "no" for a variety of reasons including fear of being killed or severely injured.

You could have some interesting discussions with the fact or myth on questions two and twelve.

A Guide for Parents to Keep Their Children Safe

Teach your child these personal safety rules:

- The difference between safe/good touches and unsafe/bad touches, and what appropriate physical affection is.
- The proper names for their private parts; many children are not able to tell about the abuse because they do not know the words to use. Safety rules apply to all adults, not just strangers.
- Their bodies belong to them and it is not okay for another person to touch their private parts. Private parts are those areas of the body covered by shirts and shorts.
- It is okay to say no if someone tries to touch their body or do things that make them feel uncomfortable; no matter who that person is.
- They should not keep secrets about touching, no matter what the person says; if someone touches them, they should tell and keep telling until someone listens.

MAKE SURE YOUR CHILDREN KNOW THEIR PHONE NUMBER AND ADDRESS.

IN YOUR CONVERSATION, YOU MAY WANT TO GO OVER GENERAL SAFETY ISSUES LIKE FIRE SAFETY, BIKE SAFETY OR TRAFFIC SAFETY.

ROLE PLAY THE ABOVE RULES SEVERAL TIMES. DO NOT EXPECT YOUR CHILD TO MEMORIZE THEM.

What Parents Should Know:

- Every child is vulnerable regardless of cultural background or economic level. Children need to feel loved, valued, and protected.
- Children are best protected by giving them the knowledge and skills necessary for their safety and well-being.
- Often there are not physical signs for emotional or sexual abuse.
- Many cases of child sexual abuse go unreported because the child is afraid or ashamed to tell anyone what has happened.
- The offender may have threatened to hurt a family member, or the child feels that she or he is to blame for the abuse.
- It is important to show interest in your child's activities; let her/him know that you are available to talk or listen; allow your child to share thoughts and feelings with you.
- It is important to identify several trusted adults to whom he or she can go to tell what has happened.
- The child is never to blame for abuse; children cannot prevent abuse, only the offender can.
- Studies suggest that personal safety rules can be taught and understood by children 3 years and older.
- While there have been cases where children have made false allegations, it is more common for a child to deny that the abuse has happened.
- **Be alert to the Internet pedophile, caution children not to give any personal identity information over the internet. Someone can pretend to be an age mate of a child. Young people should never agree to meet anyone they have communicated with on the Internet.**

Ways to Support Your Child if She or He has been Abused.

- Believe your child.
- Reassure your child that her or his safety is important.
- Assure your child that she or he is not to blame for the abuse.
- Remember that how you respond to your child is critical to his or her ability to deal with trauma or abuse.
- Get your child medical help.
- Get support for yourself; this is a very difficult issue for many parents to handle.
- Call your local sexual assault crisis center for assistance for your child and yourself.
- Report abuse to the Department of Human Services

Insert page one Parent Brochure here.

Insert page two Parent Brochure here.

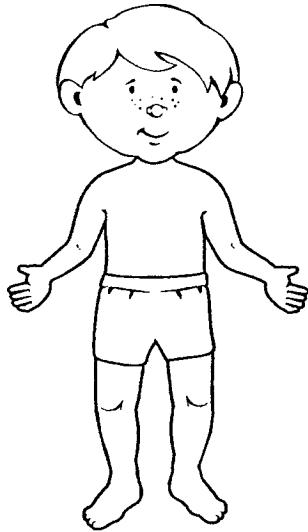
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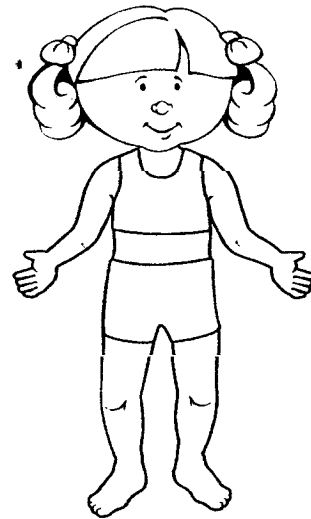
Good Touch is OK.



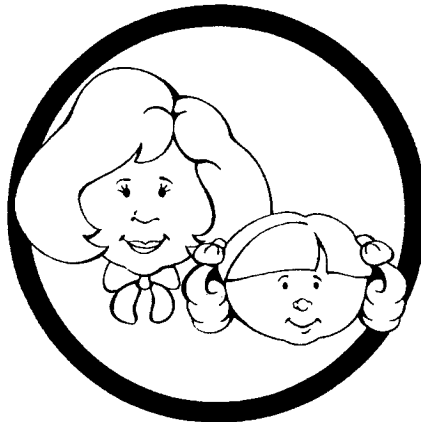
Bad Touch is NOT OK.



My Bathing Suit
Covers the
Private Parts
of My Body.

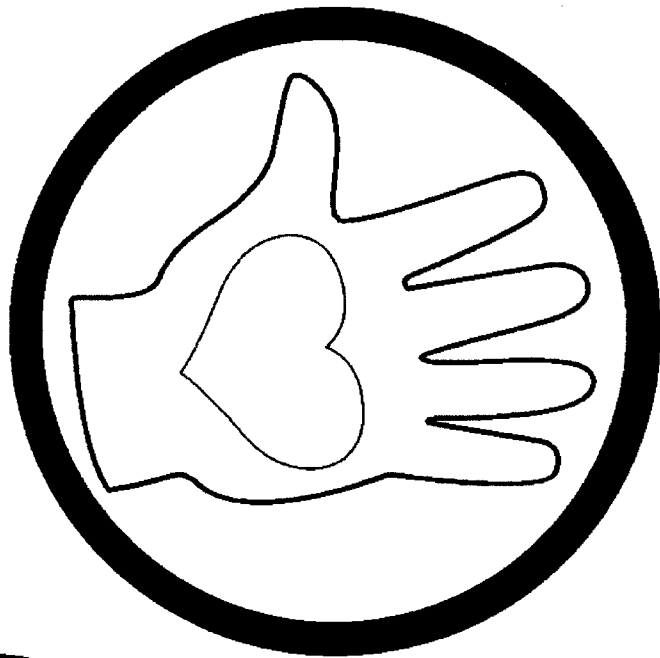


Keeping Secrets From My
Parents Can Harm Me.
I Will Tell My Parents.



Three Other People Who Can Help Me Are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



Student Name: _____

KEEPING SAFE

I am God's Child!

I must receive and give respect in the ways I talk
and act and in the ways others treat me.

I learn the difference between true friendship and false friendship.

My body is private and must be respected.

I learn the difference between good play and bad play.

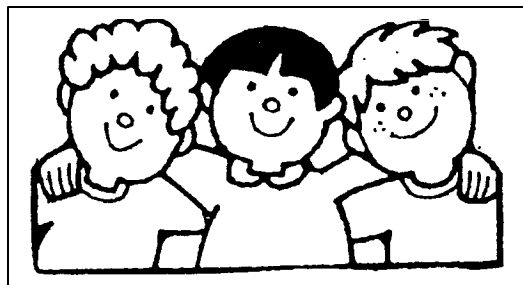
I learn the difference between good touch and bad touch.

Secrets are not good. Secrets can separate us
from others and can harm us.

People make good choices and bad choices
and I learn how to tell the difference.

When someone does something wrong,
I must tell someone I trust.

My parents and I name three people I can go to for
help besides my parents:



Name: _____

KEEPING SAFE

- We are all created in the image and likeness of God. My body is the temple of the Holy Spirit.
- Our families and trusted adults and teachers share concern for our safety.
- We learn to differentiate between safe, unsafe and unwanted touch. We are called to chastity and modesty and we have a responsibility to avoid or immediately report any unwanted or unsafe touch to a parent or trusted adult.
- We show respect for ourselves and others by how we talk, act and live. We must identify respectful and disrespectful language and actions and avoid anyone who fails to respect us. In particular, the areas of our bodies covered by shirt and shorts are private and must not be violated.
- God gives us the gift of free will. All actions have consequences. We must learn how to discern the implications of the choices we make every day. When we experience the bad choices of others, we must report the offense and get help.
- The virtue of chastity helps us understand and identify actions or behaviors which are wrong or sinful. Children, young adults, and adults must avoid actions or experiences or behaviors which offend against chastity or modesty.
- Secrets can be very harmful to us physically, emotionally and spiritually. Always question secret play, secret games and determine how the secret may cause great harm.
- There are many different kinds of friendships. Healthy relationships and friendships can help us to understand ourselves, God and others. We often meet false friends who mistreat us or take advantage of our trust and friendship. Poor relationships and false friendships can deeply harm us psychologically, emotionally, spiritually and even physically. People who manipulate or misuse friendship are not friends. We must report any relationship which can be harmful to us.
- Good communication with parents and family members helps keep me safe. I can also help keep younger siblings and others safe by being observant and concerned.
- My parents and family members and other trusted adults will listen to me and help me. My parents and I choose three trusted adults I may go to for help:

SEXUAL ABUSE PREVENTION STATEMENT TO HIGH SCHOOL ADOLESCENTS

The overwhelming majority of adults working with youth today are positive and faithful individuals, dedicated to helping our youth grow in the Catholic faith. Unfortunately, there have been cases where adults have behaved inappropriately and have even abused people entrusted to their care.

The Church believes in the dignity of the human person and recognizes abusive behavior as sinful and in some cases criminal. One victim of abuse is one too many. The Church seeks to restore any broken relationship. This is sometimes difficult.

The Diocese of Davenport is sincerely committed to the spiritual and emotional well being of all by providing morally good, healthy, and informed leaders, thereby making the Church a place of safety and trust. The Diocese needs you to share in this responsibility of awareness and to seek help for yourself or your friends if you are aware of any prior or present sexual abuse.

This statement is also found on the High School Handout.

Insert High School Handout here.

Insert High School Handout here.

What Parents Can Do to Keep their Adolescents Safe from Sexual Abuse

- Openly discuss menstrual and sexual development.
- Discuss acceptable and unacceptable social relationships.
- Discuss appropriate and inappropriate activity (body rubbing, fondling, kissing) and sexual behavior.
- Tell adolescents about the mental illness of pedophilia and ephebophilia.
- Remind adolescents they can tell you anything and then deal with revelations calmly.
- Remind them, no photos without prior parental permission.
- Reinforce with adolescents that they may challenge what adults direct them to do if they feel the directive is detrimental to their safety.
- Remind adolescents to be respectful of adults, but not to follow questionable directives blindly.
- **Be alert to the Internet pedophile, caution adolescents not to give any personal identity information over the internet. Someone can pretend to be an age mate of the adolescent. Adolescents should never agree to meet anyone they have communicated with on the Internet.**
- Caution adolescents about the seductive techniques of the pedophile and ephebophile.
- Remind adolescents to obtain permission before accepting rides with adults and other adolescents.
- Tell them not to weaken their defenses with alcohol or any other substances.
- **Tell them never accept a drink they have not poured and never set your drink down and leave it unattended.**
- Know where your adolescents are, and whom they are with.
- Be aware and listen, listen, listen to your adolescent. Be aware with your eyes and ears to their words, actions and body language.