

Roman Catholic Diocese of Fresno



Catholic Safe Environment Curriculum

Middle School

2015/2016

Note to Catechist/Teacher: Begin each topic by referring to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the doctrine of our faith. You may choose to display a copy of the Catechism of the Catholic Church book as a visual aid. Begin and end this training with an opening/closing prayer or your usual gathering and exiting routine.

Christian Conduct

Doctrinal Connection (CCC 1887)

1887 The inversion of means and ends, which results in giving the value of ultimate end to what is only a means for attaining it, or in viewing persons as mere means to that end, engenders unjust structures which "make Christian conduct in keeping with the commandments of the divine Law-giver difficult and almost impossible."

The Diocese of San Jose, Office for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults created a Code of Conduct specifically designed for youth. All youth are expected to adhere to this code of conduct while representing their Catholic school or Catholic church in any way, through attendance at school, mass, events, wearing logo clothing, and posting or checking-in on social media.

Youth Conduct

1. Every youth is expected to act in a Christ-like manner
 - a. Ask for examples of Christ-like behavior using only one word.
2. Every youth is expected to be respectful.
 - a. Ask for examples of respectful actions and reactions.
3. Every youth is expected to cooperate and communicate appropriately with peers and adults.
 - a. Ask for examples of what cooperation means to your group.
 - b. Ask for examples of appropriate communication (respectful language, posture, etc.)
4. Every youth is expected to respect the personal boundaries and property of others.
 - a. Boundaries are personal space and personal information.
 - i. Ask your group to stand up and create space between one another with "elbow room." (hands on hips to create an elbow space.)
 - ii. Remind your group that just because someone asks them a personal questions, they are not obligated to answer if they are not comfortable sharing with the person. Always encourage your group to speak with their parents BEFORE divulging any personal information.

5. Every youth is expected to promote and support a safe, fun, healthy environment.
 - a. Remind your group to be aware of the surroundings and report to an adult if someone or something does not seem right.
 - b. Remind your group to keep a positive attitude.
 - c. Remind your group to wash their hands, cover their sneezes, etc to stay healthy.
6. Every youth is expected to report and inform adults in charge of any kind of abuse or harassment in real life or on line.
 - a. Ask for examples of adults that are or might be in charge.
7. Youth will NOT tolerate any abuse of any kind!
 - a. What is Abuse? Ask the youth to give examples of what they feel to be abusive situations. (Physical, sexual, emotional, financial, neglect, bullying, harassment)
 - b. Ask the youth how they might Speak Up! –Tolerating abuse will not make it stop, it WILL make it worse. Speak up for others as well as yourself. (NO, GO, TELL)
 - c. Ask the youth how they might feel in an abusive situation. It is natural to be scared, upset, confused, and angry. Having confidence to speak up and stop abuse is being brave, and it may be the most difficult thing you will ever have to do. A confident and brave person is an inspirational leader and role model for others.

Remind the youth that any time they are wearing parish/school logo clothing, are attending Catholic school, are attending mass, or posting/checking in on social media at a Catholic event, they are representing the Diocese of Fresno and are to behave according to conduct expectations.

Confidence and Courage

Doctrinal Connection (CCC 1520 and 1917)

1520 *A particular gift of the Holy Spirit.* The first grace of this sacrament is one of strengthening, peace and courage. **1917** It is incumbent on those who exercise authority to strengthen the values that inspire the confidence of the members of the group and encourage them to put themselves at the service of others.

Building Confidence

The ability to give permission for something or not give permission for something empowers our youth to be confident. Giving youth permission to speak up and share with a trusted adult or parent helps transition from a possible unsafe situation to a key to getting help. Have your group talk about what “permissions” they might grant to help keep themselves safe. Encourage the youth to stand up in a confident pose to express their “permission.” Ex: I have permission to protect my body. I have permission to tell an adult if someone is being unsafe. I have permission to follow the rules.

Reinforcing Courage

It is never easy for a youth to stand up to a group or tell an adult if they or someone they know is in trouble. We have to encourage our youth to have courage to report to an adult if something is unsafe or a situation has become dangerous. No matter how much pressure is felt to do something, youth have to be courageous and make the right choice for THEM! If something does not seem right, it probably is not right. Remind your group to trust their instincts and tell a trustworthy adult. Assign small groups a scenario below. Give them a few

minutes to come up with a courageous reaction to the situation. Remind everyone that violence is never acceptable and we must protect ourselves with courage, our safe actions, and respectable words.

1. A teacher invites you into the teacher's lounge when others are not around.
2. An adult who volunteers with the youth group asks you to come *alone* with him or her to a remote part of the building to help load or unload something.
3. A coach asks you to stay late, after everyone else is gone home, for some individual instruction.
4. A teacher offers to give you a ride home every week after class.
5. A friend of your parents always seems to want to touch you. This person pats you on the back, pulls you into hugs, and touches your arms, your hands and your head every time you are within reach.

The 5 ALWAYS!

1. Always be around other people you know in public.
2. Always be aware of where your parents or adult in charge is.
3. Always tell your parents when you need help.
4. Always tell your parents when you leave and where you will be.
5. Always ask your parents permission to go with someone.

Always informing parents when you need help builds confidence and takes a lot of courage. In real life we try to think before we speak to help promote non-dramatic events. However, sometimes, when we enter the cyber world, our natural "filters" can be turned off and sometimes we tend to post things we would never say in person. We all have to have confidence and courage to do the right thing in real life and online.

Cyber Awareness

Doctrinal Connection (CCC 2496)

2496 The means of social communication (especially the mass media) can give rise to a certain passivity among users, making them less than vigilant consumers of what is said or shown. Users should practice moderation and discipline in their approach to the mass media. They will want to form enlightened and correct consciences the more easily to resist unwholesome influences.

Cyber Courage - There are NO boundaries on the internet!

Youth spend an extraordinary time using devices and communicating in cyber space. Even though many of the youth in your group are not old enough to have many social media sites, we have to recognize that they, in fact, do. Most youth (and adults) agree to terms, conditions, and privacy policies without ever clicking open the tab. Most people do not realize what they are agreeing to, who has access to their information, how the site will use their posts, etc. Safety in cyber space is just as important as safety in the real world. Remind the youth that if they see any posts, messages, emails, texts that are harassing, degrading, threatening, harmful, or just scares them, they **MUST** report it to an adult immediately.

Your information is being shared - There are NO boundaries on the internet!

. Your privacy may be at far greater risk of being violated than you know. There are all kinds of ways third parties can access information about you. For instance, when you are playing games, taking quizzes, and interacting on social media, you authorize an application to be downloaded to your profile that you may not realize gives information to third parties.

You Are Vulnerable - There are NO boundaries on the internet!

The most common scam is called a 419 scam, in which someone hacks your profile and send messages to your friends asking for money - claiming to be you - saying, "Hey, I was in Singapore, I was mugged, can you please wire me some money until I get home?" People think their good friend needs help and falls for the scam – ending up wiring money to Nigeria. NEVER share passwords. ALWAYS log off of public computers and devices.

Cyber “Stranger Danger” - There are NO boundaries on the internet!

Online strangers can be as dangerous as talking to a stranger in real life. Online profiles can be fake to gain your trust and form relationships. Sometimes these strangers try to convince youth to break the rules their parents have for them, try to get youth to tell them secrets and feelings about other people, and try to drive a wedge between youth and their parents.

Cyber-strangers are rarely people you would want to have a friendship with in real life. Cyber-strangers can have little to no social skills and rely on the internet to become a different person, someone who is cool, someone that you would want to be around, and someone that you would trust. Cyber-strangers need to be avoided. Do not “friend” strangers on your social networking sites. Never answer emails from strangers. Never chat with strangers on chat rooms – especially if they are phishing for personal information. ALWAYS tell your parents if someone is acting shady on line or asking for you to give them personal information.

CyberBullies - There are NO boundaries on the internet!

1. Cyber-bullies will usually pretend to be someone else.
2. Cyber-bullies will usually tease and frighten people.
3. Cyber-bullies will usually forward emails and texts to others and post embarrassing pictures or captions in order to make fun of someone.
4. Cyber-bullies will usually use bad language and insult people in game rooms.
5. Cyber-bullies will usually create online bashing polls to embarrass someone.
6. Cyber-bullies will usually deny any actions. So, keep copies of everything.
7. **TAKE 5!** If you step away from the computer and take 5 seconds to think about how you will react to a cyber-bully, you will have a better result.
 - a. Should I respond?
 - b. What adult is around to help me?
 - c. Is this a risky situation?
 - d. How can I stick up for myself?
 - e. Who will I report this to?