

Grade SEVEN
Diocese of Covington Safe Environment Curriculum

TOPIC: Personal Safety

Grateful acknowledgement to the Diocese of Tucson for permission to use its material.

STUDENT OBJECTIVES

The students will

- a. Realize that they are persons who are loved and deserving of respect.
- b. Review physical, emotional/verbal and sexual abuse and how they can deal with them.
- c. Define sexting and why it is dangerous.
- d. Explain strategies to protect oneself.
- e. Review the importance of reporting abuse until they are believed.
- f. Describe strategies to get out of abusive or potentially abusive situations.

LESSON OVERVIEW

This lesson discusses the different types of abuse, verbal, emotional, physical and sexual. It provides possible interventions and courses of action to take if they experience them. Discuss the definition of sexting and why it is disrespectful of self and others. Discuss ways to resist peer pressure to engage in sexting.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The goal is to provide useful information for the students so they are able to recognize the various types of abuse (verbal, emotional, physical, sexual) and to learn how to deal with them. Each student needs to feel that he/she is a special person who is deserving of love and respect. One of the best ways to show students how they should treat one another with respect and concern is for you, the catechist, to model the desired behavior to the students.

More materials are included so you can pick and choose what you believe the class needs to hear that this time. There may be opportunities during the year for curriculum integration that allows you to review material. Hopefully, the lesson guides and the suggested discussions and activities will make your task a little easier. The more you can involve the students, the more effective the lessons will be.

We are becoming more aware of abuse in our society, especially through social media. Individuals can be mistreated by family members, friends or strangers. It is important to know what these abuses are so that help can be provided in time of need. Also, people need to know what to do and where to go for help.

Verbal and emotional abuse may be more difficult to deal with than others. Children and adults can all be hurt by the way they are treated emotionally and by what others say, especially on media devices such as cell phones and social media. Peer pressure can pressure a teen into doing something hurtful to another that they would never do on their own. Discussing compassion and our Christian values help counteract the pull to make oneself look big by belittling another.

Two good books for discussion are: Anne Frank's "Diary of a Young Girl" and Corrie ten Boom's "The Hiding Place."

Consider starting a group involved in Netsmartz which teaches online safety. The group then presents the lessons to younger children.

VOCABULARY

Physical Abuse: causing bodily harm to another person.

Emotional Abuse: an ongoing pattern of behavior, such as intimidating, belittling, ignoring, corrupting, bullying, speaking or acting in ways that affect one's healthy emotional development. Verbal abuse is emotional abuse.

Bullying: Demeaning, belittling behavior towards a fellow human being. Bullying is emotional abuse.

Sexual Abuse: when someone tricks, forces or convinces a person into sexual contact such as looking, touching, undressing or viewing pictures or movies of adults/children undressed, in sexual poses, touching each other's private parts of the body.

Sexting: Sexting is sending and receiving sexually explicit messages or pictures, primarily between mobile devices.

Neglect: Not to attend to one's duties as a parent by not providing children with their basic needs, schooling and nurturing.

Verbal: Being mistreated or abused by the words which one person uses against another.

MATERIALS

1. The Bible: the story of Creation
2. "Vignettes of Physical and Sexual Abuse" (handout)
3. "Handling Threatening Situations" (handout)
4. "Some Ideas for Getting Out of Potentially Abusive Situations" (handout)
5. "It Doesn't Feel Good" (handout)
6. "Breaking the Silence" Video (borrow from the Office of Catechesis & Formation)

TEACHING/LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Provide a safe environment for students to discuss potentially sensitive issues. Use small group discussion, role playing, drawing, etc. to make the class interesting and more likely to be remembered. Pick and choose from the following activities to make the session relevant to this group of students.

ACTIVITIES

1. Review the story of creation emphasizing the fact that all God made is good. We are made in God's image and likeness so we are good. However, we have a free will and sometimes we make decisions and choose actions that are hurtful to others and therefore not pleasing to God (Cain and Abel). You may want to have different students read short excerpts of the Creation Story for each day of creation.
2. Say to the class, "Probably we have all seen films or television programs or news reports where child abuse takes many forms including verbal, emotional, physical and sexual that can have serious and sometimes fatal results."

Give one or two examples of TV or news reports (child dying in car from the heat, baby being dropped or hit on purpose because they were crying.) Ask the students if they have heard of other instances of abuse (child committed suicide from being bullied. Child brought gun to school and shot fellow students. Adult lured teen into a sexual relationship.)

In order to avoid students telling an incident of abuse in which they were the possible victim, stress what they saw on TV or heard in the news.

3. Select one or more of the “Vignettes on Physical and Sexual Abuse.” Perhaps “A Stranger in My House” may be a wise selection. Review the questions with the class. When you discuss question #6, stress that the truthfulness of Ashley with her parents may have saved her from sexual abuse by a sexual predator. Also the actions of her father may have saved many others from becoming victims of the predator.
4. Discuss the question “How Can I Protect Myself?” After students respond, select a handout to reinforce the lesson. (3 possible handouts)
5. Review with the students the different types of abuse using the examples (handout). Some examples may cover more than one type of abuse. Discuss.
6. Discuss “sexting”. Ask the students for examples of how sexting can be sent and received. Review how a predator can pretend to be the teen’s age and develop a relationship with the teen and then ask the teen to share pictures of self (peer pressure). Discuss why sexting is demeaning and why it is not for fun (example of two teen friends sharing personal info or pictures; then teens have a falling out and one teen sends the personal information to a whole group of teens making fun of the former friend) Remind the students that once something is posted online, it is public information. Anyone can hack it and use it for their own purposes. Posting online is NOT private. It is always potentially public. So don’t put anything online that you don’t want your parents and even yourself to find. It may feel private between you and your friend but it is never totally private. Discuss peer pressure. A so called friend dares you to post a compromising picture of yourself. A so called friend wants to play a game with you. I’ll post my leg if you post your leg and it moves on to private parts of the body. The friend is not really posting his/her own body but is tricking you into posting yours. Once you post it, you cannot take it back. Anyone can hack it and use it anywhere.

If someone sends you a picture that is inappropriate, you should STOP-BLOCK-TELL. Stop and do not respond; BLOCK so no more messages or pictures can come from that source; TELL a trusted adult who can give your phone to a professional to look for the source.

7. Divide the class into groups. Distribute the handout “It Does Not Feel Good.” Have the class complete the exercise by identifying the various types of abuse described. Share the results with the whole group. Remind the students that sometimes we all say things that are not right. Sometimes the abuse occurs when these things are said and done repeatedly.

PROCESSING THE EXPERIENCE

1. What is abuse and how does it manifest itself? (verbal, emotional, physical, sexual)
2. What options does a person have when being abused? (NO, GO, TELL: Say no; attempt to leave, yell; tell someone nearby, tell a trusted adult, call police, etc.)
3. What are the options after abuse has occurred? (Tell someone. Let people know how bad it has made you feel.)

CLOSURE

Make a list of petitions like at Mass to pray for those who have been hurt by abuse. Perhaps divide the class into pairs depending on the size of the class. Perhaps divide into groups of verbal, physical, sexual, emotional abuse, texting situations. Have each pair write a petition. Say each petition and respond with “Lord, hear our prayer.”

VIGNETTES OF ABUSE

TROUBLE FOR TONY

Scene 1: Josh is sitting on his front steps

Josh sat on his front steps and waiting for his friend, Tony, and his father to come and pick him up. He was looking forward to spending the night at Tony's house and had packed his favorite glove and his neon water pistol. Even though they had been friends for nearly a year, this was the first time that Tony had invited Josh to his house. They always had a good time together and he was sure tonight would be no different.

He jumped up when he saw the light blue car pull up to the curb and yelled, "Bye, mom!" through the open screen door as he flew down the steps.

"Hello, Josh," Tony's dad said.

"Hi."

"Did you bring your you-know-what?" Tony asked in a whisper.

"Yep, I've got it right here," Josh said as he patted the water pistol in his jacket pocket. Tony's father eyed the boys suspiciously, but said nothing.

Scene 2: at Tony's house

Later that evening, the boys were in Tony's room looking at magazines and listening to Josh's music when the door suddenly swung open. It was Tony's little sister, Lisa.

"How many times do I have to tell you to knock before you come into my room?" Tony said angrily.

Then he reached for Josh's water pistol and squirted Lisa in the stomach. "Go away."

Lisa's face turned bright red and then she burst into tears and ran out of the room.

Josh and Tony looked at each other and started to laugh. "Aren't you glad I brought my enemy deflector pistol, Tony?"

"Yeah, I don't think she will bother us anymore."

Just then he heard Tony's dad yelling from the living room. "Tony, get out here this minute."

Tony and Josh exchanged worried looks and then both headed for the living room.

"What's the matter, dad?"

"Do you think just because you have a friend over that you have permission to do whatever you please?" he demanded.

"No, but I didn't hurt Lisa. It was only water."

"I don't care what it was. You know better than to pick on her just because she's younger than you."

Josh could see that Tony was getting really nervous. "I'm sorry, dad. I won't do it again, I promise."

Tony's father did not seem to be listening anymore. He grabbed him by the shoulders and shoved him against the wall and hit him hard in the face. By this time, Tony was crying and yelling for him to stop.

Josh did not know what to do. His parents had sometimes gotten really mad when he'd done something wrong, but it had never been anything like this. Tony's father had hit Tony really hard, so hard that he had a bloody nose and a hand print on his cheek.

Finally, he stopped yelling and ordered Tony to his room. Tony just stood there for a minute, gulped back the tears and walked slowly to his room. Josh followed behind, not knowing what to say or do.

Once inside the room, Josh said, "Are you okay, Tony?"

"I think so. My head hurts. I guess it wasn't such a smart idea for me to use your water pistol."

"Your dad sure got mad. I was really scared when he hit you."

"Me too. I don't try to make him mad, but sometimes I can't help it. What do you think I should do?"

1. How did Josh feel about spending the night at Tony's house?
2. Why did Tony's dad yell for him to come out into the living room that night?
3. What happened while Tony and Josh were in the living room?
4. How do you think Tony felt?
5. How do you think it made Josh feel to watch his friend being hit?
6. Do you think Tony's father physically abused him? What's the difference between spanking and physical abuse? (Abuse is mistreatment or injury. Not all spanking is mistreatment or injury but it can be if overdone. Tony did get a bloody nose and a handprint on his cheek, so it may have been abuse. We don't know if this happened very often to Tony.)
7. Discuss in small groups. What advice would you give to Tony. List all his options and choose which you think are best.

A TOUGH SITUATION

You stay after school each night to help clean in order to pay for part of your tuition. You empty wastebaskets and run errands. You like the work a lot and want to do it because you really need the tuition money to stay in this school which you like.

When you empty the trash barrel, you need to do downstairs where no one else usually is.

On Wednesday, four weeks ago, your supervisor, the maintenance man, came down when you were down there. He helped you empty the trash, but in doing so, got very close to you and almost pinned you against the wall, rubbing against you.

Your first reaction was to think it was an accident.

Three weeks ago, on Wednesday, he came down again while you were down there and not only helped you; but also when you were pinned in the corner, he held you there with his body and touched your private parts with his hands and said, "You like me a lot, don't you?" You squirmed your way out and ran away, but did not tell anyone.

Last Wednesday he appeared again and touched your private parts, this time for a longer time. You yelled at him but he said, "You like me a lot don't you?" You yelled NO. He said, "No one can hear you. The teachers are all in a meeting. And if you tell anyone, I'll see that you lose this job. No one will believe you." He let go saying, "I'll see you next week down here, and we'll have some more fun." You leave quickly.

You know that the janitor is well liked by all the staff and students and that he is probably right in saying, “No one will believe you.”

1. What are your options?
2. What resources do you have?
3. What are the rules in your building about never being alone? About always being supervised by at least two appointed adults?
4. What will be the consequences of each of your options? If you do something? If you don’t do anything?

A STRANGER IN MY HOUSE

Ashley spends a lot of time on her computer at home. She loves instant messaging her friends and surfing on the web. One day, while surfing she found a site with an interesting chat room. Her parent’s rule was that while she was surfing the web, she could not go into any chat rooms. Ashley decided that just this one time wouldn’t hurt and she was very curious about how it worked.

As soon as she got into the chat room, she was welcomed by “skater boy.” Skater Boy said he loved to skate board and hung around a lot looking for places to free style. They talked about skating for a while and then about music. Before Ashley knew it, they had been chatting for over an hour. She could hear her mom in the next room and knew that dinner would be ready soon. She told Skater Boy that she had to go. Skater Boy asked her to come back tomorrow, and that he would like to keep talking to her. She knew she shouldn’t, but she liked Skater Boy. He sounded a lot like her, so she promised to join him tomorrow.

After school the next day and for the rest of the week, Ashley met Skater Boy in the chat room. He was friendly and sounded interested in her. He asked her about her friends, her music, her skating and school. On Friday, Skater Boy asked her to meet him in person on Saturday. He said, “Let’s keep the meeting a secret just between the two of us.” Ashley began to feel uncomfortable about this, but Skater Boy said, “Our friendship is special and we don’t need to share it with anyone else.” Ashley agreed to meet him at the Mall on Saturday afternoon. She told him that she would be wearing her favorite color red and where she would be waiting.

That night after dinner she asked her mom to take her to the Mall on Saturday.

“Why do you want to go to the Mall?” asked her mom.

Ashley responded, “I want to meet some friends.”

“Like who?”

“Just some friends.”

Ashley knew she was lying but she really wanted to meet Skater Boy and she did not want to tell her mom that she had disobeyed her by going into the chat room.

Her dad looked her in the eye and said, “Ashley, You usually tell us whom you are meeting. I don’t feel comfortable with your not telling us whom you plan to hang out with.” Ashley’s dad could always get to her.

Finally, she admitted, "I met this guy on-line named Skater Boy and I really want to meet him at the Mall."

At the same time mom and dad said, "No way!"

Then her mom and dad said in a firm tone of voice, "We will talk after dinner."

They ate their dinner in silence; then her dad went to the computer. Her mom sat down and explained to her that sometimes people who pretend to be thirteen go into chat rooms to find young people to hurt them. Ashley apologized for breaking the rules. Mom grounded her from the computer and the phone.

Meanwhile Ashley's dad followed the cookie trail on the computer and read all the messages in the chat room. Soon after he called a friend at the police department and told them where Ashley had planned to meet Skater Boy and what Ashley planned to wear.

On Saturday afternoon the phone rang. Dad answered the phone. When he returned to the living room, he sat next to Ashley and said, "Ashley, the police arrested Skater Boy at the Mall. They had a female officer pretend to be you. Skater Boy was a fifty -year-old man with a history of abusing young girls. I am so grateful you told us the truth. You could have been killed." Her dad hugged her and said, "I couldn't bear it if anything happened to you. I love you." Ashley cried and said she was sorry. Dad smiled and said, "You know you are so grounded." Ashley replied, "I know."

1. What mistakes did Ashley make?
2. What was so appealing to Ashley?
3. Why are chat rooms dangerous?
4. Is there ever a time when we should plan to meet a person we have only met online?
5. Should we ever tell an online person where we live or give our phone number or send pictures? Why not?
6. How did Skater Boy fool Ashley?
7. What good choice did Ashley make?
8. If Ashley had not told her dad what she was up to, what could have happened?

A PERSONAL VIEW

Brittany was new at school. Her dad had been transferred to a new city for his job and Brittany was just learning the names of kids in her new class. She was becoming good friends with Jaime but Brittany wanted to get into the popular crowd of girls. She thought they did fun things and she wanted to fit in. Brittany began talking to Hilary who was popular. Hilary sometimes paid attention to her and sometimes ignored her, but Brittany was determined to fit in. One day at lunch she was lucky to find a seat with Hilary and her friends. They began asking Brittany questions about where she lived before, how many brothers and sisters she had and did she have a boyfriend. When Brittany said no, she did not have a boyfriend, the group started suggesting names of boys whom Brittany might like. Brittany was not comfortable but she wanted to stay with the group. The group began teasing Brittany. The teasing turned to a dare. "We dare you to text Ben and introduce yourself." Brittany was not comfortable but she did it. Ben answered back.

Over the next weeks Ben and Brittany would text each other with simple things like, “hey, what are you doing?” “Where are you?” Ben and Brittany were becoming friends and Brittany was elated. One day Ben texted, “There’s a fun game I learned. Want to play it?” “Sure,” said Brittany.

Ben said, “Okay, you ask me a question about you. If I get it wrong, I have to send you a picture of whatever you ask for.” They had fun sending pictures of things back and forth. Then one day Ben said, “okay, if I get it wrong, I’ll send you a picture of my bare chest.” By this time, Brittany was enjoying the game, so she agreed. But as time went on, she and Ben shared pictures of themselves without their clothes on. At this point Brittany’s conscience began to bother her. She liked Ben and did not want to lose his friendship, but she did not want to send anymore naked pictures of herself and she told Ben so. Ben didn’t like it. Ben began to tease Brittany. When Brittany did not give in, Ben began to tell his friends what he and Brittany had been doing. Word got out. Kids would look at Brittany and shake their heads or giggle. One day Jamie, Brittany’s friend, showed Brittany a picture on her phone that Ben was sending to his friends. It was a naked picture of Brittany without her face showing, but Brittany knew it was her body.

Brittany was so upset that she cried at home. Her mom asked her what was wrong. Brittany finally told her mom what she had been doing. Her mom immediately took Brittany’s phone from her and called the police. Her mom gave the phone to the police. The police went to school and talked to Ben and other students involved.

1. What mistakes did Brittany make?
2. What was so appealing to Brittany?
3. Why sexting wrong?
4. How was Brittany and Ben not treating each other with respect?
5. Did sexting make Brittany more or less popular?
6. Is there ever a time when we should send naked pictures of ourselves via mobile devices?
7. What good choice did Brittany make?
8. If Brittany had not told her mom what she was up to, what could have happened?

HANDLING THREATENING SITUATIONS

Here are some steps you can take when your feelings and body signals tell you this may not be a safe situation:

- ❖ Take a deep, soft breath. Let it out slowly.
- ❖ Think – What am I feeling? Is there danger here? What can I do?
- ❖ Ask Jesus for help.
Jesus, I'm scared. I don't feel safe. Please be with me and help me think through what the best thing to do is. I love you and I know you love me. Please help me.”
- ❖ Ask an adult for help if you still feel confused or scared.

REMEMBER

- You deserve to feel safe/comfortable and to be treated with respect.
- Your needs and feelings are important. You can trust your feelings.
- It's okay to tell someone you feel afraid or don't like something.
- Your body belongs to you. It is God's precious creation.
- You can decide who touches you or gets close to you.
- You can say, NO, even to someone older whom you know well and care about.
- It's not your fault and you are not a bad person if someone tricks you into something wrong.
- You can tell someone about it and KEEP TELLING until someone helps you.

SOME IDEAS FOR GETTING OUT OF POTENTIALLY ABUSIVE SITUATIONS

Show them you don't like it...	Move away Push them away Dodge them Hide Walk or run away
Tell them in words....	"NO!" "Leave me alone." "STOP" "I'm going to tell" "That hurts." "Don't do that." "Cut it out."
Leave to go to...	Bathroom or bedroom and lock door Friend or neighbor's house Outside and play Grandparents' house Teacher or principal or counselor A friend you trust
Be gross...	Spit Throw up Burp Pick your nose Pretend to be sick Tell them you have lice
Distract them...	Tell them that someone is coming. Tell them that your mom or teacher wants you now. Tell them something is broken and ask them to fix it. Turn up the TV. Change the subject.
Use borrowed protection...	My parents, teacher, principal, counselor says you are not allowed to do that.

Tell someone you trust as soon as possible.

IT DOES NOT FEEL GOOD!

Match each statement below to the form of abuse it identifies. It is possible to have two marks for one statement.

		Verbal	Emotional	Physical	Sexual	Can't Tell
1	“You are so stupid.”					
2	“Your hair looks ugly. It always does.”					
3	Parents leave 1 and 4 year olds alone while they go to the store.					
4	“You just think you are hurt. You aren’t really.”					
5	“You’ll never amount to anything.”					
6	Child consistently comes to school with lunch or money for it.					
7	Parents make the five year old make his/her own lunch.					
8	“What a dumb thing to do, Grace!”					
9	“Why aren’t you as good as your brother?”					
10	“I’ll tell you what you should feel.”					
11	“I dare you to send me a picture of yourself naked.”					
12						
13						
14						

For numbers 12,13 and 14, write your own statements as examples of abuse.

Date:

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Your child, being formed as a disciple of Jesus by you as well as through our curriculum, is one of the most precious gifts you will receive.

As a community we are called to protect the life and dignity of the children entrusted to us. We are called to give special attention to the most vulnerable among us. Together we are charged with caring for all that God has created.

Because we believe so strongly in the importance of being faithful to this call, we take special steps to make sure our children are aware of what it means to create a safe environment for themselves.

Safe environment education is not education for human and sexual development. It is rather an effort to train young people to recognize when adults or others behave in an inappropriate manner toward them, how to resist, and to report any and all attempts.

Age appropriate information is integrated into the lesson plan taught at each grade level. The curricular points covered in your child's class are listed below. We encourage you to discuss these points with your child. Parents are primary educators of their children and studies have shown that children listen when parents take the time to talk with their children.

If you have questions, please call us. Thank you for your concern, your care and your dedication to the formation of your child. Thank you for entrusting the precious gift of your child to us.

Sincerely in Christ,

Grade 7

- Review concepts of emotional, sexual, physical abuse and peer pressure.
- Define "sexting" and the rule Stop-Copy-Block-Tell.
- Review the online dangers.

Suggested Parent/Child Follow-up

- Review sexting to make sure your child is grasping the concepts.
- Review the handouts, especially Handling Threatening Situations.
- Assure your child that the rules you have for him/her are because you love him/her and want to keep him/her safe and happy. You will never be disappointed in him/her if he/she comes to you with a problem.