

Safe Environment Training Lesson and Background Grades 9-12

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White indicates essential activities for the lesson.
Gray indicates optional activities.

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INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND FOR THE CATECHIST

Main Points for Safe Environment Training for Children Curriculum Gr. K-12:

1. We are made in the image and likeness of God.
2. Our bodies are special because they are Temples of the Holy Spirit.
3. No one should touch us in a way that makes us feel uncomfortable, particularly in the places normally covered by a swimsuit.
4. If someone does touch us in a way that makes us feel uncomfortable, we should have someone to whom we can go to get it to stop.

Safe Environment Training for Children Rationale

The Church views sexuality as a gift that is beautiful and good. Sex, when exercised within the context of marriage speaks a truth. It is a sign of the love of the Trinity and thus is an expression of the Truth of God's love. However, when sex is exercised outside of marriage, it can distort of our image of God's love, our image of God, our understanding of the gift of sexuality, and our own self-image. These distortions can bring a lifetime of pain and suffering. This is true and most evident in cases of sexual abuse, especially of minors by any adults, and particularly when perpetrated by Church leaders/members of the Church. Distortions of love are also all-too-evident in "consensual" situations where use/abuse of an individual for one's own self-gratification is substituted for true expressions of love. The Church greatly desires to end abuse of any kind and offer healing to anyone who has been hurt by abuse. The Church furthermore wishes to spread the Truths that speak God's love, the goodness and beauty of human sexuality, and the inherent dignity of every person. It is the desire of the Church to correct and bring an end to any distortions of these Truths, making every effort to assist our young people to live lives that are whole, holy, and happy.

Specific Essential Background for Grades 9-12 Curriculum:

Having built a foundation on the four Main Points in grades K-8, the curriculum for grades 9-12 helps youth come to an understanding of the difference between love and use/abuse. Youth are often groomed to *feel* loved, beautiful, important, and special (increasingly by online predators) and often do not recognize, until after the harm is intensified, that they have become a target of someone who only wished to use/abuse. Helping youth to distinguish between love and use/abuse and to be aware of grooming tactics used by users/abusers can make youth more aware of ways to protect themselves and keep them safe from use/abuse so that they might avoid a lifetime of pain/hurt. In this way they can better experience the fullness of God's love. Please note that, as you explore the concepts of love and use/abuse, the objective of this lesson is to help youth protect themselves from becoming a target of the use/abuse of another. Causing youth to discern *their own moral actions* regarding love and abuse may be an unintended consequence of some activities, but it should *not be made the objective* nor is it within the scope of this lesson.

The terminology "particularly in the places normally covered by a swimsuit" used in the curriculum of the lower grades continues to be used in grades 9-12. However, if specific questions arise or situations suggest that this description is better substituted by the names of specific body parts, it is recommended that these substitutions be made as appropriate for the circumstances.

Essential and Optional Curriculum Pieces

All of the material with **white** background is essential information that should be covered by each parish/school. However, not all points or segments need to be covered each year in grades 9-12. The curriculum can be adapted to fit the needs of each parish/school, covering it across the four years of high school.

The information in the **gray** boxes will offer greater meaning for the essential information, place the essential information in the context of Catholic teaching, offer options and alternatives, and provide answers to activities. It is recommended that the material in the gray boxes be used when not already covered as part of your regular faith formation offerings. However, the information is provided as additional material and can be used or modified as best suited to the needs of the parish/school.

Note that the additional material in the gray boxes is largely based on concepts from the *Theology of the Body*. Therefore, you are welcome (and encouraged) to incorporate the material found below into your already-existing curriculum.

*A Google Slide presentation of this material is available by clicking on the link below and making a copy. When you make a copy, you are able to **edit the presentation to best fit your needs**. Like the material below, the essential slides have **white** text boxes. The optional slides have **gray** text boxes.*
https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1jSZEV3w_vyQjI4zs6HiHT0OGLmhVEJoT1X1ST-ZZM_M/copy

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES TO PREPARE STUDENTS FOR LEARNING

ACTIVITY FOR UNDERSTANDING THAT WE ARE MADE TO LIVE IN RELATIONSHIP

“Relationship Roundabout” - *Who Is A Suitable Partner for You??*

Remind students of the following:

Adam was in a perfectly right relationship with God in the beginning. God made Adam for relationship.

Adam did not live in relationship with the rest of creation in the same way as he could with another creature made with body and soul. Only a creature made with body and soul would be able to give and receive love, as Adam could, so Adam was unable to find a suitable partner with whom to live in relationship.

God, realizing it was not good for Adam to be alone, created Eve. God created Eve from Adam so that she, too, would be both body and soul. Eve, thus “completes” Adam. She is a suitable partner for Adam!

The creation story reminds us that humans are made to live in relationship with others — and that this is very good.

Ask students to stand in a circle and work “roundabout” the circle offering answers. The first student must name a “suitable partner” for a relationship. The next names a NON-suitable partner. Students should continue around the circle alternating “suitable” and “non-suitable” responses. If someone offers a non-acceptable response, or if they cannot come up with an answer, they must step

ACTIVITY FOR UNDERSTANDING GOD’S GOODNESS IN THE CREATION AND FALL

Option #1 Creation Sort

Print and distribute signs with the events of creation in mixed-up order to ten students. (If fewer than 10 students are present, you can place the first one or more signs already in a line-up.) Ask students to order themselves in a line in chronological order as the events happened. Access the signs by clicking on the link below and making a copy. Answers are found in the box on the right.

Option #2 Creation Sort

An interactive alternative: A Google Jamboard can be shared by clicking on the link below, making a copy, and sharing. The Jamboard was created with 20 identical boards, so you can

Creation Sort Signs: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1R3p-oyrM3pimTPIRXZNmmzocRATq_m35pahfLUAsZbs/c
Creation Sort Google Jamboard: https://jamboard.google.com/d/1ZzWQzd_ZouFQHGArA9ZrPzuldNv2DOQ8u

complete as a class as you project the board from your device. One student may be invited to use your device as he/she calls on students to help him/her move the text boxes in correct order.

Share the link with students

CREATION SORT ANSWERS:

God begins to create creatures that are good, but that do not have a soul.

God creates Adam and breathes into him a soul.

God realizes Adam needs a suitable partner — a creature made with body and soul who can love and be loved by Adam.

God creates Eve — a suitable partner for Adam, and this is very good.

Adam and Eve choose to disobey God.

Original Sin enters the world.

Shame and use/abuse become consequences of knowing both good and evil.

People no longer are able to live in perfectly right relationship with God or

OPTION ACTIVITY TO SHARE THE MAIN IDEA OF THE LESSON

(A Truth that's Worth Proclaiming!)

Gift-of-Self leads a body to love.

Gift to self yields a body to use.

Write the above Proclamation on the board. (A “proclamation” is the main idea in your presentation. It is usually reviewed frequently throughout the presentations.)

Invite the students to notice anything about the second line that is similar to or different from the first line.

Similarities might include: Both speak of a gift. Both connect the gift to self. Both have a consequence for the body. Both have consonance (same-letter sounds: Lead and lust begin with L sound. Yield and use begin with Y sound.

Contrasts might include giving OF self vs giving TO self, hyphens vs no hyphens, leading vs. yielding, and love vs. use as consequences.

Accept “far-out-but-creative” answers: Both begin with the letter G and end with the letter e. Both end with a period. Both have the same number of letters.

Note: The point of this activity is to motivate the students to more closely examine the contents of two statements and begin to memorize them. Ideally, they will have a little fun without realizing they are “studying” the statements!

Highlight any important comparisons/contrasts they missed, or give clues to help them.

Explain to the students that you will be “unpacking” the meaning of these two statements throughout your session.

EXPLAINING THE LESSON

Understanding “Grooming”

Use the following points to introduce the process and common techniques of grooming.

Grooming uses a variety of techniques by the user/abuser to manipulate the victim into gradually “submitting” to abuse using behaviors that *initially* are perceived as care/attention/love.

These techniques can easily cause confusion to the victim because much of the initial grooming is, on the surface, similar to expressions of friendship/love.

Users/abusers can “groom” their victims through physical presence and/or social media platforms – often grooming for months.

The user/abuser is often skilled in deceit and manipulation, especially in the initial stages of the grooming.

Common techniques include:

- Spending devoted time with the victim, complementing the victim, taking special interest in the victim to build trust/friendship, (eventually shutting out others in the victim’s life and/or creating a kind of dependency on the relationship)

- Making the victim feel uniquely special and/or that they have a special relationship (gradually spending more and more time alone with the victim and/or in activities that become “their secret”)

- Buying gifts for the victim or giving the victim special favors (eventually making the victim feel indebted)

- Allowing the victim to do things parents would not let the victim do (using alcohol, viewing pornographic images, etc) and swearing the victim to secrecy (eventually threatening to reveal these behaviors to other in order to control the victim)

- Using sexualized behavior that begins with safe touches but gradually manipulates the victim through increases in duration and intensity (such as beginning with placing an arm around the victim’s shoulder and gradually increasing to a short hug, a sustained hug, and eventually expressions of deeper intimacy)

As the user/abuser gains trust from the victim*, the user/abuser may begin to exhibit signs/behaviors that begin to feel like use/abuse to the victim. However, the user/abuser begins to use manipulation or threats to keep the victim quiet and compliant. Examples might include:

- Making the victim feel responsible for or compliant in the use/abuse

- Threatening to tell parents of the victim about the use of alcohol/pornography

- Threatening to harm family or friends of the victim if they tell

- Making the victim feel guilty for no longer “loving” the user/abuser and for wanting to end the relationship/use/abuse.

- Manipulating the victim into thinking the victim will be unhappy without the special “love” and “attention” of the abuser/user

It is important to remember:

- The victim bears no responsibility for being in any way compliant with or appreciative of the victim’s grooming.

- The victim is never responsible for use/abuse.

- Anyone has a right to say NO to unwanted or uncomfortable attention or physical

contact at any time for any reason.

A victim should tell a trusted adult when a relationship feels like use or abuse, and continue to tell until the abuse stops and the victim feels safe again.

***Note:** Recall from the CMG training that the user/abuse will often seek also to gain trust from those who have influence in the life of the victim (parents, peers, etc...). Although this point need not be presented, it is important to be aware of this grooming technique if questions arise that are pertinent to this type of grooming, particularly if a teen is being groomed to trust the abuser as the “person of influence in the life of the victim.”

Understanding Love

Help youth understand the difference between love and grooming/use/abuse using the points below. You may wish to make two columns on the board (one titled “Love” and the other titled “Use/Abuse”) and insert the points below under each column. (See the slides for a sample.) **REMINDER:** The objective of this activity is to help youth protect themselves from becoming a target of the use/abuse of another. Causing youth to discern *their own moral actions* regarding love and abuse may be an unintended consequence, but it should *not be the objective*.

- Love
 - Love desires the good of the other.
 - Love expresses itself through a Gift-of-Self.
 - That Gift-of-Self can be expressed in actions of both *giving* to another and *receiving* from another.
 - In giving, we give something of ourselves without expecting anything in return.
 - In receiving, we receive a gift with an expression of gratitude (whether we “like” the gift or not) because receiving the gift in a gracious manner makes the giver of the gift happy. Gracious *reception* of a gift thus *becomes* a gift — a Gift-of-Self. (Note: While the reception of love is a Gift-of-Self, use/abuse should not be received. It should be rejected by saying NO, getting away, and getting help.)

OPTIONAL ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Love is made possible in and through Jesus Christ who offered his body as a total Gift-of-Self in offering his life for us, but we can only love in this way with the help of God’s grace. (Consider how Mary was able to love perfectly and purely — to the point of forgiving those who crucified her son, just as Jesus did. Her love was made possible by the grace of God offered in the Immaculate Conception.)

We must engage in prayer and participate fully in the sacramental life of the Church in order to grow in grace and develop the ability to love as Jesus loved — with a total Gift-of-Self.

Understanding Use/Abuse

Help youth understand the difference between use/abuse and love using the points below.

- Use/abuse
 - Use/abuse seeks self-gratification (gift to self).
 - Use/abuse gives in order to receive something from the other.

- Use/abuse makes the giver feel obligated to meet the receiver's expectations/desires through control; manipulation; coercion; and/or instilling fear of harm, rejection, or other negative consequences.
- Use/abuse is a result of Original Sin. As a result of Original Sin everyone can be tempted by and prone to the sins of using/abusing.
- Use/abuse should NOT be received the way that love is. It should be rejected by saying NO, getting away, and getting help.

OPTIONAL ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

We must guard ourselves against being the target of use/abuse because our body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, made to love and be loved, not for the self-gratification of another.

Likewise, frequently examining our conscience and confessing our own use/abuse of others in sacramental Reconciliation helps us to protect the gift of our bodies which are temples of the Holy Spirit, made to love and be loved — not for our own gratification. Regular examination of our conscience and sacramental Confession also make us more attune to instances when others might make us targets of use/abuse.

OPTIONAL: REVIEW THE MAIN IDEA (PROCLAMATION)

Assess Understanding of the Difference between Love and Use/Abuse

Ask students to determine if the situations below describe a body that is expressing love or a body that is expressing use/abuse. Move through these quickly. Note that motive/situation/persons involved (such as young children) will sometimes determine the difference between love and use/abuse, so accept alternative answers if the student can explain the answer.

You may wish to add/delete/modify some situations, particularly if offering the same presentation for more than one year throughout grades 9-12.

SITUATIONS OPTIONS (with ANSWERS)

Raking the yard for a neighbor. (love — giving a gift without expecting return)

A grandmother gives a gift for a grandson's birthday. He opens it and inside is the ugliest shirt ever seen. The grandchild smiles, gives his grandmother a hug, and thanks her. (love — receiving the gift graciously)

A boy struggling in math helps a super-smart new student find her way around the school so that later he can ask her for help with his homework. (use/abuse — giving and expecting something in return)

A teen spends her week doing extra chores at home without being asked, hoping that when she asks her parents to go to a party on Friday, they will allow her to go. (use/abuse)

The oldest sibling notices that his dad has been stressed when coming home from work.

He helps his younger sibling with homework so that his dad gets a break when he gets home. (love)

Someone tries to convince another that their relationship will be strengthened if they begin to hold hands, engage in light kissing, or engage in other more physically intimate actions. (use/abuse — even if holding hands while participating in her trail walking group, there is "pressure" to do so, which is implied by "tries to convince")

Someone touches another person in places normally covered by a swimsuit (outside of marriage). (use/abuse -- Note that even within marriage, this could be use/abuse if not consensual.)

Peers give each other a side hug or shoulder to shoulder hug. (love)

A young adult threatens to tell a teen's parents or peers about an intimate

relationship in which they are engaged in order to control him/her. (use/abuse)

A young adult kneels/bends down and gives a small child a hug. (generally love)

A person asks another person with whom he/she is in a close, intimate relationship to share nude photos. (use/abuse)

OPTIONS FOR ELICITING ANSWERS

Option #1

Read the situations to the left and call on individuals to answer.

Option #2

Pair students. Ask one student to give his/her answer and the other to "keep score." Switch roles of scorekeeper and player after half of the situations are read.

Option #3

Invite total-student participation by asking all students to respond to every situation.

You might suggest they indicate an answer of love by putting their right hand on their heart and indicate use/abuse by using their right hand to grab their left wrist (or choose some other non-verbal actions to communicate their answer).

Alternatively, you might ask students to write love on one side of a paper and use/abuse on the other side. Students can then show their answers by showing the correct side of the paper.

For a more active participation, ask students to stand in the center of

OPTIONAL: REVIEW THE MAIN IDEA (PROCLAMATION)

OPTIONAL REVIEW & ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: CREATION AND THE GIFT OF MODESTY

Help students recall the creation story and highlight the following points from #6-10 of the Creation activity on page 2, above:

Before the Fall, Adam and Eve looked at each other with perfect reverence and considered what they could do for the good of the other.

After the Fall, shame and use entered the hearts of Adam and Eve, and of all future generations as a result of Original Sin.

After the Fall, and because of Original Sin, people are tempted to look at others from the perspective of how the other can satisfy their own needs, from the perspective of what they can gain from the other, from the perspective of self-gratification. This is the perspective of use/abuse.

Despite the consequences of sin, God continues to love humans. In his unfathomable Mercy and Love, God clothed Adam and Eve with the skins of animals. Clothing humans in modesty is a gift from God. **It helps protect men and women from being the target of the use/abuse** that is so prevalent in human nature since Original Sin entered the world and helps them relate to one another in the spirit of love, not lust.

Use the following points to help students understand modesty as a gift:

Society today is saturated with *immodesty* and lustful/abusive displays through billboards, music, television, social media, etc. This saturation in society can lead men and women to see each other as merely objects. This can lead to a tendency toward use/abuse, rather than love. Modesty is a gift, a beauty, and a good that works against these tendencies.

Modesty in dress allows the attention of another to be drawn to the **goodness and beauty of one's heart and soul** instead of drawing attention to one's body, particularly as associated with sexualized behavior. Dressing modestly helps others focus on the inner beauty of a man or woman.

Exercising modesty in dress is a gift to men and women. It helps

Protecting Yourself Activity

Help students understand ways they can protect themselves from becoming a target of use/abuse (in addition to the optional modesty presentation in the gray box above) using the worksheet that can be accessed by clicking on the link below and making a copy.

PLEASE NOTE: It should be emphasized that victims of use/abuse are **NOT** to be blamed for the use/abuse **whether they have employed/engaged in certain behaviors or not**. Walking alone at night in a dark alley, texting nude photos, or failing to say NO to abuse out of fear or confusion may be unwise choices that put a person more at risk. Yet none of these actions make the victim of abuse deserving of blame. (See the quotes on the worksheet for additional content.)

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1IRi51cfDCgN5jGa0lCXKehkC3XJx5iVZrlpLmLaxpE0/copy>

PROTECTING YOURSELF POINTS TO INCLUDE: ACTIONS TO EMPLOY

Keep in mind and reflect often on the fact that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit and therefore should be treated with respect.

Be assertive in saying NO if you feel someone is acting inappropriately or making you a target of their use/abuse. Then get away and seek help from an adult you trust. Keep seeking help until you do find the help you need, even if this means seeking help from more than one adult.

Realize that even if you have failed to be assertive in the past, it is never too late to begin to be assertive and that you honor yourself by saying no, getting away, and getting help from an adult you trust.

Realize that even if you hurt the feelings of the other person, you have the right to say NO to him/her, to get away, and to get help when you are a target of use/abuse of any kind. No one has the right to force, pressure, tease, or manipulate you into being a target of their use/abuse or into having sexual contact of any kind.

Trust your feelings. You should say NO, get away, and get help if someone's conduct or attitude seems to be motivated by use/abuse in any way; if you are confused, afraid, or uncomfortable; or if you do not feel the person is showing reverence for your body as a temple of the Holy Spirit.

Try to have a clear idea of Church teaching on the gift of sexuality, and align your sexual values, goals, and ideals in accord with this teaching. Then say no to anything that does not align with these teachings/values.

Date with the purpose of getting to know the essence of who the person is — the heart and soul of the person — rather than for sexual pleasure.

Avoid weakening your defenses with alcohol or any other substance.

Pray for spiritual purity for yourself, for anyone with whom you are developing an intimate relationship, and for your future spouse — whomever that may be.

PROTECTING YOURSELF POINTS TO INCLUDE: LIMIT BEHAVIORS THAT SEXUALLY AROUSE & INCREASE VULNERABILITY

Limit or avoid behaviors that sexually arouse. Even in short durations, sexually arousing behaviors are scientifically proven to release hormones that create feelings of happiness (a gift within the safety of marriage) but also increase a woman's (and a man's, to a lesser extent) feelings of trust, inhibit her reservations, and increase vulnerability (creating a risk outside of marriage). Although the smell or sight of one's beloved can trigger these responses and not be totally avoided, keeping proper limits and guarding one's behaviors outside of marriage is necessary to protect one's self from becoming a target of abuse as well as to avoid temptations to use/abuse. The following behaviors should be limited/avoided by men and women, outside of marriage, who want to avoid use/abuse:

- Kissing for extended periods of time

- Engaging in cuddling and light kissing before determining whether someone can be truly trusted (Reminder: even light kissing and cuddling inhibit a woman's (or man's) reservations toward more intimate sexual activity.)

- Any behavior that sexually arouses you or another and that can be reasonably avoided, especially in situations where trust is not yet sufficient to ensure that both individuals are committed to authentic love.

PROTECTING YOURSELF POINTS TO INCLUDE: LIMIT RISKY BEHAVIORS

Men and women should avoid the following risky behaviors that could put them at risk of becoming a target of use/abuse:

- Walking alone at night

- Accepting rides from others without parental permission

- Meeting alone with individuals you have "met" through social media

- Exercising immodesty in-person or in text/photos shared electronically (or in any format)

- Being alone with a date without parental permission, especially in a potentially dangerous place like a parked car or empty home

- Going on a date with someone having a reputation of using/abusing or being sexually active

- Single dating with someone you do not know well and without parental permission

- Accepting a drink you have not poured or that you have left unattended (It may be drugged.)

Sexual Abuse and Assault: Fact or Myth Quiz

Explain that understanding the facts behind sexual abuse and assault can keep you safe.

Read/Discuss/Share the Sexual Abuse and Assault: Fact or Myth Quiz. This quiz, with answers included, is available in one of the following formats:

- Google Doc: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1NI0tk-F2erD6q74IJ_egeosPdmu5_nlubA0gQzPKwcg/copy
- PDF: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1TgAazwryyBk5FOwwh-2LXD5L9heTOO8H/view?usp=sharing>
- Electronically as Google Form Quiz: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1Z-RPeq4ou-TutGs_U1V52hK_CeawlvRXYz8F4yoCGnA/copy

Reporting Abuse

Share and discuss the handout with information about what to do if they or someone they know experiences abuse or assault of any kind. Access the handout by clicking the following link and

making a copy: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1J4ER8WJWx49m5o7K8nbaDZneAalEfmAqAC6MeoYA9js/copy>

OPTIONAL: REVIEW THE MAIN IDEA (PROCLAMATION)

OPTIONAL CELEBRATION WITH PRAYER

Remind students of the beauty and goodness of the Truth that their bodies are made to love and be loved, to offer a Gift-of-Self to others in love and to receive a Gift-of-Self from others.

Recall that use/abuse tarnish this beautiful Truth of our bodies.

Access the prayer, *Glorify God in Your Body* by clicking the link below and making a copy. Distribute the prayer to everyone. Alternatively:

Write the prayer response in a place that will be visible during prayer.

Distribute copies only to readers.

Assign reading parts and explain directions as needed.

~~Gather the students into a prayer space, if possible, and invite them into a~~

OPTIONAL: REVIEW THE MAIN IDEA (PROCLAMATION)

Pray together the prayer: *Glorify God in Your Body*.

Additional SETFC Media Resources:

For additional resources, contact Kim Feldman at 563-556-2580 (X210) or dbqmed@dbqarch.org.