**SAFE ENVIRONMENT LESSON: Grades 3-5 (Lesson #5 & #6)**

We will teach lessons on Teaching Safety, Sunday, April 7, 2024. The lessons will be based on “Grooming Behaviors” of potential abusers. Please remember this is not a sex education lesson. If a child begins to ask or discuss issues that are not appropriate for this lesson please remind them their concerns are valid, however, these are questions that they need to discuss with their parents.

**Teachers:** Depending on the discussion you have with the students please do not feel pressured to get everything completed. We would just like a healthy and informative discussion for the students.

**LESSON #5**

**OBJECTIVE LESSON #5:** To give children the ability to begin to identify and define adult behaviors that indicate that the person wants more than friendship in the relationship and to trust their own instincts about what is “okay” and what is “not Okay.” The goal is not to teach them all the warning signs but to concentrate on two specific areas:

1. An adult who gives gifts without permission and instructs the child not to tell
2. Respecting their own instincts when adults’ requests make them feel uncomfortable or are confusing.

**VOCABULARY:**

1. Uncomfortable – Experiencing physical discomfort that leaves one ill at ease or uneasy, sometimes causing anxiety.
2. Confusing – To cause to be unable to think clearly, to make unclear or incomprehensible.
3. Secrets – Something that is hidden from others or that is known only to one or to a few.
4. Secluded – kept apart from social contact with other people, hidden from view.

**CLASSROOM DISCUSSION/ACTIVITY:**

* *Everyone likes to get gifts! We look forward to birthday parties and Christmas and any other occasion when our parents, friends, and members of the family give us special gifts.*
* *What are some reasons why gifts are given?*
  + **Points to make:**
    - There are “events” and “special occasions” when they get gifts from people other than parents and family, but for the most part these are unusual and public. The gifts are given in front of others or with the permission of parents.
    - Gifts are an opportunity to recognize something special or to acknowledge something such as recognition of an accomplishment or an acknowledgement of the completion of something.
    - Sometimes gifts are given to “get something” from the recipient. For example, the gift may be used as a bribe or an incentive to get you to do something you don’t want to do or are uncomfortable doing. The gift may be a way the person gets you to do what they want – even if you don’t want to do it.
* *What kind of gifts might we get from people other than our parents or members of the family?*
* *Sometimes gifts come in boxes with wrapping paper and ribbon. Other gifts are not wrapped in pretty paper and topped with a colored ribbon.*
  + **Points to make:**
    - Sometimes gifts can be expensive and sometimes they can be simple.
    - It is the intention behind the giving of the gift that must be clarified.
    - Gifts from parents, family members are great and should be cherished and appreciated. However, these gifts are never given in secret on the condition that parents and guardians are not to be informed.
    - At a birthday party or at Christmas time we may get gifts from lots of different people.
    - A Youth Minister or teacher may present you with a gift acknowledging a major accomplishment.
    - Graduation is one of the times that gifts come from friends other than our parents and family and so are first communion and confirmation.
    - Companies and sports teams often give gifts to people for promotional purposes. For example, the first 100 people at the opening game of the local professional baseball or basketball team get a ball cap or a new bat.
* *Do people ever give you a gift and tell you to keep it a secret?*
  + - Sometimes grandparents and/or aunts and uncles give gifts and tell children to keep it a secret. Teachers need to reinforce the message that keeping secrets about gifts is wrong even if the child thinks that the parents will be upset about the gift or may ask them to give the gift back.
* *Why would someone do that?*
  + - Sometimes grandparents are frustrated by parents’ rules about gifts or that they realize that they are going overboard and want to keep from making parents mad.
    - People can use this as a way to come between you and your parents.
* *How does that make you feel?*
  + - Keeping secrets about things that you know your parents would want to know creates distance between you and them. Even if they are standing beside you, it feels like they are far away because you are keeping an important secret.
    - It might not seem like a big deal but think about how it makes you feel when your friends keep a secret from you. It makes you feel like you are an outsider and it hurts your feelings. Perhaps parents feel this too.
* *What would be a “good” purpose or intention for someone asking that you keep a gift a secret from parents or guardians?*
  + **Points to make:** It is important that this discussion clarify the difference between gifts that are appropriate expressions of love and friendship and those that are tools for manipulation and control. Key points to make in the discussion include:
    - Someone who lets you do things that your parents would not allow you to do without getting permission or gives you gifts that your parents do not know about is not a friend. Their interests are not the same as yours and their actions should always be suspect. Even though it may seem harmless to you – after all, you just disagreed with your parents about this issue – the intentions of the adult involved may be very different than you think. This person does not deserve your trust.
    - Students need to stay with “safe friends”. Those that respect your wishes and the wishes and rules of your parents, guardians, and caretakers when it comes to these kinds of issues.
    - When someone suggest that you can do something that you think your parents would not allow or to accept a gift you are unsure about, tell the person that first you need to call and check in with your parents. If the adult objects, tries to talk you out of doing that, or leaves you with the idea that it can be your own “secret,” be wary of that person.

**Prayer**

My holy Angel Guardian,

Ask the Lord to bless the journey that I undertake,

That it may benefit the health of my soul and body;

That I may reach its end,

And that, returning safe and sound,

I may find my family in good health.

Guard, guide, and preserve us throughout the day and night.

Amen.

**LESSON #6**

**OBJECTIVE LESSON #6:** To give children the ability to begin to identify and define adult behaviors that indicate that the person wants more than friendship in the relationship and to trust their own instincts about what is “okay” and what is “not Okay.” The goal is not to teach them all the warning signs but to concentrate on two specific areas:

1. An adult who gives gifts without permission and instructs the child not to tell
2. Respecting their own instincts when adults’ requests make them feel uncomfortable or are confusing.

**VOCABULARY:**

1. Surprise – Something that leaves a person feeling wonder, astonishment, or amazement, as at something unanticipated.
2. Tattle – To gossip about another by revealing their plans or activities in a sensational way or spreading rumors about another person.

**CLASSROOM DISCUSSION/ACTIVITY:** need copy of (Yes / No) sheet for each student

**Note to teacher:** The point of this discussion is to build on the discussion from the previous lesson to empower young people to trust their own instincts and to avoid going anywhere – particularly to an isolated area – alone with another adult. Also, remind students that they have the right to say “no” and to tell another person when someone approaches them to go somewhere they know that they are not allowed to go or to go to an isolated area.

Ask the students about invitations from adults and others that make them feel uneasy or uncomfortable. Give the following examples and have the students use their “Yes/No” signs to answer each situation.

* A teacher invites you into the teacher’s lounge when others are not around.
* A school bus full of kids, teachers, and parents are going on a field trip to the zoo and the teacher asks you to sit down.
* An adult who volunteers with the youth group asks you to come alone with him or her to a remote (far away) part of the building to help load or unload something.
* A bus driver offers to take you to a drive-in restaurant after school for a smoothie you’ve been wanting as soon as he or she drops of the other riders.
* An adult offers a hand up to you on a merry-go-round in the park with lots of kids and adults around.
* A coach asks you to stay late after everyone else is gone home for some individual instruction.
* A teacher offers to give you a ride home after class without letting your parents know.

**Points to make:**

* Students can say “no” when they feel uncomfortable or confused by how an older person is acting – even if the older person is someone they love and trust.
* Students should not go with or meet alone with an adult in an isolated or out-of-the-way area where no one else is around.
* It is sometimes hard to identify the problem. The point is that the student’s comfort is the determining factor, not the intentions of the other person. If one doesn’t feel comfortable, speak up. If they don’t listen or respect the student’s wishes, they should tell the first trusted adult they see and get as far away as possible.
* Trust your instincts. When something does not feel right, take action to protect yourself from harm.

**Prayer**

My holy Angel Guardian,

Ask the Lord to bless the journey that I undertake,

That it may benefit the health of my soul and body;

That I may reach its end,

And that, returning safe and sound,

I may find my family in good health.

Guard, guide, and preserve us throughout the day and night.

Amen.

NO

YES