

# Created To Love

**“As the image of God, man is created for love.”**  
The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality, Pontifical  
Council for the Family, 8.

**“Love is therefore the fundamental and innate vocation  
of every human being.”**  
Familiaris Consortio, 11.



**Adolescent Catechesis for Human Sexuality  
and Child Protection**

**Parish Middle School Version**

Sponsored by the

**Office of Child and Youth Protection  
Division of Youth and Young Adult Ministry**





OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

## ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE

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October 2008

Dear Friends in Christ,

As you know, the Archdiocese of Baltimore has a safe environment program for elementary school aged students in our Catholic schools and religious education programs called *Catechesis for Human Sexuality*. Now, as a result of a collaborative effort between the Division of Youth and Young Adult Ministry and the Office of Child and Youth Protection, a similar program for adolescents has been developed. *Created to Love* was designed to echo the positive message expressed by Pope Benedict XVI in the Encyclical *Deus Caritas Est* and affirms that all love stems from the unconditional love of God, that human sexuality is a beautiful gift from God, and that the intrinsic dignity of all human beings must be respected.

*Created to Love* blends a child protection curriculum with the Church's teachings on human sexuality in an age appropriate way. The program was designed to provide a foundational curriculum for our Catholic High Schools and parish religious education and youth ministry programs. This program is meant to support, not to supplant, the efforts already being made to educate young people in understanding and appropriately expressing God's gift of human sexuality.

Thank you for your continued efforts, in collaboration with the parents of those we serve, to educate our young people about the many gifts God has bestowed upon them. I encourage you to contact the Division of Youth and Young Adult Ministry should you have any questions or concerns about this most important program.

In the Lord,

+ Edwin F. O'Brien  
Archbishop of Baltimore

# Preface

*Education for chastity is more than a call to abstinence. It requires:*

- a) an understanding for the need of a family environment of love, virtue, and respect for the gifts of God*
- b) learning the practice of decency, modesty, and self-control*
- c) guiding sexual instincts toward loving service to others*
- d) recognizing one's embodied existence as male or female as a gift from God*
- e) discerning one's vocation to marriage, to chaste single life, to celibate priesthood, or to consecrated virginity for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven*

*(Catechetical Formation in Chaste Living II,C,4)*

With these words, the United States Catholic Bishops guide American Catholics in navigating the challenges of educating young people about healthy sexuality. In response to this challenge and in union with the instruction of our Archbishop, the Archdiocese of Baltimore has issued a new catechetical program for human sexuality called *Created to Love*. Designed to supplement the curricular programs which are already in place in our Catholic schools and parish religious education programs, *Created to Love* teaches young people about the dignity of human life, Catholic morality, healthy relationships, positive decision-making and the sacramentality of marriage. *Created to Love* also incorporates elements of child protection in an age-appropriate way. Its purpose is to support, not to supplant, the efforts already being made to educate young people in understanding and appropriately expressing God's gift of human sexuality.

It is important to note that instruction in sexuality, from a Catholic point of view, is not separate from other kinds of religious instruction. Just as we partner with parents to educate young people in the virtues and values of the Catholic faith, we also collaborate with them to teach their daughters and sons about the gift of human sexuality that God has given to each human person.

*Created to Love was co-authored by  
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**Created to Love is a co-sponsored program by the Division of Youth and Young Adult Ministry and the Office of Child and Youth Protection.**

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People Essential Norms “Promise to Protect, Pledge to Heal” includes a concern for the amount of middle school aged young people who have been trained in safe environment education. It is the goal of the DYYAM and OCYP to provide user friendly resources in regards to the topics of Human Sexuality and Safe Environment. It is our value to place these trainings within the larger context of Catechesis for Human Sexuality.

*Created to Love* is a compilation of lesson plans, prayer services and other resources to aid those who serve middle school students in the parishes of the Archdiocese of Baltimore. Components of safe environment education for young people have been contextualized within theological and catechetical foundations of the Roman Catholic Church regarding Human Sexuality.

In November 2007, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops approved a set of guidelines called “Catechetical Formation in Chaste Living,” which direct parishes and schools in their role as partner educators with parents in the instruction of young people in healthy human sexuality. *Created to Love* incorporates these guidelines, offers theological and practical guidance for educating young people in human sexuality from a Catholic point of view.

The final *Created to Love* program in its entirety will be provided to every parish and school in the Archdiocese of Baltimore for implementation. Each parish and school is expected to offer the *Created to Love* program for all high school students.

Included within *Created to Love* is a stand-alone parent session which can be utilized for either middle or high school parents. This session provides both an introduction to the *Created to Love* program as well as an opportunity for the youth minister to reinforce and celebrate the church’s teaching that parents are the primary catechist in their child’s life.

## Suggestions for Implementing the Middle School Curriculum

The Division of Evangelization and Catechesis has put forth the Child Protection Curriculum Update for grade K – 8. The parent session and middle school programming within *Created to Love* is not intended supersede the curriculum updates to the textbook series utilized within the Archdiocese for K - 8. Rather, this program is a supplemental resource that can be sponsored by the parish or school to provide parents and middle school students with opportunities for facilitated dialogue around the topics of Healthy Relationships and Decision Making.

If the parish’s middle school youth ministry program does not utilize an approved text book series for catechesis, the utilization of *Created to Love* within a parish is essential for compliance as well as the safety of middle school students.

Options for implementation of the middle school *Created to Love* Program are:

Option One - Three consecutive weeks, one night a week	Week One – Parent Session Week Two – MS and Parent Healthy Relationships Week Three – MS and Parent Decision Making
Option Two - One Day Retreat for Parents and MS Youth	First Morning Session: Parent Session – MS youth do icebreakers and possibly service program Second Morning Session: MS and Parents Healthy Relationships Lunch Afternoon Session: MS and Parent Decision Making
Option Three – Parent Meeting separate and then morning with middle school students	Weekday Evening – Parent Session Then MS Healthy Relationships and MS Decision Making sessions provided for parents and MS youth in one large block
Option Four – Parent Meeting for all of Middle School, separate 7th and 8th grade sessions	Parent Meeting for all Middle School Parents Parents and 7th grade do Healthy Relationships Parents and 8th grade do Decision Making (Could happen for both grades in one evening)

This is not an exhaustive list of options. However, if you would like to utilize an alternative model for providing the curriculum for *Created to Love* to



middle school students, it is requested that you contact the DYYAM in regards to adaptation of the program.

## **Bibliography/References**

- CCC        The Catechism of the Catholic Church. English Translation. United States Catholic Conference (Washington, D.C. 1997 – Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
- CFCL        Catechetical Formation in Chaste Living: Guidelines for Curriculum Design and Publication. United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (Washington, D.C. 2008)
- GDC        General Directory for Catechesis. Sacred Congregation for the Clergy (Rome, 1997).
- Hajduk, David. God’s Plan for You. Pauline Books & Media (Boston, 1996).
- NDC        The National Directory for Catechesis. Department of Education, United States Catholic Conference (Washington D.C., 2005).
- Pope Paul VI. Humanae Vitae “Of Human Life”. 1968
- TMHS        The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality: Guidelines for Education within the Family. The Pontifical Council for the Family (Vatican City, 1995).

**Sample Parent Letter**  
Program Introduction-Middle School

(On school or parish letterhead)

Dear (Parent),

The Archdiocese of Baltimore is committed to providing young people and their parents with education about youth protection within the context of a holistic catechesis in human sexuality. This catechesis is to be offered as an important component of the curriculum of religious instruction and faith formation in the parish or school setting. The National Directory for Catechesis (NDC, Chapter 6, 178) calls for catechesis in human sexuality which “recognizes the duty of pastors and parish catechetical leaders to support and encourage parents as they carry out their role as educators of their children in human sexuality as well as to provide additional instructions regarding Catholic teaching and values that complement and complete the formation provided by parents.”

The Archdiocese of Baltimore has made a concentrated effort to protect our community from the devastating effects of sexual abuse. In fact, the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People requires that all arch/dioceses must establish, offer, and provide safe environment training for children and youth as a regular part of a school curriculum. With the support of Archbishop O’Brien and in concert with the Bishops’ Charter for Child Protection, the Archdiocese has undertaken a very comprehensive project toward this end.

The result is a new curriculum aimed specifically at middle and high school students called *Created to Love*. The *Created to Love* curriculum is designed to teach young people about the dignity of human life, Catholic morality, healthy relationships, positive decision-making and the sacramentality of marriage. The parent sessions, lesson plans, and prayer materials provided through *Created to Love* take into account our Catholic teachings, as well as best practice recommendations made by experts in the field of abuse prevention and treatment.

In order to present these topics in an age-appropriate manner, the curriculum is divided into separate sessions for middle school and high school age groups.

Our Middle School program begins with a “parents only” session which gives an overview of the program. The sessions which follow rely heavily on strong parental involvement, therefore students are required to attend each session with at least one parent or guardian. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops makes very clear that “the invitation to other educators to carry out their responsibilities in the name of the parents arises from the consent and authorization of the parents” (Catechetical Formation in Chaste Living). This consent is implied by your participation in the program in partnership with your son/daughter.

**The required parent meeting for our Middle School program will be held on \_\_\_\_ (date) \_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_ (place) \_\_\_\_ . At that time we will provide you with additional information and an opportunity to review the lesson materials and ask questions. The remaining parent/child sessions will take place on \_\_\_\_ (dates) \_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_ (place) \_\_\_\_ . Please make every effort to attend, as your parent participation is an essential component of the program. No student will be permitted to participate without a parent/guardian present.**

We believe that parents are and should be the primary educators of their children; nevertheless, the parish and school community also play a secondary but essential role in educating young people about healthy relationships. Thank you for your continued support as we strive to keep our young people safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

Principal or Parish Catechetical Leader

**ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE**  
**DIVISION OF YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY**

**PERMISSION FORM AND RELEASE**

Youth Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Other number where Parent can be reached: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Male Female (please circle)

In consideration of the wholesome learning experience in which my son/daughter will participate, I as parent or guardian of my son/daughter, do hereby agree to allow my son/daughter to participate in the "Created to Love" program through the youth ministry/campus ministry group of their parish/school on: (event/date/time)

I/we acknowledge receipt of the attached information letter describing the planned activities.

In consideration of the opportunity for my son/daughter to participate in the program, I agree to **RELEASE AND HOLD HARMLESS AND INDEMNIFY** \_\_\_\_\_, (name of parish or school) the Division of Youth & Young Adult Ministry, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Baltimore and his successors, a Corporation Sole, and all their agents, servants and employees from any liability, claims, demands and causes of action arising out of or relating to any loss, damage or injury sustained in connection with or arising out of my son/daughter's participation in the program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Child's Name

Additional resources may be sent home. Please provide a PARENT email address below:

\_\_\_\_\_

## THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR THE FAMILY

### ***THE TRUTH AND MEANING OF HUMAN SEXUALITY***

#### ***Excerpt from the Guidelines for Education within the Family***

##### ***on Puberty and Adolescence***

## **2. Puberty**

87. Puberty, which constitutes the initial phase of adolescence, is a time in which parents are called to be particularly attentive to the *Christian education of their children*. This is a time of self-discovery and "of one's own inner world, the time of generous plans, the time when the feeling of love awakens, with the biological impulses of sexuality, the time of the desire to be together, the time of particularly intense joy connected with the exhilarating discovery of life. But often it is also the age of deeper questioning, of anguished or even frustrating searching, of a certain mistrust of others and dangerous introspection, and the age sometimes of the first experiences of setbacks and of disappointments".

88. Parents should pay particular attention to their children's gradual development and to their physical and psychological changes, which are decisive in the maturing of the personality. Without showing anxiety, fear or obsessive concern, parents will not let cowardice or convenience hinder their work. This is naturally an important moment for teaching the value of chastity, which will also be expressed in the way sexual information is given. In this phase, educational needs also concern the genital aspects, hence requiring a presentation both on the level of values and the reality as a whole. Moreover, this implies an understanding of the context of procreation, marriage and the family, a context which must be kept present in an authentic task of sexual education.

89. Beginning with the changes which their sons and daughters experience in their bodies, parents are thus bound to give *more detailed explanations about sexuality* (in an on-going relationship of trust and friendship) each time girls confide in their mothers and boys in their fathers. This relationship of trust and friendship should have already started in the first years of life.

90. Another important task for parents is following the gradual physiological development of their daughters and helping them joyfully to accept *the development of their femininity* in a bodily, psychological and spiritual sense. Therefore, normally, one should discuss the cycles of fertility and their meaning. But it is still not necessary to give detailed explanations about sexual union, unless this is explicitly requested.

91. It is very important for adolescent boys to be helped to understand the stages of physical and physiological development of the genital organs before they get this information from their companions or from persons who are not well-intentioned. The physiological facts about male puberty should be presented in an atmosphere of serenity, positively and with reserve, in the framework of marriage, family and fatherhood. Instructing both adolescent girls and boys should

also include detailed and sufficient information about the bodily and psychological characteristics of the opposite sex, about whom their curiosity is growing.

In this area, the additional supportive information of a conscientious doctor or even a psychologist can help parents, without separating this information from what pertains to the faith and the educational work of the priest.

92. Through *a trusting and open dialogue*, parents can guide *their daughters* in facing any emotional perplexity, and support the value of Christian chastity out of consideration for the other sex. Instruction for both girls and boys should aim at pointing out the beauty of motherhood and the wonderful reality of procreation, as well as the deep meaning of virginity. In this way they will be helped to go against the hedonistic mentality which is very widespread today and particularly, at such a decisive stage, in preventing the "*contraceptive mentality*", which unfortunately is very common and which girls will have to face later in marriage.

93. During puberty, *the psychological and emotional development of boys* can make them vulnerable to erotic fantasies and they may be tempted to try sexual experiences. Parents should be close to their sons and correct the tendency to use sexuality in a hedonistic and materialistic way. Therefore, they should remind boys about God's gift, received in order to cooperate with him "to actualize in history the original blessing of the Creator — that of transmitting by procreation the divine image from person to person..."; and this will strengthen their awareness that, "Fecundity is the fruit and the sign of conjugal love, the living testimony of the full reciprocal self-giving of the spouses". In this way sons will also learn the respect due to women. The parents' task of informing and instructing is necessary, not because their sons would not know about sexual reality in other ways, but so that they will know about it in the right light.

94. In a *positive and prudent* way, parents will carry out what the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council requested: "It is important to give suitable and timely instruction to young people, above all in the heart of their own families, about the dignity of married love, its role and its exercise; in this way they will be able to engage in honourable courtship and enter upon marriage of their own".

Positive information about sexuality should always be part of a formation plan so as to create the Christian context in which all information about life, sexual activity, anatomy and hygiene is given. Therefore, the spiritual and moral dimensions must always be predominant so as to have two special purposes: presenting God's commandments as a way of life, and the formation of a right conscience.

To the young man who asked him what he had to do in order to attain eternal life, Jesus replied: "If you would enter life, keep the commandments" (*Matthew 19:17*). After listing the ones that concern love for one's neighbour, Jesus summed them up in this positive formulation: "You shall love your neighbour as yourself" (*Matthew 19:19*). In order to present the commandments as God's gift (written by his hand, cf. *Exodus 31: 18*), expressing the Covenant with him, confirmed by Jesus' own example, it is very important for the adolescent not to separate the commandments from their relationship with a rich interior life, free from selfishness.

95. As its departure point, the formation of conscience requires being enlightened about: God's project of love for every single person, the positive and liberating value of the moral law, and awareness both of the weakness caused by sin and the means of grace which strengthen us on our path towards the good and towards salvation.

"Moral conscience, present at the heart of the person" — which is "man's most secret core and sanctuary", as the Second Vatican Council affirms, "enjoins him at the appropriate moment to do good and to avoid evil. It also judges particular choices, approving those that are good and denouncing those that are evil. It bears witness to the authority of truth in reference to the supreme Good to which the human person is drawn, and it welcomes the commandments".

In fact, "conscience is a judgment of reason whereby the human person recognizes the moral quality of a concrete act that he is going to perform, is in the process of performing, or has already completed". Therefore, the formation of conscience requires being enlightened about the truth and God's plan and must not be confused with a vague subjective feeling or with personal opinion.

96. In answering *children's questions*, parents should offer well-reasoned arguments about the great value of chastity and show the intellectual and human weakness of theories that inspire permissive and hedonistic behavior. They will answer clearly, without giving excessive importance to pathological sexual problems. Nor will they give the false impression that sex is something shameful or dirty, because it is a great gift of God who placed the ability to generate life in the human body, thereby sharing his creative power with us. Indeed, both in the Scriptures (cf. *Song of Songs* 1-8; *Hosea* 2; *Jeremiah* 3: 1-3; *Ezekiel* 23, etc.) and in the Christian mystical tradition, conjugal love has always been considered a symbol and image of God's love for us.

97. Since boys and girls at puberty are particularly vulnerable to *emotional influences*, through dialogue and the way they live, parents have the duty to help their children resist negative outside influences that may lead them to have little regard for Christian formation in love and chastity. Especially in societies overwhelmed by consumer pressures, parents should sometimes watch out for their children's relations with young people of the opposite sex — without making it too obvious. Even if they are socially acceptable, some habits of speech and conduct are not morally correct and represent a way of trivializing sexuality, reducing it to a consumer object. Parents should therefore teach their children the value of Christian modesty, moderate dress, and, when it comes to trends, the necessary autonomy characteristic of a man or woman with a mature personality.

### **3. Adolescence in One's Plan in Life**

98. In terms of personal development, adolescence represents the period of self- projection and therefore the discovery of one's vocation. Both for physiological, social and cultural reasons, this period tends to be longer today than in the past. Christian parents should "educate the children for life in such a way that each one may fully perform his or her role according to the *vocation received from God*". This is an extremely important task which basically constitutes the culmination of the parents' mission. Although this task is always important, it becomes especially so in this period of their children's life: "Therefore, in the life of each member of the lay faithful



there are *particularly significant and decisive moments* for discerning God's call...Among these are the periods of *adolescence* and *young adulthood*".

99. It is very important for young people not to find themselves alone in discerning their *personal vocation*. Parental advice is relevant, at times decisive, as well as the support of a priest or other properly formed persons (in parishes, associations or in the new fruitful ecclesial movements, etc.) who are capable of helping them discover the vocational meaning of life and the various forms of the universal call to holiness. "Christ's '*Follow me*' makes itself heard on the different paths taken by the disciples and confessors of the divine Redeemer".

100. For centuries, the concept of vocation was reserved exclusively for the priesthood and religious life. In recalling the Lord's teaching, "You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (*Matthew 5:48*), the Second Vatican Council renewed the universal call to holiness. As Pope Paul VI wrote shortly after the Council: "This strong invitation to holiness could be regarded as the most characteristic element in the whole Magisterium of the Council, and so to say, its ultimate purpose". This was reiterated by Pope John Paul II: "The Second Vatican Council has significantly spoken on the universal call to holiness. It is possible to say that this call to holiness is precisely the basic charge entrusted to all the sons and daughters of the Church by a Council which intended to bring a renewal of Christian life based on the gospel. This charge is not a simple moral exhortation, but an *undeniable requirement arising from the mystery of the Church*".

God calls everyone to holiness. He has very precise plans for each person, a *personal vocation* which each must recognize, accept and develop. To all Christians — priests, laity, married people or celibates — the words of the Apostle of the Nations apply: "*God's chosen ones, holy and beloved*" (*Colossians 3:12*).

101. Therefore, in catechesis and the formation given both within and outside of the family, the Church's teaching on the sublime value of virginity and celibacy must never be lacking, but also the vocational meaning of marriage, which a Christian can never regard as only a human venture. As St. Paul says "This is a great mystery, and I mean in reference to Christ and the church." (*Ephesians 5:32*). Giving young people this firm conviction is of supreme importance for the good both of the Church and humanity which "depend in great part on parents and on the family life that they build in their homes".

102. Parents should always strive to give *example and witness* with their own lives to fidelity to God and one another in the marriage covenant. Their example is especially decisive in adolescence, the phase when young people are looking for *lived and attractive behaviour models*. Since sexual problems become more evident at this time, parents should also help them to love the beauty and strength of chastity through prudent advice, highlighting the inestimable value of prayer and frequent fruitful recourse to the sacraments for a chaste life, especially personal confession. Furthermore, parents should be capable of giving their children, when necessary, a positive and serene explanation of the solid points of Christian morality such as, for example, the indissolubility of marriage and the relationship between love and procreation, as well as the immorality of premarital relations, abortion, contraception and masturbation. With regard to these

immoral situations that contradict the meaning of giving in marriage, it is also good to recall that: "*The two dimensions of conjugal union, the unitive and the procreative, cannot be artificially separated* without damaging the deepest truth of the conjugal act itself". In this regard, an in-depth and reflective knowledge of the documents of the Church dealing with these problems will be of valuable assistance to parents.

103. *Masturbation* particularly constitutes a very serious disorder that is illicit in itself and cannot be morally justified, although "the immaturity of adolescence (which can sometimes persist after that age), psychological imbalance or habit can influence behaviour, diminishing the deliberate character of the act and bringing about a situation whereby subjectively there may not always be serious fault". Therefore, adolescents should be helped to overcome manifestations of this disorder, which often express the inner conflicts of their age and, in many cases, a selfish vision of sexuality.

104. A particular problem that can appear during the process of sexual maturation is *homosexuality*, which is also spreading more and more in urbanized societies. This phenomenon must be presented with balanced judgement, in the light of the documents of the Church. Young people need to be helped to distinguish between the concepts of what is normal and abnormal, between subjective guilt and objective disorder, avoiding what would arouse hostility. On the other hand, the structural and complementary orientation of sexuality must be well clarified in relation to marriage, procreation and Christian chastity. "Homosexuality refers to relations between men or between women who experience an exclusive or predominant sexual attraction toward persons of the same sex. It has taken a great variety of forms through the centuries and in different cultures. Its psychological genesis remains largely unexplained". A distinction must be made between a tendency that can be innate and acts of homosexuality that "are intrinsically disordered" and contrary to Natural Law.

Especially when the practice of homosexual acts has not become a habit, many cases can benefit from appropriate therapy. In any case, persons in this situation must be accepted with respect, dignity and delicacy, and all forms of unjust discrimination must be avoided. If parents notice the appearance of this tendency or of related behaviour in their children, during childhood or adolescence, they should seek help from expert qualified persons in order to obtain all possible assistance.

For most homosexual persons, this condition constitutes a trial. "They must be accepted with respect, compassion and sensitivity. Every sign of unjust discrimination in their regard should be avoided. These persons are called to fulfill God's will in their lives and, if they are Christians, to unite to the sacrifice of the Lord's Cross the difficulties they may encounter from their condition". "Homosexual persons are called to chastity".

105. Awareness of the positive significance of sexuality for personal harmony and development, as well as the person's vocation in the family, society and the Church, always represents the educational horizon to be presented during the stages of adolescent growth. It must never be forgotten that the disordered use of sex tends progressively to destroy *the person's capacity to love* by making pleasure, instead of sincere self-giving, the end of sexuality and by reducing other

persons to objects of one's own gratification. In this way the meaning of true love between a man and a woman (love always open to life) is weakened as well as the family itself. Moreover, this subsequently leads to disdain for the human life which could be conceived, which, in some situations, is then regarded as an evil that threatens personal pleasure. "The trivialization of sexuality is among the principal factors which have led to contempt for new life. Only a true love is able to protect life".

106. We must also remember how adolescents in industrialized societies are preoccupied and at times disturbed not only by the problems of *self-identity*, discovering their plan in life and difficulties in successfully integrating sexuality in a mature and well-oriented personality. They also have problems in accepting themselves and their bodies. In this regard, out-patient and specialized centres for adolescents have now sprung up, often characterized by purely hedonistic purposes. On the other hand, a healthy culture of the body leads to accepting oneself as a gift and as an incarnated spirit, called to be open to God and society. A healthy culture of the body should accompany formation in this very constructive period, which is also not without its risks.

In the face of what hedonistic groups propose, especially in affluent societies, it is very important to present young people with the ideals of human and Christian solidarity and concrete ways of being committed in Church associations, movements and voluntary Catholic and missionary activities.

107. *Friendships* are very important in this period. According to local social conditions and customs, adolescence is a time when young people enjoy more autonomy in their relations with others and in the hours they keep in family life. Without taking away their rightful autonomy, when necessary, parents should know how to say "no" to their children and, at the same time, they should know how to cultivate a taste in their children for what is beautiful, noble and true. Parents should also be sensitive to adolescents' self-esteem, which may pass through a confused phase when they are not clear about what personal dignity means and requires.

108. Through loving and patient advice, parents will help young people to avoid *an excessive closing in on themselves*. When necessary, they will also teach them to go against social trends that tend to stifle true love and an appreciation for spiritual realities: "Be sober, be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking some one to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experience of suffering is required of your brotherhood throughout the world. And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, establish, and strengthen you" (*1 Peter 5:8-10*).

**For complete text of this document, visit:**

**[http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/pontifical\\_councils/family/documents/rc\\_pc\\_family\\_doc\\_08121995\\_human-sexuality\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/family/documents/rc_pc_family_doc_08121995_human-sexuality_en.html)**

**UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS**  
***CATECHETICAL FORMATION IN CHASTE LIVING***

*Excerpt from Guidelines for Curriculum Design and Instruction*

**Part I, A**

**Received Teaching of the Church**

24. Formation in the virtue of chastity includes:

- Education for authentic love
- Understanding one's sexuality as a gift
- Cultivation of all the virtues, especially charity
- The practice of prayer
- The virtue of temperance
- Respect for human dignity in oneself and in others
- The practice of decency and modesty in behavior, dress, and speech
- The respect for one's own body and for others as temples of the Holy Spirit
- Assistance in acquiring self-mastery and self-control

25. The benefits of chastity include:

- The integrity of life and love placed in the person
- The gift of authentic friendship
- Fidelity in marriage which leads to strong family life
- The ability to be "pure of heart"
- Development of authentic maturity
- Capacity to respect and foster the 'nuptial meaning' of the body
- A lifestyle that brings joy
- The discipline to renounce self, make sacrifices and wait
- A life that revolves around self-giving love
- Development of a harmonious personality
- Freedom from all forms of self-centeredness
- The capacity for compassion, tolerance, generosity and a spirit of sacrifice

**For complete text of this document, visit:**

**<http://www.usccb.org/education/chasteliving.pdf>**



# Created to Love

## Parents and their Role in Human Sexuality Education

### Theological Rationale



“Parents should be aware ... that sexual giving should also be lived out in respect for God and for his plan of love, with fidelity, honour and generosity towards one's spouse and toward the life which can arise from their act of love. Only in this way can their love be an expression of charity" *The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality*

"Sex education, which is a basic right and duty of parents, must always be carried out under their attentive guidance, whether at home or in educational centres chosen and controlled by them. In this regard, the Church reaffirms the law of subsidiarity, which the school is bound to observe when it cooperates in sex education, by entering into the same spirit that animates the parents". JPII

“... the educational service of parents must aim firmly at a training in the area of sex which is truly and fully personal: for sexuality is an enrichment of the whole person - body, emotions and soul - and it manifests its inmost meaning in leading the person to the gift of self in love. Sex education, which is a basic right and duty of parents, must always be carried out under their attentive guidance, whether at home or in educational centres chosen and controlled by them. In this regard, the Church reaffirms the law of subsidiarity, which the school is bound to observe when it cooperates in sex education, by entering into the same spirit that animates the parents. In this context *education for chastity* is absolutely essential, for it is a virtue that develops a person's authentic maturity and makes him or her capable of respecting and fostering the 'nuptial meaning' of the body. Indeed, Christian parents, discerning the signs of God's call, will devote special attention and care to education in virginity or celibacy as the supreme form of that self-giving that constitutes the very meaning of human sexuality. In view of the close links between the sexual dimension of the person and his or her ethical values, education must bring the children to a knowledge of and respect for the moral norms as the necessary and highly valuable guarantee for responsible personal growth in human sexuality. For this reason the Church is firmly opposed to an often widespread form of imparting sex information dissociated from moral principles. That would merely be an

introduction to the experience of pleasure and a stimulus leading to the loss of serenity - while still in the years of innocence - by opening the way to vice" (*Familiaris consortio*, no. 37).

"In view of the close links between the sexual dimension of the person and his or her ethical values, education must bring the children to a knowledge of and respect for the moral norms as the necessary and highly valuable guarantee for responsible personal growth in human sexuality". JPII

*Charter of the Rights of the Family*: "Since they have conferred life on their children, parents have the original, primary and inalienable right to educate them; hence they ...have the right to educate their children in conformity with their moral and religious convictions, taking into account the cultural traditions of the family which favour the good and the dignity of the child; they should also receive from society the necessary aid and assistance to perform their educational role properly".

"Parents/guardians are to be the first and foremost educators of their children. This God-given responsibility cannot legitimately be taken away by other powers or institutions." (CFCL, II, B, 2)

"Parents/guardians are obliged to ensure that their children's education in human sexuality occurs within the context of the moral principles and truths of the Catholic Church, whether is be done at home or in educational centers chosen by them." (CFCL, II, B, 4)



# Created to Love



## Parent Focus

## Theological Rationale

### Catechism of the Catholic Church

**CCC 2204** “The Christian family constitutes a specific revelation and realization of ecclesial communion, and for this reason it can and should be called a *domestic church*.” It is a community of faith, hope, and charity; it assumes singular importance in the Church, as is evident in the New Testament.

**CCC 2205** The Christian family is a communion of persons, a sign and image of the communion of the Father and the Son in the Holy Spirit. In the procreation and education of children it reflects the Father's work of creation. It is called to partake of the prayer and sacrifice of Christ. Daily prayer and the reading of the Word of God strengthen it in charity. The Christian family has an evangelizing and missionary task.

**CCC 2206** The relationships within the family bring an affinity of feelings, affections and interests, arising above all from the members' respect for one another. The family is a *privileged community* called to achieve a "sharing of thought and common deliberation by the spouses as well as their eager cooperation as parents in the children's upbringing."

### Additional Documents

Parents are the primary educators in the faith. Together with them, especially in certain cultures, all members of the family play an active part in the education of the younger members. It is thus necessary to determine more concretely the sense in which the Christian family community is a *locus* of catechesis. The family is defined as a "domestic Church," that is, in every Christian family the different aspects and functions of the life of the entire Church may be reflected: mission; catechesis; witness; prayer, etc. Indeed in the same way as the Church, the family "is a place in which the Gospel is transmitted and from which it extends." The family as a locus of catechesis has a unique privilege: transmitting the Gospel by rooting it in the context of profound human values. On this human base, Christian initiation is more profound: the awakening of the sense of God;

the first steps in prayer; education of the moral conscience; formation in the Christian sense of human love, understood as a reflection of the love of God the Father, the Creator. (*General Directory for Catechesis* #255)

The normal and fundamental method, (for human sexuality catechesis) . . . is *personal dialogue between parents and their children*, that is, *individual formation within the family circle*. In fact there is no substitute for a dialogue of trust and openness between parents and their children, a dialogue which respects not only their stages of development but also the young persons as individuals. (TMHS 129)

There are various ways of helping and supporting parents in fulfilling their fundamental right and duty to educate their children for love. Such assistance never means taking from parents or diminishing their formative right and duty, because they remain "original and primary", "irreplaceable and inalienable". Therefore, the role which others can carry out in helping parents is always (a) *subsidiary*, because the formative role of the family is always preferable, and (b) *subordinate*, that is, subject to the parents' attentive guidance and control. Everyone must observe the right order of cooperation and collaboration between parents and those who can help them in their task. It is clear that the assistance of others must be given first and foremost to parents rather than to their children. (TMHS 145)

The Holy Father John Paul II reaffirms in *Familiaris Consortio*: "The right and duty of parents to give education is *essential*, since it is connected with the transmission of human life; it is *original and primary* with regard to the educational role of others, on account of the uniqueness of the loving relationship between parents and children; and it is *irreplaceable and inalienable*, and therefore incapable of being entirely delegated to others or usurped by others"





# Created to Love

## Parent Session

## Prayer Service



### Opening Prayer

Loving Father,  
You committed children to our loving care to raise for You and to prepare them for eternal life. Help us to fulfill this sacred duty. Teach us when to give and when to withhold, when to permit and when to reprove, make us gentle, yet firm, considerate and watchful. Grant that in what we say and how we live, we may lead them towards you through your Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ.  
**Amen.**

### First Reading: Matthew 6:19-23

A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

The Word of the Lord.  
All: Thanks be to God.

### Antiphonal Psalm 34

**Side One: Come, children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord. Who among you loves life, takes delight in prosperous days?**

Side Two: Keep your tongue from evil, Your lips from speaking lies. Turn from evil and do good; Seek peace and pursue it.

**Side One: The Lord has eyes for the just and ears for their cry. The Lord's face is against evildoers, To wipe out their memory from the earth.**

Side Two: When the just cry out, the Lord hears and rescues them from all distress. The Lord is close to the broken hearted, saves those whose spirit is crushed.

**Side One: Many are the troubles of the just, but the Lord delivers them all. God watches over all their bones; not a one shall be broken.**

**ALL: The Lord redeems loyal servants; No one is condemned whose refuge is God.**

### Second Reading Psalm 78:1-7

O my people, hear my teaching; listen to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter hidden things, things from of old - what we have heard and know, what our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, his power, and the wonders he has done. He decreed statutes for Jacob and established the law in Israel, which he commanded our forefathers to teach their children, so the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born, and they in turn would tell their children. Then they would put their trust in God and would not forget his deeds but would keep his commands.

### Reflection: (To be shared in small groups of two or three)

“Parents are urged *to dare to ask for more and to propose more*. They cannot be satisfied with avoiding the worst — that their children do not take drugs or commit crimes. They will have to be committed to educating them in the true values of the person, renewed by the virtues of faith, hope and love: the values of freedom, responsibility, fatherhood and motherhood, service, professional work, solidarity, honesty, art, sport, the joy of knowing they are children of God, hence brothers and sisters of all human beings . . . “

*(Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality, 49)*

### Questions:

What are some of the messages you feel your child receives daily from their peers and society?

What are some of the most important messages you try to stress to your children?

### Closing Prayer

Loving God,

I commend my children to your care. May they grow in wisdom and compassion, honor and holiness. Grant them healthy relationships and the ability to make prayerful decisions. Strengthen them for the journey ahead through your grace, so that they may grow in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ and may come to rejoice in your love forever.  
Amen.





# Created to Love



## Parent Session

## Leader Guide

### The Point

As human beings we are created in the image and likeness of God.

### Learning Objectives

During this presentation it is essential to communicate the following points:

- Parents are the primary educators of their children but share in a partnership with the Church, which provides support, education and encouragement in this task.
- Human interaction is an opportunity for holiness.
- There are four characteristics that describe the fullness of love and the intention of marital love. Love is free, full, faithful, and fruitful.
- Human life is to be respected. We have a responsibility to speak out against violations of the dignity of the human person, to defend and to educate young people about such violations.

### Preparation Check List

- *Created to Love* outline and materials for review
- Paper, pens for personal responses
- Newsprint, markers, easel for consolidating group responses

### Memory Lane

**20 Minutes**

Participants will be asked to work through a Pastoral Circle remembrance of “their first *positive* and/or an early *significant* experience of physical affection within a love/ dating relationship.” It is vitally important to emphasize **positive**. The purpose of this activity is not to address experiences that were negative or forced.

Participants will be asked to recapture the memory. (It might be helpful to have participants imagine that someone was able to go back in time and capture a picture of that moment.)

**FACTS:** Without sharing the whole story, have each participant describe three facts that preceded that moment. (without going into the entire story... yet) Facilitator should share examples from their own story. ( Examples: She was a cheerleader from a public school. His parents were away. I had a big zit on my nose.)

After individual processing, have some sharing from the large group.

**FEELINGS:** Participants will be asked to share with the same neighbor (without going into the story... yet) three feeling words that they would use to describe their experience. How were they feeling during their encounter? Facilitator should share examples from their own story. Examples: I felt trusted. I was very nervous. I had a sense of accomplishment.

After individual processing, have some sharing from the large group.

**FOUNDINGS:** Participants will be asked to share with the same neighbor one or two things that they have learned or gained from that experience that they feel impacted them in the future (without going into the story... yet). Facilitator should share examples from their own story. (Examples: I learned what an honor it was to be allowed to kiss him. From that moment on, I wanted him to know my family and friends. I learned the importance of breath mints.)

After individual processing, have some sharing from the large group.

**STORY-TELLING;** Allow the participants, if they so choose, to share the full story of their memory “a first *positive* and or an early *significant* experience of physical affection within a love/ dating relationship.” Facilitator should share examples from their own story.

## **HEADLINES**

### **10 Minutes**

Facilitator should attempt to make a conscious shift in the agenda for the group - - - asking for a “reality check” or a “tone change” related to our young people.

Invite participants to write a headline for an article in a Catholic Newspaper (The Catholic Review) regarding what “you wish young people know about sexuality” Summarizing the critical few words for young people to know from their parents about sexuality. Rule: Headlines are short. (Note: Do not allow from group discussion but ask for immediate “gut” reactions.)

While some responses will reflect a positive message, many will lean towards caution.

Debrief this experience in contrast to the general good mood that was experienced with the previous “Memory Lane” activity. Invite participants to analyze why this occurs.

## CHURCH

10 Minutes

From an interview with Pope Benedict XVI on German Television- August 5, 2006

**Interviewer:** The issue of the family. A month ago you were in Valencia for the World Meeting of Families. Anyone who was listening carefully, as we tried to do at Radio Vatican, noticed how you never mentioned the words "homosexual marriage," you never spoke about abortion, or about contraception. Careful observers thought that was very interesting. Clearly your idea is to go around the world preaching the faith rather than as an "apostle of morality." What are your comments?

**Pope Benedict:** Obviously, yes. Actually I should say I had only two opportunities to speak for 20 minutes. And when you have so little time you can't say everything you want to say about "no." Firstly you have to know what we really want, right? *Christianity, Catholicism, isn't a collection of prohibitions: it's a positive option.* It's very important that we look at it again because this idea has almost completely disappeared today. We've heard so much about what is not allowed that now it's time to say: *we have a positive idea to offer*, that man and woman are made for each other, that the scale of sexuality, eros, agape, indicates the level of love and it's in this way that marriage develops, first of all, as a joyful and blessing-filled encounter between a man and a woman, and then the family, that guarantees continuity among generations and through which generations are reconciled to each other and even cultures can meet. So, firstly it's important to stress what we want. Secondly, we can also see why we don't want something. I believe we need to see and reflect on the fact that it's not a Catholic invention that man and woman are made for each other, so that humanity can go on living: all cultures know this. As far as abortion is concerned, it's part of the fifth, not the sixth, commandment: "Thou shalt not kill!" We have to presume this is obvious and always stress that the human person begins in the mother's womb and remains a human person until his or her last breath. *The human person must always be respected as a human person. But all this is clearer if you say it first in a positive way.*

Discuss.

Re-Do Headlines activity providing parents the opportunity to "positively state" a set of human sexuality headlines.

## THREE ESSENTIAL LESSONS (Lecture Portion)

10 Minutes

Lesson One: We are created in the image and likeness of God. Each human interaction is between one image and likeness of God and another. Therefore, each interaction is an opportunity for holiness and sacredness. Unfortunately, we are also flawed human beings capable of disobedience to God's will. God's will for us, body and soul, is we are created to love.

Lesson Two: There are four characteristics of love are found in Pope Paul VI's encyclical *Of Human Life*. ) These not only describe the fullness of love but also describe the intention of marital love as well.

- Free - There are no conditions placed on God's love. God has made an active choice to love and always continues to act upon that choice.
- Full – God's love is complete- God gives himself completely without reservation or qualification. God is invested in you.
- Faithful – God love is consistent and is not diminished by the unfaithfulness of the other. God keeps his commitments
- Fruitful - God's love is generous. It is a love that does not limit but generates more love. God's love is a love of abundance and is life-giving.

Lesson Three: Any attempt to exploit another image and likeness of God as an object is a violation of the respect and dignity of the human person. It is sinful and wrong. We must speak out about this and equip our young people to be aware of violations against the dignity of the person, especially when this abuse comes from adults or people in positions of power.

#### **REVIEW CREATED TO LOVE RESOURCE**

**10 Minutes**

An outline of the program, its purpose, and which model the parish will be utilizing will be covered. This is also the opportunity for the parents to ask questions regarding the program, content, etc.

#### **OUR LIVES AS WITNESS AND MODELS TO TRUE LOVE**

**10 Minutes**

Discipleship can not be taught from a book, neither can the richness of our church's understanding of the gift of human sexuality.

Ask parents to brainstorm and dialogue on concrete ways that they might better serve as witnesses and models of the church's teaching on sexuality.

#### **PRAYER**

Creator God, you have blessed us with the joy and opportunity to serve as parents. May we continue to be faithful guides to our young people. Send forth your Spirit to strengthen us to serve as models of love, fidelity, and joy for them.

We pray that we might have the will and the patience to encourage our children so that they too might follow your teaching and designs for their adult lives. We seek that your will is achieved in the lives of our family as we pray the prayer that Jesus taught.

Our Father. . . .



# Created to Love

## Middle School Session

## Healthy Relationships

### Theological Rationale

**CCC 2331** God is love and in himself he lives a mystery of personal loving communion. Creating the human race in his own image . . . God inscribed in the humanity of man and woman the *vocation*, and thus the capacity and responsibility, *of love* and communion.

**CCC 2332** *Sexuality* affects all aspects of the human person in the unity of his body and soul. It especially concerns affectivity, the capacity to love and to procreate, and in a more general way the aptitude for forming bonds of communion with others.

"Faced with a culture that largely reduces human sexuality to the level of something commonplace, since it interprets and lives it in a reductive and impoverished way by linking it solely with the body and with selfish pleasure, the educational service of parents must aim firmly at a training in the area of sex that is truly and fully personal: for sexuality is an enrichment of the whole person — body, emotions and soul — and it manifests its inmost meaning in leading the person to the gift of self in love". JP II

*Friendships* are very important in this period. According to local social conditions and customs, adolescence is a time when young people enjoy more autonomy in their relations with others and in the hours they keep in family life. Without taking away their rightful autonomy, when necessary, parents should know how to say "no" to their children and, at the same time, they should know how to cultivate a taste in their children for what is beautiful, noble and true. (TMHS 107)

Individually, as male or female, human beings reflect creation in the image and likeness of God by having an intellect, a free will, and the capacity of free truly human and moral acts. A person's gender is also constitutive of his or her nature and spirituality. (CFCL I, A, 2)





# Created to Love

## Middle School Prayer Service

### Healthy Relationships

#### Opening Prayer

God of all love, you gave us one another that we may know and share love. You have given us our friends and all those who love and trust us in our lives. Grant us the strength to build healthy friendships and relationships that are strongly rooted in You. **Amen.**

#### First Reading Proverbs 4: 18-19, 23-27

The path of the righteous is like the light of dawn,  
That shines brighter and brighter until the full day.  
The way of the wicked is like darkness;  
They do not know over what they stumble.  
Watch over your heart with all diligence,  
For from it flow the springs of life.  
Put away from you a deceitful mouth  
And put devious speech far from you.  
Let your eyes look directly ahead  
And let your gaze be fixed straight in front of you.  
Watch the path of your feet  
And all your ways will be established.  
Do not turn to the right nor to the left;  
Turn your foot from evil.

The Word of the Lord  
**All: Thanks be to God**

#### Psalm 31

**Response: Lord, be my rock of safety.**

In you, O Lord, I take refuge; Let me never be put to shame.  
In your justice rescue me, incline your ear to hear me, make haste to deliver me!

**Response: Lord, be my rock of safety.**

Be my rock of refuge, A stronghold to give me safety.  
You are my rock and my fortress; For your name's sake you will lead and guide me.





**Response: Lord, be my rock of safety.**

Let your face shine upon your servant; Save me in your kindness.  
Take courage and be stouthearted, all you who hope in the Lord.

**Response: Lord, be my rock of safety.**

**SECOND READING MATTHEW 7: 24 - 29**

A Reading from the Gospel of Matthew

"Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock. Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell--and great was its fall." When Jesus had finished these words, the crowds were amazed at His teaching; for He was teaching them as one having authority, and not as their scribes.

The Gospel of the Lord

**All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

**Activity:** (To be shared in small groups of four or five)

We have come together to talk about strong relationships. We hear in the Gospel Jesus' story about the man who built his house on a strong foundation—that "it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock" (Matthew 7:25)

Talk about in small group who the "rocks" are in your life.

- Who are some of the relationships that help to make you who you are?
- What are some of the qualities of those relationships?
- Write on the rocks a couple of the names of the people "who" are rocks for you.

Then, as a community, place the rocks in the form of a path around the prayer space.

**Closing Prayer**

Loving God, we stand on the rock of your love. We are grateful for those you have given us in our lives that have helped to give us a firm foundation in our faith and our knowledge of who we are as members of your family. We ask that you form us to be strong supports for others in relationship and that our relationships be healthy and life-giving. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**





# Created to Love

## Middle School

### Healthy Relationships/ Abstinence

## Lesson Plan

It is anticipated that participants will be attending in family sets only and that young people will NOT be unaccompanied throughout the presentation. Unaccompanied young people place a factor of risk into this effort in two ways:

- Parental consent is necessary when addressing catechesis for human sexuality. It is implied by the parent's presence.
- If an unaccompanied young person was present throughout the program, each adult who interacts with that young person should be STAND trained.

#### **The Point**

As human beings, we are created in the image and likeness of God. As God's creations, we are gifted and good.

#### **Learning Objectives**

During this presentation it is essential to communicate the following:

- Human life is a gift from God.
- God loves us and intends for us to reflect that love to one another through healthy relationships and expressions of love which show respect for ourselves, one another, and God's will for our lives.
- Unfortunately, there are times when others violate the dignity of another human person. When this happens, it is not the survivor's fault. The dignity of the human person is not diminished by having experienced rape or abuse.

#### **Preparation Check List**

- Rocks, markers—enough for each participant to have one with space for writing
- Newsprint, markers, easel
- Remind participants that they need to bring a “quick” game for next week, such as card games, trivia cards, etc.
- Copies of “Parent Page” for this lesson

## **Reverse Reports**

10 minutes

All parents should develop sub-groups and develop a list of what it is that young people need to understand about love, dating, and sex.

All young people should develop sub-groups and develop a list of what it is that parents need to understand that they already “know” about love, dating, and sex.

The facilitator should monitor both groups, eliciting responses from the groups as well as assuring that the content is appropriate.

Each set of groups should report in and the facilitator should tally up the responses. Then the facilitator should compare and contrasts both lists.

## **Parental Story-telling**

10 minutes

A birth is a wonderful and sacred thing. With the addition of each person to a family, the family becomes a new beautiful entity. Parents are invited to recount the story of when the young person came to become a member of their family (be it birth, adoption, foster care, etc.). Possible detail prompts could include the following:

- Was the child early, born around the due date, or late? When the parents were waiting for the child to enter the family what were some of the feelings they had at the time?
- Where were the parents before they went to the hospital/ to pick up the child? What were they doing? What were they thinking about?
- What was the moment like when they looked into the eyes of their child for the first time?
- Who received the first phone calls? Who were the first visitors?
- What were the early reactions?
- When you look back, what words best describe how you were feeling at that time?

## **Reverse Role Play**

10 minutes

All parents should develop sub-groups and develop a brief skit portraying (respectfully) the discomfort of young people when talking with adults about love, dating, and sex.

All young people should develop sub-groups and develop a brief skit portraying (respectfully) the discomfort of parents when talking with young people about love, dating, and sex.

The facilitator should monitor both groups, eliciting responses from the groups as well as assuring that the content is appropriate.

Each set of groups should report in and the facilitator should tally up the responses. Then the facilitator should compare and contrast both lists.

### **Life as a Gift from God**

10 minutes

Parents and young people should work together to understand how each new life is a gift from God. Each family set should work to develop a list of five ways that we know life is a gift from God. (In other words, five examples that show how life is a gift from God.)

The facilitator should assemble a list of responses and process it with the entire group

After reviewing the list, parents and young people should prioritize their top three responses (allowing for responses from the larger group to be considered as well.)

### **Gift given or taken?**

5 minutes

Facilitator will offer a brief presentation on how abuses can occur related to our physical interactions with one another. When others abuse, then others attempt to be takers. But the gift is from God and always remains.

Potential signs of an unhealthy relationship and/or abuse include: an imbalance in the power of relationship (indicated by age, experience, social standing, and/or who makes all the decisions or determines the boundaries), secrecy, lack of consent, coercion, lack of empathy, isolation from others, hurtful behavior.

A survivor of abuse maintains the gift from God no matter what others have done. The dignity of the human person is not diminished by having experienced rape or abuse.

### **Waiting for the Gift**

10 minutes

There is a “total giving” that we, as Church, believe is meant to be a part of our sexual intercourse.

Parents are invited to help young people understand what they believe is the total giving, not only within a sexual relationship but, within human interactions.

The facilitator should further share their own example of their understanding of “total giving” based within the context of ADULT maturity. This should cover some of the characteristics of healthy relationships, including respect for boundaries, equality, safety, empathy, nurturing, open communication, trust, the ability to express feelings, privacy (not secrecy).

Finally, the facilitator should make a brief presentation that the Church believes that sex is good, not bad. It is through sexual intercourse that we come to experience the gift of life. But, we believe that that gift is so highly valued, it is right to wait for a mature “total giving” within the commitment of marriage.

Remind the group of the responses they gave earlier about how life is a gift from God.

### **Worth the Wait**

10 minutes

The act of physical intimacy communicates spiritual realities, whether or not they are conscious or intended. It gives great pleasure and comfort. It is a wonderful act of intimacy that conveys so much- Gift, Commitment, Trust, and Affection. Any “intimate act” (hand holding, hugging, kissing, or anything else including “making love”) that does not communicate these things is not really an act of intimacy. It is an act of selfishness. It is important not to confuse intimacy and selfishness.

### **Prayer**

We praise you, Lord,  
For your gentle love for us.

We who are made in your own image  
Are created to love as you have loved us,  
Freely and faithfully.

Strengthen our hearts so that  
We will be witnesses of your love with one another  
And that we, body and soul, may be fully in service of your will.

We ask all this through Christ our Lord,

AMEN

# Created to Love

## Parent Page

### Middle School Session Healthy Relationships/ Abstinence

#### **The Point**

As human beings, we are created in the image and likeness of God. As God's creations, we are gifted and good.

#### **Learning Objectives**

During this presentation we discussed the following:

- Human life is a gift from God.
- God loves us and intends for us to reflect that love to one another through healthy relationships and expressions of love which show respect for ourselves, one another, and God's will for our lives.
- Unfortunately, there are times when others violate the dignity of another human person. When this happens, it is not the survivor's fault. The dignity of the human person is not diminished by having experienced rape or abuse.

#### **What to bring next time**

- A short game such as a deck of cards or trivia questions

#### **Family Discussion Questions**

- What makes an unhealthy relationship?
- What makes a healthy relationship?
- How and why is love meant to be free, full, faithful and fruitful?





# Created to Love

## Middle School Decision Making Session

### Theological Rationale

In proclaiming the Good News of Revelation to the world, evangelization invites men and women to conversion and faith. The call of Jesus, "Repent and believe in the Gospel," (Mk 1:15) continues to resound today by means of the Church's work of evangelization. The Christian faith is, above all, conversion to Jesus Christ, full and sincere adherence to his person and the decision to walk in his footsteps. Faith is a personal encounter with Jesus Christ, making of oneself a disciple of him. This demands a permanent commitment to think like him, to judge like him and to live as he lived. In this way, the believer unites himself to the community of disciples and appropriates the faith of the Church. (*General Directory for Catechesis*, #53)

*Familiaris Consortio*: "The Church is firmly opposed to an often widespread form of imparting sex information dissociated from moral principles. That would merely be an introduction to the experience of pleasure and a stimulus leading to the loss of serenity — while still in the years of innocence — by opening the way to vice".

**CCC 2339** Chastity includes an apprenticeship in self-mastery which is a training in human freedom. The alternative is clear: either man governs his passions and finds peace, or he lets himself be dominated by them and becomes unhappy.<sup>126</sup> "Man's dignity therefore requires him to act out of conscious and free choice, as moved and drawn in a personal way from within, and not by blind impulses in himself or by mere external constraint. Man gains such dignity when, ridding himself of all slavery to the passions, he presses forward to his goal by freely choosing what is good and, by his diligence and skill, effectively secures for himself the means suited to this end.

**CCC 2341** The virtue of chastity comes under the cardinal virtue of temperance, which seeks to permeate the passions and appetites of the senses with reason.



# Created to Love

## Middle School

## Decision Making

## Prayer Service

### Opening Prayer

Loving God,

We are abundantly blessed with the ability to make decisions in our lives. Help us to make decisions that are consistent with your love for us and our love for others. Help us to develop our critical thinking skills, set aside precious time for reflection, and continue to grow our relationship with you in prayer. **Amen.**

### First Reading Colossians 3: 12-17

A Reading from St. Paul to the Colossians,

So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. Beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful. Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.

The Word of the Lord

**All: Thanks be to God**

### Psalm 34

**Response: I will bless the Lord at all times**

I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall be always in my mouth.  
My soul will glory in the Lord that the poor may hear and be glad.

**Response: I will bless the Lord at all times**

Glorify the Lord with me; let us exalt his name together.  
I sought the Lord, who answered me, delivered me from all my fears.



**Response: I will bless the Lord at all times**

Look to God that you may be radiant with joy and your faces may not blush for shame. In my misfortune I called, the Lord heard and saved me from all distress.

**Response: I will bless the Lord at all times**

The angel of the Lord, encamps around those who fear him, and delivers all who fear God. Learn to savor how good the Lord is; happy are those who take refuge in him.

**Response: I will bless the Lord at all times**

**Second Reading Philippians 4:8-9**

A Reading from St. Paul to the Philippians,

Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things. The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

The Word of the Lord

**All: Thanks be to God**

**Activity:** (To be shared in small groups of four or five)

The words of St. Paul, tell us, “beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.” (Colossians 3:14) In your small groups, share your answers to the following questions.

- Who are some of the people we love? Who are some of the people who love us?
- What are some ways that these people show us their love? How do we show our love in return?

**Closing Prayer**

Generous God, we thank you for the opportunity to be together as a community. Guide us as we daily “put on love” with our families, with our friends and with all of your people. Help us to be people of holiness who make thoughtful, prayerful decisions throughout our lives. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



# Created to Love

## Middle School

## Decision Making

## Lesson Plan

It is anticipated that participants will be attending in family sets only and that young people will NOT be unaccompanied throughout the presentation. Unaccompanied young people place a fact of risk into this effort in two ways:

- Parental consent is necessary when addressing catechesis for human sexuality. It is implied by the parent's presence.
- If an unaccompanied young person was present throughout the program, each adult who interacts with that young person should be STAND trained.

### **The Point**

God created each one of us with free will to make decisions which direct our lives. Along with this free will comes the responsibility to live a moral life which reflects God's loving presence in the world.

### **Learning Objectives**

During this presentation, it is essential to communicate the following:

- God gave each of us the freedom to make decisions for ourselves.
- God's love is unconditional, complete, consistent and generous. It is a model of the love that we should offer to one another.
- Love can be exploited and twisted to become controlling, manipulative, and limiting—not at all the generous gift that God intends for it to be. We must make decisions that reflect love as God intends it to be—not the shallow, shadow of love to which humans reduce it.
- Healthy relationships have boundaries that respect the dignity of each person involved.
- Parents and young people should develop a plan and role play how the young person can ask for immediate assistance if they are in a dangerous and/or uncomfortable situation.
- Marriage is a sacrament. Within the context of marriage, sexual intercourse is not merely a physical act for one's pleasure but is the outward sign (for the married couple) of the inward grace (God's love for them).

### **Preparation Check List**

- Handouts “Making Tough Choices” and “Personal Plan for Dating”
- Newsprint, markers, easel
- Some quick activities—cards, checkers, trivia cards, pen & paper—for the icebreaker
- Copies of “Parent Page” for this lesson

### **Ice-breaker/ Starting point**

15 minutes

At the previous session, all participants are asked to bring a deck of cards or a “quick” board game (checkers, trivia, etc). As the icebreaker, each family will have a few minutes of family time to play a short game of their choosing. If participants do not have their own game, you can provide some or distribute paper and pens for written games such as hangman or tic-tac-toe. The game is less important than having the young people and their parent(s) interacting with one another.

### **Making Tough Choices**

15 minutes

*(See handout)*

You and your family have just survived the crash of a small plane. Both the pilot and co-pilot were killed in the crash. It is mid-January, and you are in Northern Canada. The daily temperature is 25 below zero, and the night time temperature is 40 below zero. There is snow on the ground, and the countryside is wooded with several creeks criss-crossing the area. The nearest town is 20 miles away. You are all dressed in city clothes appropriate for a business meeting. Your group of survivors managed to salvage the following items:

- A ball of steel wool
- A small ax
- A loaded .45-caliber pistol
- Can of Crisco shortening
- Newspapers (one per person)
- Cigarette lighter (without fluid)
- Extra shirt and pants for each survivor
- 20 x 20 ft. piece of heavy-duty canvas
- A sectional air map made of plastic
- One quart of 100-proof whiskey
- A compass
- Family-size chocolate bars (one per person)

Your task as a family is to list the above 12 items in order of importance for your survival. List the uses for each. You **MUST** come to agreement as a group.

## **Explanation**

Mid-January is the coldest time of year in Northern Canada. The first problem the survivors face is the preservation of body heat and the protection against its loss. This problem can be solved by building a fire, minimizing movement and exertion, using as much insulation as possible, and constructing a shelter.

The participants have just crash-landed. Many individuals tend to overlook the enormous shock reaction this has on the human body, and the deaths of the pilot and co-pilot increases the shock. Decision-making under such circumstances is extremely difficult. Such a situation requires a strong emphasis on the use of reasoning for making decisions and for reducing fear and panic. Shock would be shown in the survivors by feelings of helplessness, loneliness, hopelessness, and fear. These feelings have brought about more fatalities than perhaps any other cause in survival situations. Certainly the state of shock means the movement of the survivors should be at a minimum, and that an attempt to calm them should be made.

Before taking off, a pilot has to file a flight plan which contains vital information such as the course, speed, estimated time of arrival, type of aircraft, and number of passengers. Search-and-rescue operations begin shortly after the failure of a plane to appear at its destination at the estimated time of arrival.

The 20 miles to the nearest town is a long walk under even ideal conditions, particularly if one is not used to walking such distances. In this situation, the walk is even more difficult due to shock, snow, dress, and water barriers. It would mean almost certain death from freezing and exhaustion. At temperatures of minus 25 to minus 40, the loss of body heat through exertion is a very serious matter.

Once the survivors have found ways to keep warm, their next task is to attract the attention of search planes. Thus, all the items the group has salvaged must be assessed for their value in signaling the group's whereabouts.

*The ranking of the survivors items was made by Mark Wanvig, a former instructor in survival training for the Reconnaissance School of the 101st Division of the U.S. Army. Mr. Wanvig currently conducts wilderness survival training programs in the Minneapolis, Minnesota area. This survival simulation game is used in military training classrooms.*

## **Rankings:**

### **1. Cigarette lighter (without fluid)**

The gravest danger facing the group is exposure to cold. The greatest need is for a source of warmth and the second greatest need is for signaling devices. This makes building a fire the first order of business. Without matches, something is needed to produce sparks, and even without fluid, a cigarette lighter can do that.

2. Ball of steel wool

To make a fire, the survivors need a means of catching the sparks made by the cigarette lighter. This is the best substance for catching a spark and supporting a flame, even if the steel wool is a little wet.

3. Extra shirt and pants for each survivor

Besides adding warmth to the body, clothes can also be used for shelter, signaling, bedding, bandages, string (when unraveled), and fuel for the fire.

4. Can of Crisco shortening

This has many uses. A mirror-like signaling device can be made from the lid. After shining the lid with steel wool, it will reflect sunlight and generate 5 to 7 million candlepower. This is bright enough to be seen beyond the horizon. While this could be limited somewhat by the trees, a member of the group could climb a tree and use the mirrored lid to signal search planes. If they had no other means of signaling than this, they would have a better than 80% chance of being rescued within the first day. There are other uses for this item. It can be rubbed on exposed skin for protection against the cold. When melted into an oil, the shortening is helpful as fuel. When soaked into a piece of cloth, melted shortening will act like a candle. The empty can is useful in melting snow for drinking water. It is much safer to drink warmed water than to eat snow, since warm water will help retain body heat. Water is important because dehydration will affect decision-making. The can is also useful as a cup.

5. 20 x 20 foot piece of canvas

The cold makes shelter necessary, and canvas would protect against wind and snow (canvas is used in making tents). Spread on a frame made of trees, it could be used as a tent or a wind screen. It might also be used as a ground cover to keep the survivors dry. Its shape, when contrasted with the surrounding terrain, makes it a signaling device.

6. Small ax

Survivors need a constant supply of wood in order to maintain the fire. The ax could be used for this as well as for clearing a sheltered campsite, cutting tree branches for ground insulation, and constructing a frame for the canvas tent.

7. Family size chocolate bars (one per person)

Chocolate will provide some food energy. Since it contains mostly carbohydrates, it supplies the energy without making digestive demands on the body.

8. Newspapers (one per person)

These are useful in starting a fire. They can also be used as insulation under clothing when rolled up and placed around a person's arms and legs. A newspaper can also be used as a verbal signaling device when rolled up in a megaphone-shape. It could also provide reading material for recreation.

9. Loaded .45-caliber pistol

The pistol provides a sound-signaling device. (The international distress signal is 3 shots fired in rapid succession). There have been numerous cases of survivors going undetected because they were too weak to make a loud enough noise to attract attention. The butt of the pistol could be used as a hammer, and the powder from the shells will assist in fire building. By placing a small bit of cloth in a cartridge emptied of its bullet, one can start a fire by firing the gun at dry wood on the ground. The pistol also has some serious disadvantages. Anger, frustration, impatience, irritability, and lapses of rationality may increase as the group awaits rescue. The availability of a lethal weapon is a danger to the group under these conditions. Although a pistol could be used in hunting, it would take an expert marksman to kill an animal with it. Then the animal would have to be transported to the crash site, which could prove difficult to impossible depending on its size.

10. Quart of 100 proof whiskey

The only uses of whiskey are as an aid in fire building and as a fuel for a torch (made by soaking a piece of clothing in the whiskey and attaching it to a tree branch). The empty bottle could be used for storing water. The danger of whiskey is that someone might drink it, thinking it would bring warmth. Alcohol takes on the temperature it is exposed to, and a drink of minus 30 degrees Fahrenheit whiskey would freeze a person's esophagus and stomach. Alcohol also dilates the blood vessels in the skin, resulting in chilled blood being carried back to the heart, resulting in a rapid loss of body heat. Thus, a drunk person is more likely to get hypothermia than a sober person is.

11. Compass

Because a compass might encourage someone to try to walk to the nearest town, it is a dangerous item. Its only redeeming feature is that it could be used as a reflector of sunlight (due to its glass top).

12. Sectional air map made of plastic

This is also among the least desirable of the items because it will encourage individuals to try to walk to the nearest town. Its only useful feature is as a ground cover to keep someone dry.

**How to score**

Each team should list its top 5 choices in order prior to seeing the answer sheet. To award points, look at the ranking numbers on this answer sheet. Award points to each team's top choices according to the numbers here. For example, the map would earn 12 points, while the steel wool would earn 2 points. Lowest score wins (and survives).

**Making Tough Choices- An Analysis**

5 minutes

How were we regarding our decision making as a family team? How well did we listen to each other? What did we learn from our working together on this?

## **Love is a decision**

10 minutes

Because we are created in God's image and likeness: we understand that Love should be...

- Free - There are no conditions placed on God's love. God has made an active choice to love and always continues to act upon that choice.
- Full – God's love is complete- God gives himself completely without reservation or qualification. God is invested in you.
- Faithful – God love is consistent and is not diminished by the unfaithfulness of the other. God keeps his commitments
- Fruitful - God's love is generous. It is a love that does not limit but generates more love. God's love is a love of abundance and is life-giving.

(the four characteristics of love are found in Pope Paul VI's encyclical *Of Human Life.* )

Invite families to work together to identify how relationships might be described as free, full, faithful and fruitful. Are there examples from our family's stories and/or from movies, TV, or books?

What decisions would we need to make to find and experience love like this?

## **Our concern**

10 minutes

Not everyone experiences love this way. As parents we remain concerned that you might experience love in the following ways

- Possessive - This is often evidenced by the language we use, "my" boy/girlfriend, "my" prom/wedding vs. "ours". Jealousy is the clearest symptoms of this.
- Selective – This is a 'pick and choose" mentality about a friendship/relationship. We choose to be in relationship for the good or easy times but avoid the difficult.
- Fragile - We always have to be very careful as to not offend or to do damage to the relationship.
- Limiting - It always seems that the relationship is more about getting than giving

A relationship is unhealthy when another attempts to "control" the relationship by physical or emotional manipulation.

Invite families to work together to identify how relationships might be described as possessive, selective, fragile and limiting. Are there examples from our family's stories and/or from movies, TV, or books?

What decisions would we need to make to avoid relationships like his?

**Boundaries**

10 minutes

It is essential that trust be a part of any dating relationship. Not only does that trust need to be established between those who are dating, but parents also need to be able to trust both their young person as well as their date.

There was an old TV show known as “Ten Rules for Dating my Daughter.” As a family, sit and strategize together what might be the appropriate rules for whenever the young person begins dating.

**Emergency Contact**

10 minutes

Often, many families have developed a code to communicate between parent and young person when a young person is in need of assistance without immediate judgment. When a young person, uses this code, it is a request for assistance in decision making and problem solving. Analysis of the situation can be reserved until the immediate concerns have been addresses. The code phrase should be usable over the phone by the young person - - - Example “What? You had banana pudding for desert tonight” (Friends overhear banana pudding, Parent hears Help!)

Parents and Teens should role play and practice this, both pretending over the phone as well as asking face-to-face for immediate assistance.

**Sacrament**

5 minutes

Definition: Sacraments are outward signs of inward grace, instituted by Christ for our sanctification.

Let’s review..... You’ve seen sacraments, You’ve experienced grace (a help or gift from God) in those sacraments. Review each of the following sacraments, asking participants to identify the signs of the sacraments and the graces received through them. If they have difficulty, guide them through the examples below.

<u>Sacrament</u>		<u>Signs</u>	<u>Grace</u>
Baptism	-	waters	- forgiveness of sin, membership in community
Reconciliation	-	sign of peace	- forgiveness of sin,
Eucharist	-	bread, wine	- Communion with Jesus and community
Confirmation	-	oils	- sealed with Spirit and community

**Sacramentality of Relationship**

5 minutes

Ask the young people to do the very same with Marriage. They’ve seen weddings. What’s the sign or symbol?



Allow them to define the meaning of rings, unity candle, “the kiss,” the public vows, the passing from father to betrothed after walking down the aisle. Let them know that all of these are “close” but not it.

### **The Marital Act**

15 minutes

Ask them if they have ever heard the phrase “the Marital Act?” Ask them what it means. Make sure that it is clearly identified as sexual intercourse. Ask why they believe that it is understood as “the Marital Act.”

The Church believes that sexual intercourse can and should be the outward sign (for the married couple) of the inward grace (of God’s love for them).

Remind the participants of the definition of God’s Love from the Healthy Relationships segment of this process.

Because we are created in God’s image and likeness:

- Free - There are no conditions placed on God’s love. God has made an active choice to love and always continues to act upon that choice.
- Full – God’s love is complete- God gives himself completely without reservation or qualification. God is invested in you.
- Faithful – God love is consistent and is not diminished by the unfaithfulness of the other. God keeps his commitments
- Fruitful - God’s love is generous. It is a love that does not limit but generates more love. God’s love is a love of abundance and is life-giving.

(the four characteristics of love are found in Pope Paul VI’s encyclical *Of Human Life.* )

Ask the Participants, to redefine their understanding of Sexual Intercourse through Marital Love as Free, Full, Faithful, and Fruitful.

Remind participants that any sexual experience that is not equal or free is not an expression of love.

Invite Participants to explore how sexual intercourse outside a marriage relationship (this includes pre-marital sex and/or extra-marital affairs... aka adultery) fails to live up to their definitions.

### **Sex is Good:**

10 minutes

Make no mistake. The Church thinks that sex is good. It’s part of God’s will and design for who we are.

It gives great pleasure and comfort. It is a wonderful act of intimacy that conveys so much- Gift, Commitment, Trust, and Affection. Any “intimate act” (hand holding,

hugging, kissing, or anything else including “making love”) that does not communicate these things in not really an act of intimacy. It is an act of selfishness. It is important not to confuse intimacy and selfishness. Acts of selfishness do not keep us open to the grace of the Lord’s friendship. They will confuse us and others about the God’s purpose for the human body which is created to love and not to “use.” Selfish acts are sinful but the gift of sex within marriage is an intimate act that communicates gift, commitment, trust, affection, respect. In other words it is a reflection of God’s love.

**Note to Self:**

10 minutes

Participants and parents will be invited to write out a personal plan for dating and the possibility of marriage. (*See handouts. There are separate pages for students and parents.*)

**EXAMPLES:**

**Motivations:**

- I date because I enjoy having an escort to parties and other social events.
- I date because it is better to go to movies and other things with someone so that we can discuss it afterwards.
- I date because I do enjoy “being close” to “someone special.”

**Goals:**

- I am looking for a partner with whom I can share various parts of my life.
- I am looking for a partner with whom I can share my feelings.
- I am looking for “someone special” date.

After completing this task, students and parents should compare their responses.

What would this list say about you? How would a future date read it? How would your future spouse read it?

**Prayer**

We praise you, Lord,  
For your gentle love for us.

We who are made in your own image  
Are created to love as you have loved us,  
Freely and faithfully.

Strengthen our hearts so that  
We will be witnesses of your love with one another  
And that we, body and soul, may be fully in service of your will.

We ask all this through Christ our Lord, AMEN.

# Making Tough Choices

You and your family have just survived the crash of a small plane. Both the pilot and co-pilot were killed in the crash. It is mid-January, and you are in Northern Canada. The daily temperature is 25 below zero, and the night time temperature is 40 below zero. There is snow on the ground, and the countryside is wooded with several creeks criss-crossing the area. The nearest town is 20 miles away. You are all dressed in city clothes appropriate for a business meeting. Your group of survivors managed to salvage the following items:

- A ball of steel wool
- A small ax
- A loaded .45-caliber pistol
- Can of Crisco shortening
- Newspapers (one per person)
- Cigarette lighter (without fluid)
- Extra shirt and pants for each survivor
- 20 x 20 ft. piece of heavy-duty canvas
- A sectional air map made of plastic
- One quart of 100-proof whiskey
- A compass
- Family-size chocolate bars (one per person)



Your task as a family is to list the above 12 items in order of importance for your survival. List the uses for each. You **MUST** come to agreement as a group.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_
11. \_\_\_\_\_
12. \_\_\_\_\_

# Personal Plan for Dating and Marriage (Maybe?)

## STUDENT PAGE

People date for lots of reasons. We are all looking for different qualities in our potential partner. Take some time to think about and respond to the following statements. After completing this task, compare answers with your parents.

### What are my reasons for dating?

I date because . . .

### What are my relationship goals?

I am looking for a partner who . . .

### Discussion Questions:

What does this list say about you?

How would a future date read it?

How would your parents read it?

How would your future spouse read it?

# Personal Plan for Dating and Marriage (Maybe?)

## PARENT PAGE

People date others for lots of reasons. We all look for different qualities in our potential partner. How would you like your son/daughter to respond? What values do you want to communicate about dating?

### What are some reasons for dating?

Date because . . .

### What are good relationship goals?

Look for a partner who . . .

### Discussion Questions:

What does this list communicate to your son/ daughter?

How would your son/ daughter read it?

# Created to Love

## Parent Page

### Middle School Session Decision-Making

#### The Point

God created each one of us with free will to make decisions which direct our lives. Along with this free will comes the responsibility to live a moral life which reflects God's loving presence in the world.

#### Learning Objectives

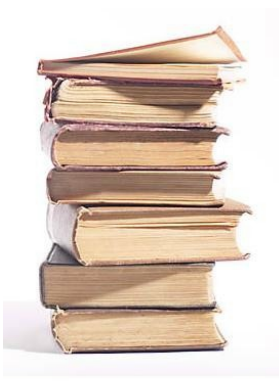
During this presentation, we discussed the following:

- God gave each of us the freedom to make decisions for ourselves.
- God's love is unconditional, complete, consistent and generous. It is a model of the love that we should offer to one another.
- Love can be exploited and twisted to become controlling, manipulative, and limiting—not at all the generous gift that God intends for it to be. We must make decisions that reflect love as God intends it to be—not the shallow, shadow of love to which humans reduce it.
- Healthy relationships have boundaries that respect the dignity of each person involved.
- Parents and young people should develop a plan and role play how the young person can ask for immediate assistance if they are in a dangerous and/or uncomfortable situation.
- Marriage is a sacrament. Within the context of marriage, sexual intercourse is not merely a physical act for one's pleasure but is the outward sign (for the married couple) of the inward grace (God's love for them).

#### Family Discussion Questions

- We talked a little bit about how you can ask for help if you're in a dangerous or uncomfortable situation. Let's talk about it a little more. How can I help you you're in a situation like that? What is plan?
- Remember that God's love is free, full, faithful and fruitful. How does that impact the what you are looking for in your relationships?





# Created to Love

## Evaluation of Child Protection Curriculum within Other Resources

Listed below are several of the most commonly used resources for teaching about child protection and/or human sexuality within a Catholic context. Each of these has its own areas of focus as well as areas that could be supplemented to more fully address the broad scope of catechesis for human sexuality. This evaluation is not intended as a criticism of the materials listed below, but rather as a tool to guide catechists in supplementing their curriculum to provide the most comprehensive youth protection education possible. As always, it is important for catechists to maintain awareness that the young people they instruct may have experienced some form of abuse and/or may be currently dealing with it. Sensitivity, openness and trust are essential to guiding young people to a healthy understanding of God’s gift of human sexuality, as well as empowering them to seek help when they need it.

**Benziger Family Life: Grade 7, Fourth Edition.** Benziger. Comment: This text includes a section about sexual abuse. It would be helpful to supplement with information about victims and offenders, including how to seek help.

**Benziger Family Life: Grade 8, Fourth Edition.** Benziger. Comment: This text does not repeat the themes about boundaries and abuse covered in grade 7, so it would be important to refresh these topics in grade 8. The section about families focuses mostly on happy, functional families. It would be helpful to supplement this section by addressing unhappiness in families.

**Benziger Family Life: Grade 6, Fourth Edition.** Benziger. Comment: This text covers a wide range of topics—from diversity to childbirth to economics. Along with the information imparted, it would be helpful to supplement with more discussions about emotions and relationships.

**Building Catholic Character: Developing Christian Life Skills.** Janie Gustafson. Ave Maria Press. Comments: Part 3 (Power) includes lessons on “right” relationships with others, sexual abuse, dating violence, and problems with parents. Students are asked to create group presentations on these and other topics. Part 5 (Love) provides definitions of friendship and healthy relationships.

**Called to Love: Your Christian Vocation.** Mary Kathleen Glavich. Ave Maria Press. Comment: This text includes sections about healthy and troubled families but does not discuss sexual abuse. It is important to supplement with materials about sexual abuse, as well as resources to help young people in troubling situations to find help.

**Challenge: Faith Filled Growth, Teacher Manual.** Comment: This manual does briefly cover the topic of “touch.” Teachers may need more guidance about how to discuss sensitive topics, particularly more specific information about what to teach about “touch.”

**Christian Life Choices Part 1: Personal Growth and Development.** Comment: This text provides a great deal of clinical information, including proper vocabulary terms and definitions. There is also a brief statement about date rape. It is important to supplement with information about boundaries and abuse, as well as to find ways to make these topics more interactive and engaging for young people.

**Christian Life Choices Part 3: Christian Marriage.** Comment: Again, this text provides clinical information, as well as some information about adultery and abuse. Supplement with more in-depth discussions about boundaries and abuse, as well as student-centered activities to keep young people engaged.

**Deciding.** Michele McCarty. Comment: This text provides a more comprehensive discussion about forgiveness for abuse. Abuse, itself, is more on the periphery without specific details being provided.

**Discovering: Making Decisions.** Maggie McCarty. Saint Mary’s Press. Comment: This text discusses forgiveness as well as provides an activity to teach “warning signs” to young people. It would be helpful to supplement with information about what to do with the warning signs such as where and to whom to go for help.

**Discovering: Dealing w/ Tough Times.** Marilyn Kielbasa. Comment: This text does include information about seeking help from others. Supplement this resource with discussions about abuse, itself, which the text does to address.

**Discovering: Growing Up sexually.** Michael Carotta and Valerie Vance Duncan. Comment: This curriculum discusses sexual behaviors including one scenario about sexual abuse. Supplement this text with holistic materials about healthy self-image and sexuality—emphasizing the positive elements of human sexuality as well as the emotions and thoughts behind the behaviors.

**Discovering: Becoming Friends.** Jeff Johnson/revised by Marilyn Kielbasa. Comment: This book in the series addresses healthy and unhealthy relationships.



**Discovering: Creating a Christian Lifesyle.** Carl Koch and Virginia Pharr. Comment: This text includes discussions about sexuality, including distorted sexuality (rape, lust, abuse, etc.). It also addresses equality in friendships. It would be helpful to supplement with information about when and who to turn to for help.

**Fully Alive: Grade 7.** Silver Burdett Ginn. Comment: This resource includes a brief discussion of sexual abuse. It may be helpful to expand this discussion and include more student interaction. (out of print)

**Fully Alive: Grade 8.** Silver Burdett Ginn. Comment: This text does include some information about sexual abuse within the family. Supplement with materials about abuse outside the family and include some activities that engage students in learning. (out of print)

**Horizons: Taking Charge: Managing Life's Struggles.** Marilyn Kielbasa and Michael Theisen. Comment: Supplement this text with discussions about boundaries, power, healthy relationships and abuse.

**Living a Moral Life: Gifted and Growing.** Benziger. Comment: This text includes a brief discussion of date rape. Additional lessons about abuse and boundaries would be helpful. .

**Living Our Faith: Morality.** Harcourt. Comment: This text includes brief lessons about sexuality including a brief section about abuse and rape. Supplement with materials about offenders and victims, including how, when and why to seek help.

**Living the Christian Scriptures.** Joel Gorun. Comment: This resource includes a section about healthy relationships and brief discussions about sexual harassment and date rape. It also includes a section about forgiveness. It would be helpful for the catechist to acknowledge in some way that the feelings of people who have been abused and/or experienced severe trauma are complex and may not fit neatly into the definition of forgiveness that is offered in the text. Also supplement with information about how, when, and why to seek help.

**Relating: A Christian Approach to Friendship and Love.** Michele McCarty. Comment: This text includes discussions about marriage and celibacy in the context of the sacredness of human sexuality. It does not cover relationships that are inappropriate for other reasons. It is important for the catechist to point out that while sexuality is a gift from God that must be respected, victims are never to blame for abuse. Supplement this lesson with discussions which show the features of healthy relationships.

**Sex and the Teenager: Choices and Decisions.** Kieran Sawyer. Ave Maria Press. Comments: The chapter on sexual abuse includes statistics, effects, and

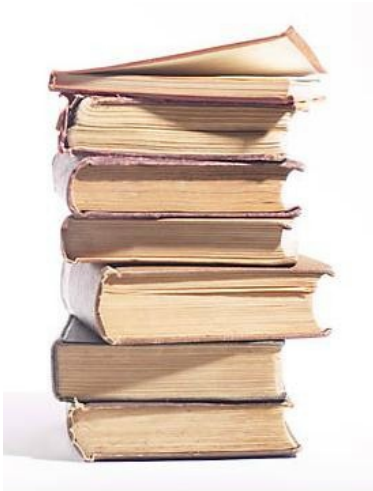
encourages victims to seek help. It also shows that offenders may be people teens know and trust. The text provides case examples and references professionals in the field of child abuse treatment and prevention.

**Valuing Values:Sexuality Education and the Catholic Tradition.** John E. Forliti. .

Comment: This text does address some of the issues of abuse and trust. There is a lesson about the value of keeping promises. It is important for the catechist to balance this with guidelines about when it is important not to keep something a secret. Point out that most offenders are people who are known and trusted. Self-protection strategies are discussed. Supplement these with clear explanations that victims are not to blame for abuse (or failing to protect themselves). Be sure to provide resources for how to get help.

**Your Life in Christ:Foundations of Catholic Morality.** Michael Pennock. Ave Maria Press. Comment: This text does attempt a holistic understanding of sexuality, and discusses abuse and misuse of sexuality as offenses against marriage. Supplement these with more interactive lessons for recognizing victims and offenders and finding help for those who need it.

The Office of Child and Youth Protection and the Division of Youth and Young Adult Ministry are grateful to Allison West, Child Safe Program Manager for Catholic Charities for providing the evaluations of both the written and video supplemental resources for Created to Love.



# Created to Love

## Recommended Video

### Supplemental Material Regarding Child Protection

#### **Videos Available from the Archdiocese of Baltimore Media Resource Center**

*Christian Morality: Human Sexuality.* (6347.04) While this video does not address sexual abuse directly, it does provide a good foundation or starting point to lead into such a discussion. Appropriate for older teens and young adults.

*Katie's Secret.* (Available, but not in catalogue) Grades 7 – 12. Katie is being sexually abused at home by her mother's fiancé. A concerned teacher convinces Katie to tell her story. With support and encouragement she comes to realize that she is not alone. Discovery Education.

*Real Love 7: Love Means Never Having to Say Sorry.* (6141.07) Does not discuss abuse directly yet zeroes in on characteristics of healthy relationships. Asks the question "what is love?" and emphasizes empathy for others.

*Teen Files Flipped: Date Rape/Abusive Relationships.* (Available, but not in catalogue). For grades 6-12. Provides good discussion opportunities. AIMS Multimedia.

*True Love: Relationships.* (6142.04). Focuses on characteristics of healthy relationships including respect, accountability, and communication. Discusses rape but no other forms of abuse. Also raises the issue of secondary virginity.

*Time to Tell: Prevent Child Molestation.* (6180.01) For boys ages 11-14. Explores the problem of sexual molestation through the experiences of three adolescent boys. Boy Scouts of America.

*Youth Protection: Personal Safety Awareness.* (6662.03). For boys 7-12<sup>th</sup> grade. Includes discussions of acquaintance rape, internet safety, peer sexual harassment. Boy Scouts of America.



# Created to Love

## Sexual Abuse Fact Sheet

- Sexual abuse doesn't have to involve sexual intercourse – it can also include touching, fondling, prostitution, pornography, and obscene phone calls
- Studies indicate that one in four girls and one in seven boys have experienced some type of sexual abuse
- Sexual abuse offenders are not usually strangers to children – approximately 90 percent are known to children as friends, acquaintances, family members, teachers, camp counselors, etc.
- Offenders often “groom” their victims, building up trust and then betraying that trust. Sometimes offenders lead children to believe that the abuse was the child's fault. *Children are NEVER to blame for the abusive actions of adults.*
- Studies of offenders show that there is no “typical offender” – they often look just like anyone else.
- Victims of sexual abuse may cope in many ways. Some victims may appear withdrawn, while others may be over-achievers in school. You cannot always tell by someone's appearance or behavior whether or not they have been abused, although victims of sexual abuse are typically not as involved with their peers as other children.
- Sexual abuse can have many long-term effects on its victims. These include problems with self-esteem and self-concept, problems with interpersonal relationships, problems with school and academics, and sexual abuse can sometimes even lead to violent or self-destructive behaviors.
- It is believed that up to 90% of victims never tell anyone about their abuse. Many people who do tell do not tell right away, but rather wait weeks, months, or – in many cases – years, to disclose. *It is never too late to tell someone about abuse.*



# Created to Love

## Responding to Disclosures in Ways That Promote Trust and Healing

### What to do for the child.....

**1. Remain calm. Allow the child to speak and tell their story.** Remember that this particular child has chosen you, a particular person, to tell because they trust you, believe in you, and feel comforted in your presence. **Breathe.**

**2. Be supportive. Listen.** Provide encouragement through words and body language. Lean forward, focus on the child, nod to indicate that you are listening. Use open-ended questions and phrases such as “Can you tell me more about that?” “Uh huh,” and “What happened next?”

**3. Remain neutral in tone. Be aware of facial expressions.** Expressions of shock, anger or disbelief may inhibit the child from continuing his or her story.

**4. Refrain from asking closed-ended and leading questions.** Closed ended questions are questions that lead to a yes or no response, such as “Did this happen every night?” These questions limit the amount of information you can accurately gather from the child. Open-ended questions, on the other hand, allow children to tell their story in their own words. Leading questions, questions that suggest detailed information about people, places, and events, may confuse children by suggesting information to a child that causes them to remember events inaccurately. “Did Uncle Bill touch you in your private places under the covers?” is one example.

**5. Congratulate him or her for sharing.** Acknowledge that sharing must have been very difficult and that they did the right thing by telling you about the abuse.

**6. Respect the privacy of the child** by not telling any more people about the abuse than those who absolutely need to know.

**7. MOST IMPORTANTLY, tell the child repeatedly that the abuse was not his or her fault, and that s/he has the right to feel safe.** Children often blame themselves for the abuse. Some perpetrators, in fact, convince children that they “wanted it” or “enjoyed it.” Other children may feel guilty either because they may have experienced some pleasurable sensations as a result of the abuse, or because they did not disclose the abuse sooner. From a developmental perspective, children are not able to provide informed consent to sexual activity of any type and, therefore, are NEVER to blame.

**8. Finally, remember that your job is not to investigate the allegation,** but rather to listen and provide support to the child and make the report to social services.

### **What NOT to do or say....**

**1. Do not confront the offender.** You may put you or the child at risk of harm, and you may compromise an investigation.

**2. Do not offer empty promises, such as “everything will be okay.”** Children who are abused by caretakers will likely experience many losses as a result of the abuse and may be temporarily or permanently separated from their family, their home, their friends, their pets, their school. To a young child, this is not “okay.” Try to refrain from offering the child any picture of what the future may hold, other than to suggest that they did the right thing because now s/he can get the help they need to feel safe.

**3. Do not offer promises of which you are not certain,** such as that the abuser will be sent to jail. Evidence suggests that arrests are made in only about one in four cases of CSA.

**4. Do not say anything bad about the abuser,** particularly since it is often someone the child knows or the child cares about. Young children are often not capable of understanding that someone they love and trust could be capable of doing something harmful to them.



## Created to Love

# Reporting Child Abuse or Neglect

Maryland requires that any person who suspects child abuse or neglect report it to the appropriate authorities. It does **NOT** require **PROOF** that abuse or neglect has occurred before reporting. Incidents are to be reported as soon as they are suspected. Professionals such as social workers, health practitioners and educators who knowingly fail to report suspected abuse of a child may be subject to professional sanctions by their licensing boards. For those who do report, the law provides protection for persons who make "good faith" reports are immune from civil liability and criminal penalty.

A child abuse reporting form is available online at:

<http://www.dhr.state.md.us/cps/mandated.htm>

### Maryland Child Protective Services Phone Numbers

**Allegany County:** (301)784-7122

After hours: (301)759-0362

After hours: 410-996-0228

**Anne Arundel County:** (410) 421-8400

(24 hours)

**Charles County:** (301)392-6739

After hours call Sheriff's office:

(301)934-2222

**Baltimore City:** (410)361-2235

(24 hours)

**Dorchester County:** (410)901-4100

After hours: 410-221-3246

**Baltimore County:** (410)853-3000

(24 hours)

**Frederick County:** (301)694-2464

**Calvert County:** (443)550-6969

After hours: (410)286-2100

**Garrett County:** (301)533-3005

After hours: (301)334-1911

**Caroline County:** (410)819-4500

After hours call the Sheriff's office:

(410)479-2515

**Harford County:** (410)836-4713

After hours: (410)838-6600

**Carroll County:** (410)386-3434

(24 hours)

**Howard County:** (410)872-8700

After hours: (410)313-2929

**Cecil County:** (410)996-0100

**Kent County:** (410)810-7600

After hours: (410)758-1101

**Montgomery County:** (240) 777-4417

**Prince George's County:** (301)909-2450  
After hours: (301)699-8605

**Queen Anne's County:** (410)-758-8000  
Alternate p.m. # 410-758-0770

**St. Mary's County:** (240)895-7016  
After hours: (301)475-8016

**Somerset County:** (410)677-4200  
After hours: (410)651-0630

**Talbot County:** (410)770-4848  
After hours call State Police: (410)822- 3101

**Washington County:** (240)420-2222  
(24 hours)

**Wicomico County:** (410)713-3900  
After hours: (410)548-4891

**Worcester County:** (410)677-6800  
After hours: 410-632-1111





# Created to Love

## Local Resources

### **Child Safe**

An educational program of St. Vincent's Center and Catholic Charities, the Child Safe program seeks to reduce the risk of child sexual abuse through child, adult, and community outreach and education. Services include workshops and consultation for parents and other caregivers, professionals who work with children and families, and children. We also provide information and referrals. Call 410-252-4000 extension 1602.

### **The Family Tree**

A non-profit organization which offers a wide range of child, family, and community-focused advocacy and outreach services aimed at breaking the cycle of child abuse and neglect. Services include parenting information and classes, school-based services, Family Stressline, Parents Anonymous groups, and community and volunteer education. Services are free of charge. Office are located in Baltimore City and Anne Arundel, Howard, Harford, and Prince George's Counties. Main number: 410-889-2300. Family Stressline: 1-800-243-7337. Website: [www.familytreemd.org](http://www.familytreemd.org).

### **House of Ruth**

Crisis hotline, temporary emergency shelter for victims of domestic violence, counseling for victims, abusers, children, legal information and court accompaniment, referrals to legal, financial, housing, and employment services. 410-889-0840. 24 hour hotline: 410-889-7884.

### **Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence (MNADV)**

A state coalition working to eliminate domestic violence through education, training, and advocacy. For more information about domestic violence or to locate a service provider in your area, call the 24 hour statewide Helpline at 1-800-MD HELPS or visit [www.mnadv.org](http://www.mnadv.org).

### **Survivors of Incest Anonymous, Inc.**

International network of anonymous, self-help meetings that can be used with other forms of therapy by survivors of child sexual abuse. Also provides literature, bulletins, pen-pals, and speakers. No fees. Website: [www.siawso.org](http://www.siawso.org)  
World Service Office, Benson, Maryland – 410-893-3322  
Catonsville – 410-719-9026; Lutherville – 443-413-3465;  
Owings Mills (women only) – 410-233-0280

**Turnaround, Inc.**

Provides individual and group counseling for adult, teenage and child victims of sexual assault and/or domestic violence. Other services include treatment programs for batterers, counseling for friends and families of survivors, hotline, emergency shelter, ER companion program, on-site school programs (therapeutic groups), community/professional outreach, community antiviolence project (addresses violence in the gay and lesbian community), Safe Homes-Safe Pets Program, and a Teen Empowerment Program. Towson: 410-377-8111; Rosedale: 410-391-2396; Baltimore City: 410-837-7000.