

Growing with GOD™

Safe and Sacred

LESSON 7 Trust and Secrets

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What the Church Says About

Child Sexual Abuse

In abuse, we see the hand of evil that does not spare even the innocence of children. No explanations suffice for these abuses involving children.

Pope Francis, *Meeting "The Protection of Minors in the Church,"*
Sunday, February 24, 2019

Keeping Children Safe

You want to protect your child from harm and prepare him or her to respond to situations that may present danger. Gentle, age-appropriate conversations about sexual abuse are an important way for you to keep your child safe.

Because sexual abuse is most often perpetrated by someone a child knows, it is important to have ongoing conversations with your child about his or her safety.

Child sexual abuse is any interaction in which a child is used for the gratification of an abuser or an observer of abuse. It may include physical contact but can also include non-touching behaviors such as showing pornography to a child or taking photos or videos of a child.

Children should be made aware that certain body parts are private and should not be touched by anyone other than a parent or doctor when it is necessary for a child's health. This kind of touching is never a secret. Teach your child the correct names for body parts so that he or she can communicate about health issues or abuse interactions should they ever take place. Tell your child that he or she should not keep secrets from you, especially secrets about touching. Explain that it's OK to tell an unsafe secret even if it means breaking a promise made not to tell. Offer reassurance that telling is always the right thing to do.





3minute
RETREAT

“I have told you this so that you might have peace in me. In the world you will have trouble, but take courage, I have conquered the world.”

John 16:33

Reflection

God does not promise that our lives will be without hardship. During challenging times, God calls us to be courageous and resolute in our faith and to know that through him, we can find the peace we seek. God’s love for us is eternal and unchanging, and everything that may feel broken or wounded will be made to feel whole again in his time.

Questions

How can I demonstrate the courage that my faith in God brings me during times of difficulty?

How can I share Christ’s peace with my child to provide comfort when he or she is troubled or afraid?



Prayer

Pray to Jesus, using the words of this prayer or your own.

Jesus, help me grow in faith and courage as I follow your way of peace.

Lead Your Child to Grow with God: Spiritually, Socially, and Physically

Spiritual

Parents want their children to feel free to tell them everything, but at times, children may fear the consequences and opt to hide the truth.

Listening to our loved ones talk about their ideas encourages open communication and fosters trust and respect. Write one or

two open-ended questions that have no single answer. (Example: What would your perfect vacation be like?) Gather your family together. Invite each family member to answer each question and encourage everyone to listen to the responses. After each family member has shared, pray together to express gratitude for your family and the time you share together.

Social Talk with your child about emotions like surprise, sadness, and anger that he or she might feel when interacting with peers. Discuss ways to regulate or respectfully express those emotions.

Physical People vary in how they experience and express their emotions. For example, some people who feel angry may have low energy and want to be alone and still, while others might feel hot and shaky and want to move or stomp their feet. Help your child notice how he or she experiences and responds to emotions.



Safe and Sacred at Home



What Would You Do? (Loyola Press)

By Jennifer Moore-Mallinos

Making a good choice, doing the right thing, or even knowing right from wrong can be hard. In *What Would You Do?*, children read about 46 everyday dilemmas and practice making decisions.

Big Ideas

In Lesson 7, your child will:

- tell the difference between safe secrets and unsafe secrets.
- identify some behaviors of trustworthy adults.
- define *unsafe secret*, *trustworthy*, and *emotion*.

Bringing the Lesson Home

Determine ahead of time when and where you and your child will engage with the lesson content. Invite your child to share his or her work on the Lesson 7 worksheet or have the child complete the worksheet with you.

Name _____

LESSON 7 Trust and Secrets

Worthy of Trust

No one should ever ask you to keep a secret about touching. A secret about touching is one kind of **unsafe secret**. Unsafe secrets should not be kept even if someone you know or love asks you to keep them.

Tell a **trustworthy** adult as soon as you can about unwanted touching or other unsafe secrets. A person's job or the fact that he or she is trusted by others is not the best way to know if that person is trustworthy. Instead, you can decide whether someone is trustworthy by how he or she acts.

Write the name of an adult you could tell if you were being harmed or made to feel confused or unsafe. Under the name, list behaviors that make this person worthy of your trust.

_____ (name of a trustworthy adult)

is trustworthy because he or she

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

GRADE 4 | LESSON 7 Trust and Secrets Worksheet 77 | Side A

STEP 1 ENGAGE & EXPLORE

Talk with your child about examples of safe and unsafe secrets, including secrets about touching. Use the proper names for body parts, including genitals. Explain that children should never be asked to keep secrets from their parents and that touching is never a secret. **SAY: It's never your fault if someone touches you on private parts or does anything else to make you feel sad, afraid, or confused. Please tell me or another trusted adult right away if that ever happens.**

Read the worksheet with your child. Discuss behaviors that would tend to indicate someone is trustworthy. Explain that the job someone has, the position he or she holds, or a familial relationship does not automatically make that person safe or trustworthy.

SAY: You are precious to me and to God. You will never be in trouble for telling me or another trusted adult an unsafe secret, and it's never too late to tell.



Words to Know

unsafe secret · *Something that is kept hidden to conceal a serious misdeed or crime*

trustworthy · *The quality of being deserving of trust. Honest and reliable*

emotion · *A strong feeling or reaction to people, things, or events*

Bringing the Lesson Home *(continued)*

STEP 2 REFLECT & RESPOND

Invite your child to share the “What Am I Feeling?” worksheet with you if he or she wishes.

SAY: Some emotions can be difficult to feel, but they often have important information for us. Our emotions can help us respond to what is happening

and determine whether someone is worthy of our trust. Invite your child to share which emotions might signal that a situation or person is unsafe. You might share with your child a time that your emotions signaled to you that a situation or a person was safe or possibly dangerous.

Talk about how you responded and how your child might respond if he or she encounters a potentially unsafe situation. Remind your child that he or she can always say no to touching and ask for help from a trustworthy adult.

SAY: Let’s pray together now. Pray the prayer from the Pray Together feature or one of your own. Begin and end the prayer with the Sign of the Cross.

What Am I Feeling?

In addition to giving us people who can help us when we need them, God gives us emotions. Emotions can provide clues that can help us know how to respond to situations and judge whether someone is trustworthy.

Think of a time when you felt a strong positive emotion. In the box on the left, write or draw the memory, experience, or person that sparked that emotion. In the circle, write the name of the emotion. On the right side, write or draw what that emotion prompted you to do or feel. (You may share your responses if you wish, but you do not have to.)

Scripture
The Lord is my strength and my shield,
in whom my heart trusts. Psalm 28:7

Prayer
Heavenly Father, I know you love me always and your love for me is unchanging. Thank you for the people in this world who can be trusted.

GRADE 4 / LESSON 7 Trust and Secrets Worksheet 7 / Side B



Pray Together

Heavenly Father, thank you for the people in our lives who are caring and trustworthy. Please help us respond to life’s challenges with courage and faith.

