

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

As a parent, 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 young person knows, it is important to have ongoing conversations with your child about his or her safety.

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

Talk with your child about grooming tactics that adults use for manipulation such as asking a young person to keep a secret or break a rule. Reinforce with your child that he or she should not keep secrets from you, especially secrets about touching. Explain that it is OK to tell an unsafe secret even if it means breaking a promise not to tell. Point out that your child should let you know right away if anyone touches him or her in a way that makes your child feel afraid, worried, or confused. Offer reassurance that he or she will not be in trouble for telling. 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?

What can I do to share Jesus’ way of peace with my child 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 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: If you could have one hundred of anything, what would it be and why?) 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 anxiety, sadness, happiness, surprise, and anger that might arise as a result of interactions with peers. Discuss ways to regulate or respectfully express those emotions.

Physical People vary in how they experience and respond to their emotions. For example, one person who is sad may cry, while another might become quiet. Each is okay. Help your child become aware of his or her emotions and respond to them in healthy ways.

Safe and Sacred at Home



Sharing the Wisdom of Time (Loyola Press)

By Pope Francis and Friends

Young people can learn the power of faith, perseverance, resilience, and love from this collection of stories by elders from more than 30 countries. Each chapter includes a personal story from Pope Francis, who also wrote the preface and reflections on the stories of other contributors.

Big Ideas

In Lesson 7, your child will

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



Words to Know

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

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.



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

Listen to Your Emotions

Our emotions are a gift from God that can help us know how to respond to potentially unsafe situations. They can also help us recognize whether someone is worthy of our trust. Even if what we are feeling is unclear, we can still try to pay attention to our emotions and what they may be signaling.

Adults should not have to be told that certain interactions with young people are harmful. It is never your fault if an adult hurts you or puts you in a situation that is unsafe. Secrets about these interactions are unsafe secrets and should be told to a trustworthy adult as soon as possible.

Read each interaction in the first column. Consider what emotion you might feel in that situation and then write it in the second column. In the third column, write what you might do or say next.

An adult ...	My Emotions	My Response
buys you something you want that your parents can't or won't buy for you.		
offers you a special privilege or reward in return for touching of some kind.		
tries to wrestle with you or rub your neck and back.		
contacts you through an app or online game.		
sends you pictures of himself or herself without clothes or partially clothed.		
says you will make him or her sad if you don't do something that makes you feel uncomfortable.		
threatens to tell something private you shared if you don't do what he or she says.		
asks you to send him or her a picture of yourself without clothes.		

GRADE 7 / LESSON 7 Trust and Secrets Worksheet 77 / Side A

STEP 1 ENGAGE & EXPLORE

Review the first page of the worksheet with your child.

SAY: Emotions can alert us to potentially unsafe situations.

Have your child share the emotions and responses he or she identified for each situation. Discuss the responses.

SAY: Your safety is very important to me. An adult should never ask you to keep a secret about his or her behavior. This includes secrets about touching or about anything else that makes you feel worried or confused. It's never your fault if someone touches your private parts or does anything to make you feel sad, afraid, or confused. Please tell me or another trusted adult right away if something like this ever happens. Make sure to use correct terminology when talking with your child about body parts, including genitals. Clearly state that your child has the right to say no to any touching or other behavior that makes him or her feel anxious or confused. Affirm that your child should tell you or another trusted adult about these interactions as soon as possible.

SAY: You are precious to me and to God, and I want to keep you safe. You will never be in trouble for telling the truth.



Bringing the Lesson Home *(continued)*

STEP 2 REFLECT & RESPOND

Review the “Worthy of Trust” worksheet with your child and talk about identifying trustworthy adults.

SAY: While most adults are trustworthy, some are not. The best way to know if someone is trustworthy is by how the person acts.

Have your child share the behaviors he or she listed and discuss others that might be added. Reaffirm that the job a person has, the fact he or she is trusted by others, or a familial relationship does not automatically make a person worthy of trust. Assure your child that it is never too late to tell about a situation that has caused him or her to feel distress, even if the person who caused the distress is no longer in your child’s life.

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.

Worthy of Trust

Tell a trustworthy adult as soon as you can about harmful interactions 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.

Scripture

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

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 the person worthy of your trust.

(name of a trustworthy adult)

is trustworthy because he or she

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Prayer

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

GRADE 7 / 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.

