



# Growing with GOD™

*Safe and Sacred*

**LESSON 2**  
**Boundaries**

**In This Lesson**

**For You**                      **Pages 1–2**

- Telling Hard Truths
- 3-Minute Retreat
- Lead Your Child to Grow with God
- Safe and Sacred at Home

**For You and Your Child**                      **Pages 3–4**

- With Your Child: Bringing the Lesson Home
- Pray Together



**What the Church Says About**

*Authentic Love*

Basically, education for authentic love, authentic only if it becomes kind, well-disposed love, involves accepting the person who is loved and considering his or her good as one's own; hence this implies educating in right relationships with others.

The Pontifical Council for the Family, *The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality* (1996)

**Telling Hard Truths**



From the time they are little, we teach children the importance of telling the truth. At age four, this truth-telling involves clear *yes or no, this or that* responses. *Did you take your sister's toy?* By eighth grade, the concept of truth may seem more complex to your child. *Should I tell my parents what I saw Maya doing? What will they say? Should I tell what Jorge said? How will they react?*

At this time in your child's life, social circles begin to widen and opportunities for independence grow. It is common for parents to feel torn between giving their children more freedom and trying to protect them from potential harm. You will not be able to predict every situation your child will encounter, but you can develop a relationship of trust with your child so he or she feels safe telling you the truth about uncomfortable or unsafe experiences. Develop a habit of talking openly with your child about a variety of issues.

**Having conversations about difficult topics will be less threatening if lines of communication are already open and familiar.**

Make yourself available to listen whenever your child needs to talk. Make sure your child knows you will always help him or her if a situation feels uncomfortable or unsafe. If your child shares something particularly upsetting with you, take a breath and consider how brave he or she is for sharing. Reacting first out of fear or worry may lead your child to feel like he or she is being punished. Be sensitive to your child's desire to tell you the truth and respond in a way that lets your child know you respect and value his or her trust.



3minute  
RETREAT

*And Jesus advanced [in] wisdom and age and favor before God and man.*

Luke 2:52

### Reflection

Our lives are filled with many seasons. We grow and change at each stage, facing new joys and challenges every day. In this Scripture passage, we read that Jesus, even from a young age, lived God's special call to be a witness to the truth. We are called to reflect this in our lives by being faithful to our promises to God and one another. Jesus is both our example and our strength.

### Questions

What is one way I can seek Jesus' help in keeping a difficult promise? How can I be an example of truth and faithfulness for my children?



### Prayer

Speak to Jesus, using this prayer or one of your own.

*Help me, young Jesus, follow your example as a witness to the truth, so I may grow in wisdom and grace.*

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



**Spiritual** Share with your child experiences you have had with prayer in your life.

Encourage your child to pray daily. Help your child understand that even when prayer does not noticeably change the circumstances you are struggling with, the act of prayer will change you.

**Social** Schedule special one-on-one time with your child at least once a month. Create opportunities for the two of you to talk, laugh, be together, and make memories. From these special times, you will strengthen the bond you share with your child and open pathways to deeper communication.

**Physical** Let your child know that he or she should always trust a gut feeling that something in a situation is wrong or unsafe. List examples of such reactions, such as a tingling sensation, fluttering in your stomach, nervousness, or shaky or sweaty hands. Together with your child, devise clear plans for how to get help if someone causes him or her to feel uncomfortable.

### Safe and Sacred at Home



*The Prayer List* (Loyola Press)

by Jane Knuth

Mercy in the family is a sign that relationships matter more than being right, more than money or possessions, and more than hanging on to our hurts. "Seven times seventy times" is just about the right number of opportunities that family members are given to forgive one another over the years. Mercy and forgiveness require lots of prayer. We are not capable of forgiving big hurts by ourselves because our love is too small. But God's love is invincible. He can forgive the gravest of harm when we cannot. Some say that praying to God to forgive our loved one is the path to being able to forgive that person ourselves.

## Big Ideas

### In Lesson 2, your child will:

- distinguish between truth-telling and tattling.
- identify warning signs for grooming behaviors.
- demonstrate an understanding that honesty is necessary for healthy and safe relationships.
- define *reporting*, *tattling*, *grooming*, *consent*, and *witness*.

### Words to Know

**reporting** · *The act of giving an account of something that one has observed, heard, or done*

**tattling** · *The act of telling an adult about a peer's behavior to get that person into trouble*

**grooming** · *A process by which a sexual predator gains favor with a child and the adults around the child to gain access to the child*

**consent** · *Permission or agreement for something to happen*

**witness** · *To share knowledge and experience of God's love*

## Bringing the Lesson Home

Determine ahead of time when and where you and your child will engage with the lesson content. Read or complete Side A of the worksheet with your child.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Growing with GOD  
Safe and Sound

LESSON 2 Boundaries

To Tell the Truth

Telling the truth is not always easy. Sometimes it means making difficult and unpopular decisions. Sometimes it means reporting what you saw or heard to someone in authority. It takes courage to tell the truth, especially when it might result in someone being angry or upset with us.

Truth-telling is different from simply tattling. When we tell the truth, we share information and concerns to keep ourselves and others safe. The purpose of truth-telling is to help and to solve problems. Tattling is telling an adult about a peer's behavior with the intention to hurt that person or to get him or her in trouble. Tattling is the opposite of reporting.

List three examples of times when it might be difficult to tell the truth.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Choose one of the examples you wrote above. Explain why it might be difficult to tell the truth in that situation. Then write why telling the truth is the right choice.

GRADE 8 / LESSON 2 Boundaries - Worksheet 2 / Side A

### STEP 1 ENGAGE & EXPLORE

You may notice your child is less willing to share details of friendships than he or she was in the past. Your child's desire for privacy is normal and shows his or her growing independence. Let your child know that you respect and trust him or her, while making clear that you are always available to provide help and support.

**SAY:** As you get older, there are more and more things that you do on your own. I see you taking on new responsibilities and that makes me proud. It's important you know that even though you are able to take care of more things, you do not have to handle everything on your own. If something ever feels confusing or unsafe, you can always come to me. I will do my best to listen and help you.

Have an open conversation with your child about telling the truth. Use Side A of the worksheet to guide your discussion.

# Bringing the Lesson Home *(continued)*

## STEP 2 REFLECT & RESPOND

Read or complete Side B of the worksheet with your child.

**SAY:** We can be an example of God's love to others when we are truthful in our relationships. Talk with your child about how telling the truth helps strengthen

the relationships within your family. Encourage your child to share some of his or her commitments that he or she wrote on Side B of the worksheet. Remind your child of your commitment to always be available should he or she need help in telling the truth or keeping a promise.

**SAY:** Let's pray together now. Pray aloud the prayer from the Pray Together feature or one of your own. Begin and end the prayer by praying the Sign of the Cross.



### Pray Together

Dear God, help us approach our relationships with respect and honesty. When we stray, please help us find our way back to your light.

