



Safe Environment Education

3rd Grade

"He Loves, He Hopes, He Waits" - St. Maria Goretti



Healthy Boundaries

When it comes to 3rd grade, children typically know they have to ask before leaving the classroom or ask before they take something. Just like they should ask to borrow something, they should be taught to ask permission before touching someone. For example- asking for a hug before just giving one. They should be taught appropriate ways of asking permission, because this is something that they should not only ask for themselves but ask of others as well. Children should not be forced to give hugs, kisses, etc. to anyone, even family. Help them set this boundary if they feel uncomfortable speaking up at first.

What could you say to someone before giving them a hug or high five?

If someone does something without asking, what could you say to them to let them know you don't like that?

Body Awareness

Children of this age should know the anatomically correct terms for their private areas. If you are scared or uncomfortable talking about it, then the children will feed off that and think it's something to avoid. Using the terms correctly will also help if someone touches them inappropriately and they report it, then the adults they go to will know exactly what they are talking about and be able to tell the parents immediately. Our bodies are gifts from God, and therefore should be treated as the gift they are. When our bodies are mistreated, it is important to know the proper way to speak about the mistreatment so as to restore the gift.

Why is it important to know the names of our body parts?

How are our bodies a gift?

Technology

Does your son or daughter have a friend who has different digital rules? Maybe rules that are a little looser? Since it only takes one graphic image to traumatize a child, I want your kids prepared for battle. One way we can do that is to give them a simple phrase. Tell them that if their friend ever wants to show them something on a tablet, phone, or computer, instruct your child to ask, "What do you want to show me?" And, let your child know that they aren't to look unless they're satisfied with the response. This little pause and response can act as a powerful defense against life-altering content.

What would you do if a friend tried to show you something on a screen that you knew wasn't good?

I'm going to my bedroom and close the door. I want you to pretend that you just saw something on a tablet or Chromebook that bothers you. Come knock on my door and tell me what happened. Can we practice?

Communication

Building up communication skills with your child will make it easier to make sure that they will communicate with you when they are uncomfortable. Having simple conversations with your child daily will assist with this. However, you also need to have conversations about difficult things so they know they can talk to you about difficult topics.

What are some things you are uncomfortable talking about?

Who are you comfortable talking about difficult things with?

Theology of the Body

Christ manifests the love with which he has love the church by giving himself for her. That love is an image and above all a model of the love which the husband should show to his wife in marriage, when the two are subject to each other "out of reverence for Christ".



Parent Resources



Ninety percent of abuse victims are abused by someone they know. This may be a peer, a relative, a neighbor, a teacher. Sixty percent are acquaintances, teachers, neighbors or community leaders. Thirty percent are by immediate or extended family members. Only ten percent are by strangers. Many victims are concerned their parents will not believe them, especially if it is someone close to the family or in authority. Talking about these issues with your kids will make it much easier for them to approach you if something is not right.

What are signs you might see that indicate your child might be being abused?

- Becoming more reserved around others
- Not wanting to be around someone they used to feel comfortable with
- Hiding themselves from you, becoming more secretive
- Having fits or frustration or anger that come out (outside of their normal personality)

There are things you can do if you suspect that your child is being abused. The first is to have a conversation with your child. Make sure they know they can tell you anything without getting in trouble. Ask them if there is anything that has happened that has them concerned. Reassure them that they are loved and will continue to be loved by you.

Top reasons for children disclosing their abuse are: access to someone they trust, realizing it is not normal, wanting something to be done, expecting to be believed, and being asked. All of these are easier when parents have open communication with their children about these topics. Children that disclose within a month are less likely to have long-term psychological affects

Red flags can be noticed in many different areas. At school or church you may see adults who are only talking with the children and ignore the parents. You don't might also find adults who are buying lots of gifts for your child. Sometimes they may find ways to be alone with your child. They may also give compliments to your child and ignore others. If you see any of these red flags please bring this to the attention of their supervisor.

Technology can be a difficult part of our world to navigate. Even if we grew up with lots of technology, it is now changing at a very rapid pace. As parents you need to be aware of what is out there and how to address the different concerns and pitfalls of these different technologies. This is why we have partnered with Protect Young Eyes. You can find more information at www.protectyoungeyes.com

We are here to help you. Beyond Protect Young Eyes, you can find information at protect.diokzoo.org/gorettiproject. Along with this sheet as a guide to talk with your kids, your parish can give you additional lessons to work with your students.

If you suspect that your child or any other child is being abused contact:
Michigan Department of Human Services:
Child and adult protective services intake number:
855-444-3911

Sources:

Statistics on resource page: www.d2l.org

Technology: Chris McKenna @ Protect Young Eyes

Body Awareness and Boundaries: Amy McNamara, LCSW; AM Counseling Services, PLLC