

Protecting God's Children Safe Environment Curriculum



2010

by

The Catholic Diocese of
Lafayette-in-Indiana

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Format.....	4
Implementation.....	5
Appropriate Documentation and Summary.....	6
Protecting God’s Children Safe Environment Curriculum.....	7
Glossary.....	12
Resources.....	15
Verification Form	19
Opt-Out Form	20

**Protecting God’s Children
Safe Environment Curriculum
Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana**

Introduction

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops published the revised *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* guidelines in 2005 which calls Catholic schools and religious education programs in each parish to comply with the *Charter* and implement age appropriate training programs for children and young people pertaining to personal safety. This includes information about improper touching and developing positive, healthy relationships. The Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana *Protecting God’s Children* (PGC) safe environment curriculum is designed to address the instructional content envisioned by the USCCB *Charter*. The curriculum promotes the dignity of the human person, personal safety, and the moral teachings of the Catholic Church.

The Preamble of the Charter states, “Let there now be no doubt or confusion on anyone’s part: For us, your bishops, our obligation to protect children and young people and to prevent sexual abuse flows from the mission and example given to us by Jesus Christ himself, in whose name we serve.” Catechists in the Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana, as disciples of Christ, are committed to assist parents, educators, and parish children in providing comprehensive safe environment programs in compliance with the USCCB *Charter* for ages Kindergarten through Grade 12.

Format

The Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana's PGC safe environment curriculum is formatted to be meaningful, age appropriate, and integrated into each school and religious educational instructional program throughout the entire year, rather than as a separate stand alone program. This curriculum has been modified with permission from the Diocese of Peoria, Office of Catholic Schools Safe Environment Curriculum. The safe environment curriculum for students includes four key areas of personal safety: interpersonal safety; touching safety; environmental safety; and computer safety. The format is designed to be consistent with other diocesan curriculum guides for all academic subject areas. Resources for implementing the curriculum may vary.

Skills and concepts follow under each heading. Introduction to each of the skills and concepts are given in age appropriate, grade level groupings – Primary K-2; Intermediate 3-5; Middle School 6-8; and High School 9-12. Four goals are listed:

- A. Recognize and appropriately respond to the lures of sexual predators;
- B. Discuss, demonstrate, and examine behaviors that promote a safe lifestyle;
- C. Recognize and respond appropriately to behaviors disrespectful to mind and/or body; and
- D. Examine and evaluate proper conduct in the midst of today's societal pressures.

The "I" in a grade level grouping means that the skills/concepts will be introduced in this clustering. The gray areas marked indicate ongoing development of the skill/concept in that specific grade level grouping.

Implementation

At the beginning of each school year, a school and religious education administrator will need to engage his or her teaching staff in one or more sessions in order to review the content of the safe environment curriculum and help define when the concept/skills will be introduced, developed, and reinforced in the grade level groupings. Some objectives will overlap into special area curriculum such as physical education, health, religion and other classes.

Parents, as primary educators of their children, will also need to be kept informed of safe environment curriculum and how they can help reinforce a particular objective at home. The PGC curriculum is designed to give meaningful opportunities for parents to dialogue with their children and address Catholic values in areas such as; self esteem, respect, and building healthy loving relationships. Parents who desire to teach a particular objective at home and withhold their child's participation at school, must complete the "opt-out" form specifying the objectives that will be taught at home, as well as methods and materials used to teach the content. If a parent refuses to sign the form, the administrator must record such refusal and maintain appropriate documentation. Children in religious education classes may be receiving much of this training in the public schools. However, it is the responsibility of the parish religious education director to verify this by comparing the public school curriculum to the framework.

A list of resources is included in the PGC curriculum guide. The resource list includes publications, videos, and web sites that are grounded in Catholic Church teachings and can assist educators in designing and teaching lessons on child safety and abuse education. Collaboration within the diocese and parish communities should be given in sharing resources and supplemental materials.

Appropriate Documentation of Protecting God’s Children Safe Environment Curriculum

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) periodically audits each diocese to ensure compliance with the requirements outlined in the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*. Consequently, schools and religious education programs in each parish must maintain appropriate documentation of PGC safe environment procedures for children and parents.

Documentation includes:

- 1) Copies of the curriculum checklists where specific skills/concepts are taught.
- 2) Opt-Out parent forms and documentation.
- 3) Copies of flyers, newsletters and bulletin announcements promoting safe environment parent meetings and programs.
- 4) Verification form documents providing the Pastoral Office for Education and Youth Catechesis the numbers of students who received instruction in each grade level; the number of students that opted out of any part of the safe environment curriculum/program; and certification of parent involvement. A copy of this form is included with this document.

Summary

It is the duty of all Catholic parishes to protect children and young people and promote healing when needed while guaranteeing prompt and effective responses to allegations. Catholic parishes must ensure the implementation and accountability of safe environments for our children in a faith filled environment where Christ is the center of all encounters. We as members of the Diocese of Lafayette-in- Indiana are committed to protect and provide a safe environment for our Catholic children and to effectively implement and document the PGC curriculum.

PROTECTING GOD’S CHILDREN SAFE ENVIRONMENT CURRICULUM

GOALS: The student will be able to...

- A Recognize and respond to interpersonal safety.
- B. Demonstrate and describe touching safety.
- C. Identify and describe environmental safety
- D. Apply and practice computer safety.

LEGEND: I = Grade at which skill is first introduced
Gray area = ongoing development of skill

Concepts/Skills	K- 2	3- 5	6- 8	9- 12
A. INTERPERSONAL SAFETY				
A1. Demonstrate and defend that every person, including oneself, must be treated with dignity and respect, recognizing that human persons are holy, created body and soul in the image of God.	I			
A2. Recognize and respect the individual uniqueness of the human person.	I			
A3. Demonstrate and value free will by choosing good over evil in thought, word, and deed.	I			
A4. Choose and practice the Christian virtues, such as the virtues of respect, chastity, and prudence.	I			
A5. Explain the importance of communication, both verbal and non-verbal, in avoiding maltreatment (physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect).	I			
A6. Recognize and describe the impact of violence and abuse on self and others.	I			
A7. Apply and give examples of how to deal with anger, anxiety, and stress.	I			
A8. Safeguard and give examples of one’s own emotional and psychological boundaries.	I			
A9. Describe and demonstrate conflict resolution skills.	I			
A10. Identify and differentiate between passive, aggressive, and assertive responses.	I			
A11. Give examples of possible consequences when exercising God’s gift of free will.		I		
A12. Conclude that behaviors or actions that harm self or others physically, spiritually, or psychologically are wrong.		I		
A13. Recognize and describe various types of abuse including physical, sexual, verbal, emotional, and neglect.		I		
A14. Demonstrate and value the importance of modest dress and behavior.		I		

Concepts/Skills	K-2	3-5	6-8	9-12
A15. Demonstrate the use of self-defense and personal safety tactics.			I	
A16. Explain that sexist attitudes can lead to harmful behaviors.			I	
A17. Recognize the differences between flirting and sexual harassment.			I	
A18. Differentiate the facts and myths about violence and hate in relationships.			I	
A19. Restate the factors and dynamics inherent in abuse.			I	
A20. Explain that abuse will reoccur unless intervention takes place.			I	
A21. Recognize and avoid unhealthy places and social relationships that could lead to dangerous situations such as the use of date rape drugs and date rape.				I
B. TOUCHING SAFETY				
B1. Differentiate between safe, unsafe, and unwanted touches.	I			
B2. Report immediately to a teacher, parent, or trusted adult if someone attempts or actually touches in a way that feels uncomfortable, especially if the touch involves private body parts.	I			
B3. Identify and define private body parts are those places covered by a bathing suit.	I			
B4. Demonstrate words and actions to be used if someone attempts or actually touches private body parts.	I			
B5. Give examples of appropriate touching private body parts - parental bathing and medical exams.	I			
B6. Explain that while touch can be a wonderful way to express caring, sometimes touch may not be wanted, or some touches may feel uncomfortable.	I			
B7. Describe the importance not to keep secrets about touching, even if promised not to tell anyone.	I			
B8. Explain that one is not at fault if someone touches or tries to touch inappropriately.	I			
B9. Describe and give examples that not all unsafe touches feel “bad” and not all safe touches feel “good.”	I			
B10. Conclude that consequences and help for people who touch children in an inappropriate way will follow.		I		
B11. Justify the importance of reporting improper touching even when it can be hurtful to family members or others.			I	
B12. Defend and support that any minor who is touched inappropriately or has experienced inappropriate touch in their past needs healing, help, and support from family, community, and professionals.			I	

Concepts/Skills	K- 2	3- 5	6- 8	9- 12
C. ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY				
C1. Awareness that being on one’s own is a big responsibility which must be taken seriously.	I			
C2. Choose never to go anywhere with anyone without the permission of parents or teacher.	I			
C3. Recognize and give examples of safe and unsafe people and situations.	I			
C4. Identify who to turn to for help at home, at school, and in the community.	I			
C5. Give examples and illustrate how to incorporate the “buddy system” into one’s everyday life – riding bicycle, going to the mall, playing at the park, etc.	I			
C6. Recognize one should never answer the door unless he/she is familiar with the person.	I			
C7. Identify and label emergency numbers, including the phone number of a friend or neighbor, especially if home alone.	I			
C8. Explain never to go anywhere with anyone without the permission of parents or a teacher.	I			
C9. Choose to avoid shortcuts and isolated areas when traveling to and from school.	I			
C10. List the warning signs of potential perpetrators.	I			
C11. Explain that a perpetrator may be unrelated to a student however; the perpetrator is just as likely to be someone known to the student as to be a stranger.	I			
C12. Secure permission from a teacher, parent, or another trusted adult before accepting a gift from anyone.	I			
C13. Recognize that adults should never ask children for directions, and avoid approaching cars if the driver is unfamiliar.	I			
C14. Show refusal to accept a ride from someone not known or someone who makes one feel uncomfortable.	I			
C15. Decide to get away as quickly as possible if someone is following and inform a trusted adult about what happened.	I			
C16. Give examples of those who prey on children may entrap or lure them.	I			
C17. Explain that a gift may be a bribe.	I			
C18. Report and disregard requests from strangers who claim they are friends of one’s parents who try to persuade you to leave school or home.	I			
C19. Choose not to leave with a stranger, even if it is an emergency.	I			

Concepts/Skills	K-2	3-5	6-8	9-12
C20. Construct strategies to protect oneself if abducted.	I			
C21. Tell a teacher, parent, or another trusted adult if a friend is being or has been abused.	I			
C22. Plan to lock all doors if staying home alone.		I		
C23. Develop a plan for staying home alone. Check out the house before entering it, and go to a safe place to call for help if something does not seem right.		I		
C24. Do not tell callers that parents are gone from home.		I		
C25. Notify parents that they made it home safely if no one else is there.		I		
C26. Construct an alternative plan if adult help does not respond when help is needed.		I		
C27. Notify parents and receive permission if planned activities or whereabouts change.		I		
C28. Explain that a seemingly innocent game can lead to sexual exploitation.		I		
C29. Recognize that the offer of a short-term job or errand may be a trick to abduct and/or abuse.		I		
C30. Inform a teacher, parent, or other trusted adult of any sexual solicitation or the availability of pornography.		I		
C31. Explain that a perpetrator may introduce children and young adults to drugs, alcohol, and/or pornography in an attempt to make them feel responsible and not report the abuse.		I		
C32. Plan to watch out for the safety of younger brothers and sisters.			I	
C33. Justify and explain that one is never safe if intoxicated by alcohol or drugs, or if one is with people who are intoxicated.			I	
D. COMPUTER SAFETY				
D1. Immediately inform a teacher, parent, or other trusted adult when one comes across any material that brings about scared, uncomfortable, or confused feelings.	I			
D2. Show suspicious communications to a teacher, parent, or other trusted adult.	I			
D3. Regularly share with a teacher, parent, and/or other trusted adult the people one communicates with online.	I			
D4. Notify immediately a teacher, parent, or other trusted adult if anything is encountered on the Internet that is obscene (indecent) or unlawful.	I			
D5. Explain that it is unsafe to open spam or e-mails from unknown people.	I			

Concepts/Skills	K- 2	3- 5	6- 8	9- 12
D6. Explain that some Internet sites ask users to list their age, gender, and interests, and that perpetrators use these profiles to search for potential victims. Many web sites are cached by search engines, allowing photos and text to be retrievable long after a web site has been deleted.	I			
D7. Determine that on the Internet, perpetrators may pose as a person with a different age or name without others knowing in order to entice or sexually exploit children.	I			
D8. Construct screen names that do not reveal one's gender, age or location.	I			
D9. Decide never to give out personal information or arrange to meet in person with someone met online.	I			
D10. Recognize that it is never appropriate to respond to online communication in a sexually provocative way.		I		
D11. Conclude that one cannot "take back" the online text and images posted on the web. Once online, "chat" as well as other postings become public information that can be exploited.		I		
D12. Construct privacy settings on social-networking sites to restrict access to personal "spaces" or blogs to only those one knows personally.		I		
D13. Locate how to block the sender if receiving an instant message (IM) from someone unknown.		I		
D14. Choose to IM only those people known in person and who have been approved by a teacher or parent.		I		
D15. Plan not to respond to any rude, threatening, or annoying messages received.		I		
D16. Select to use webcams or post photos online only with the knowledge and supervision of a teacher or parent.		I		
D17. Analyze if embarrassment would occur if friends or family saw their images posted or viewed online. Avoid posting or viewing any images that would cause embarrassment, shame, or guilt.		I		
D18. Identify what is in a web cam's field of vision and turn cameras off when not in use.		I		
D19. Explain that it is not safe to post identity-revealing photos.		I		
D20. Choose to avoid posting photos of others, even friends, without the permission of the friends' parents.		I		
D21. Recognize that it is illegal to share copyrighted materials online without permission.		I		
D22. Conclude that by sharing files, one may unknowingly download and distribute viruses and even illegal material such as child pornography.		I		
D23. Choose to restrict access to online profiles so only those on one's contact lists are able to view them.			I	
D24. Conclude that webcam sessions and photos can be easily captured, and other users can continue to circulate those images online.			I	

Glossary

Abduction: When a perpetrator takes a child by the use of physical force or threat or detains a child in an isolated place without lawful authority.

Blog: Short for web log. An instantly updatable online journal used for publishing short, informal comments and ideas. The act of keeping a blog is known as blogging.

Boundaries: The physical and emotional limits a person establishes in his/her relationships.

Buddy system: The practice of pairing two or more people together for mutual assistance or safety.

Bullying: Repeated exposure to intentional injury or discomfort inflicted by one or more persons against another. Bullying behavior may include physical contact, verbal and written assault, social ostracism, obscene gestures or other aggressive acts that cause the victim to feel fearful or distraught.

Cache: The area of a computer's hard drive where web pages and page elements are stored when they are downloaded from the Internet, making it easier and faster for the user to revisit those pages.

Cardinal Virtues: Fortitude, temperance, justice, and prudence.

Chastity: The virtue which tempers, regulates, and moderates one's sexual desires, thoughts, and actions. "Chastity includes an apprenticeship in self-mastery which is a training in human freedom" (CCC 2339).

Charity: The theological virtue by which we love God above all things for his own sake, and our neighbor as ourselves for the love of God." (CCC 1822)

Chat room: A virtual room where people can communicate in real time while on the Internet. When using a chat room. Computer users type their messages with a keyboard and the entered text appears on the monitor, along with the text of the other chat room visitors.

Child abuse: Harm or threatened harm to a person's health or safety by someone responsible for the minor's health or safety or a person in a position of power or control over a minor. It includes physical, verbal, emotional, or sexual abuse and exploitation or child neglect.

Conscience: "A judgment of reason by which the human person recognizes the moral quality of a concrete act." (CCC 1796)

Date rape: Often called acquaintance rape, this is unwanted sexual contact perpetrated by someone known to the victim. Most commonly, the perpetrator is a boyfriend, ex-boyfriend, or acquainted in some way with the victim. The victim can be female or male and the perpetrator can be male or female.

Date rape drug: A drug administered surreptitiously (as in a drink) to induce an unconscious or sedated state in a potential victim of sexual abuse.

Emotional abuse: A pattern of behavior by an adult that can seriously interfere with a child's cognitive, emotional, psychological, or social development. Emotional abuse can include ignoring, rejecting, isolating, terrorizing, verbally assaulting, exploiting, and/or corrupting a child or young person.

File sharing: The act of making files on one computer that are accessible to others on a network.

Freedom: "The power, rooted in reason and will, to act or not to act, to do this or that, and so to perform deliberate actions on one's own responsibility." (CCC 1731)

Grooming: Behavior that indicates that a person is trying to set up and prepare another person to be the victim of sexual abuse.

Instant messaging (IM): Technology similar to that of chat rooms which enables real-time text-based online communication. A user is noted when one of his/her "contacts" or "buddies" is online, allowing communication with each other by exchanging text messages and files via special software.

Internet safety: The concept of being educated and empowered to take control of online experiences. It involves recognizing and making smart and responsible decisions in potentially dangerous situations.

Minor: A child or young person who is under the age of legal competence (18 years of age).

Modesty: The virtue that regulates one's actions and exterior customs concerning sexual matters. Modesty in dress is to avoid clothing that can be expected to cause sexual arousal in oneself or others.

Neglect: The failure or omission of an adult to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care, and/or supervision to a minor; or the failure to provide special care to a minor that is made necessary by their physical or mental condition; and/or child abandonment.

Obscene: Anything that is offensive to the virtues of decency or modesty.

Perpetrator of child abuse: Someone who has harmed children or young people.

Physical abuse: Knowingly or intentionally causing serious physical harm to a minor.

Pornography: Graphics and/or text that is sexually explicit in nature and designed to cause sexual arousal or stimulation in the viewer.

Posting: Sending a message, photo, or document to an online message board to be viewed by others.

Prudence: First among the cardinal virtues – the correct knowledge of things to be done or avoided. Prudence requires three things: 1) considering the consequences of future actions; 2) judging correctly from the evidence at hand; and 3) directing one’s activity accordingly.

Respect: The virtue of speaking and acting with courtesy. Respect means treating others with the dignity due to all humans as children of God.

Self-esteem: How a person feels about himself/herself. Positive self-esteem indicates that a person feels worthwhile and valuable; poor self-esteem implies the opposite.

Sexual abuse: Any contact between a minor and an adult, or a person significantly older or in a position of power over the minor, where the minor is being used for sexual stimulation of the older person.

Theological Virtues: Faith, hope, and charity.

Trusted adult: An adult who will not intentionally confuse, scare, or harm a child. Trusted adults respect the dignity of children and the rules established by a child’s parents, guardians, and caretakers.

Twitter: A social networking and micro-blogging service that allows its users to send and read others’ updates exchanging answers to simple questions.

Verbal abuse: Words that attack or injure a person, cause one to believe an untrue statement, or speak falsely of an individual. Making a person the butt of jokes, cursing someone, calling a person degrading names, defaming one’s character, and/or similar behavior is considered verbal abuse.

Virtue: Character traits which lead people to do what is right and avoid what is wrong; the habitual disposition of a person to act with goodness.

Warning signs: Behavior in children that may indicate they are victims of abuse or neglect. Warning signs include such behaviors as poor hygiene, sudden changes in mood or personality, low self-esteem, unusual nervousness around adults, aggression towards others, inability to stay awake or concentrate loss of appetite, self-destructive behavior, promiscuity, and/or unexplained bruises or injuries.

Resources

Hotlines

State of Indiana

Child Abuse Reporting: 1-800-800-5556

National

Childhelp USA National Hotline: 1-800-4-A-child TDD 1-800-2-A-child

National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse: 312-663-3520

National Network of Child Advocacy: 1-800-239-9950

National Runaway Switchboard: 1-800-621-4000

National Youth Crisis Hotline: 1-800-448-4663

International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse: 312-578-1401

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Videos

A Time to Tell (available from www.scouting.org)

Breaking the Silence (available from www.rcbo.org/breakingsilence)

Great Escapes Anti-Abduction (available from www.safenetwork.org)

I Am the Boss of My Body (available from www.unitedlearning.com)

Little Bear (available from www.jist.com/kidsrights)

Love – All That and More (available from www.faithtrustinstitute.org)

Safety Net Kids: No Easy Targets (available from www.videoswithvalues.org)

Stranger Safety (available from www.thesafeside.com)

Talk for Parents and Kids – Safety (available from www.goodtouchbadtouch.com)

Tricky People (available from www.yellodyno.com)

True Love: God’s Plan for Abstinence Until Marriage (available from www.mediakids.com)

What Tadoo with Secrets (available from www.empowerkids.com)

Yes You Can Say No (available from www.cfchildren.org)

Your Right to Respect (available from www.flannerycompany.com)

Youth Protection: Personal Safety Awareness (available from www.learning-for-life.org)

Web Sites

ACT for Kids (www.actforkids.org)

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (www.aacap.org)

Child Abuse Prevention Association (www.childabuseprevention.org)

Child Lures (www.childlures.com)

Childhelp USA (www.childhelp.org)

Child Welfare Information Gateway (www.childwelfare.gov)

Committee for Children (www.cfchildren.org)

Connect Safely Forum (www.blogsafety.com)

Faith Trust Institute (www.faithtrustinstitute.org)

Girls and Boys Town (www.girlsandboystown.org)

Good-Touch/Bad Touch® (www.goodtouchbadtouch.com)
Got2BSafe (www.honeywell.com/sites/hhs/got2bsafe)
International Center for Assault Prevention (www.ncap.org)
i-SAFE, Inc. (www.isafe.org)
J. Gary Mitchell films to Empower Kids (www.empowerkids.com)
Katie Brown Educational Program (www.kbep.org)
Kid Safety of America (<http://kidsafetystore.com>)
Kindervision (www.kindervision.org)
National Alert Registry (www.nationalalertregistry.com)
National Catholic Risk Retention Group, Inc. (www.virtus.org)
National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (www.missingkids.com)
National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse (www.childabuse.org)
National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (www.nfcym.org)
National Institute of Mental Health (www.nimh.nih.gov)
National Sex Offenders Public Registry (www.nsopw.gov)
National Sex Offender Registry (www.familywatchdog.us)
NeighborhoodScan.com (www.neighborhoodscan.com/familysafety)
NetSmartz® Workshop (www.netsmartz.org)
Prevent Child Abuse America (www.preventchildabuse.org)
Red Flag Green Flag Resources (www.redflaggreenflag.com)
Safekids.com (www.safekids.com)
Safeteens.com (www.safeteens.com)
Safety Awareness & Family Education Network (www.safenetwork.org)
Safer Society Foundation, Inc. (www.safersociety.org)
Teen Lures (www.teenluresprevention.com)
The Safe Side® (www.thesafeside.com)
Touching on Safety, Inc. (www.touchingonsafety.org)
Virtus (www.virtus.com)
William H. Sadlier (www.sadlier.com)
Yello Dyno, Inc. (www.yellodyno.com)

**Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana Protecting God's Children Curriculum
Opt-Out Form**

The U.S. Bishop's *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* and the Protecting God's Children procedures of the Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana require that all children in our Catholic schools/parishes receive Protecting God's Children training that is age-appropriate and in accord with Protecting God's Children Curriculum on an annual basis. Parents can review the content of this curriculum by contacting the Principal/Director of Religious Education or the Pastoral Office for Education & Youth Catechesis.

If you choose to withhold your child from participation in any part of the training, please sign this form, specifying the name of your child and the specific lesson content from which your child's participation is to be withheld. We will then assume that you are personally covering this content.

School/Parish Name: _____

Child's Name: _____

Child's Grade: _____

Lesson Content: _____

Material(s) Method(s): _____

I understand that the learning content listed above is part of the school's/parish's Protecting God's Children requirements. I do not want my child to participate in instruction at the school/parish covering this content, and I assume my responsibility to teach the content to my child at home.

Parent's Signature

Date