

Dear Caregivers,

Our Catholic Faith teaches that our bodies are a gift from God, and that we have been created by God to be in relationship with others. Importantly, God wants us to be safe and smart in our relationships with others. As part of our commitment to your child(ren)'s healthy development and well-being, your child(ren) learned about personal body safety today.

The following topics were covered with our sixth, seventh, and eighth grade children in the light of our shared Faith:

Secrets vs. Surprises

Surprises are something that you are asked to keep for a short period of time. It is something that makes you feel happy, it is about something exciting or special.

Secrets are about something that makes you feel sad, mad, scared or worried. It is often about someone being hurt or doing something unsafe. It is expected that secrets will never be told.

Talk to your safe grown-ups about secrets and secret touches.

The Four Private Places**

- Mouth
- Chest
- Two areas covered by your underwear

No one should touch or look at these places without a good reason:

- To keep you clean
- To keep you healthy

** Best practice shows that parents should teach their children the anatomically correct terms for their genitals.

Your Body belongs to you!

Touches

A Good touch is any touch that makes you feel happy, doesn't hurt and one you don't mind giving to or getting from someone.

A Bad touch is any touch that hurts you, makes you feel sad or scared and one you should not give or get from someone.

A Secret Touch is any touch you are told to keep secret; one that usually involves private places or injuries to your body.

Safe People Behaviors:

- help you
- listen to you
- take care of you
- do not hurt you
- respect your body
- respect your personal space
- set limits
- do not ask you to keep secrets
- keep personal information private
- do not show you inappropriate movies
- do not allow you or ask you to break rules

The Four Types of Child Abuse

Physical Abuse:

Non-accidental physical injury that causes bruises or broken bones or black eyes.

- There is a difference between abuse and punishment. When a child makes a bad choice or does something wrong, the child will probably suffer a consequence, like no phone or video games for a week, this is a punishment not abuse.

Neglect:

When a caregiver does not give a child the basic things he or she needs to be healthy or safe like food, clothing or shelter.

- Neglect is not when a child does not get what he or she wants, it is when a child does not get what he or she needs.

Sexual Abuse:

Anything dealing with private places on a child's body or someone else's body.

It could include:

- someone showing a child pictures of someone else's private places
- someone touching a child's private places for no good reason
- someone forcing a child to touch that person's private places

Emotional abuse:

When your caregivers say mean hurtful things repeatedly.

Boundaries

The space around us that we do not want anyone to enter without permission-
A space between us and someone or something else that allows us to feel comfortable and safe.

Boundary violations

Times when someone does not respect a person's physical or emotional boundaries.

Examples include:

- hugging or kissing a person after that person has said "no" or "stop"
- taking something that does not belong to you
- sharing someone else's personal information without permission

Ways to Set Boundaries

- Be direct, be assertive
 - Tell someone they are violating your boundary
 - Say it like you mean it
 - "I don't like to be treated that way"
- Move away from the situation
- Make an excuse
 - My mom won't let me
- Ignore the person
- Make a joke
 - No thanks! I only give kisses on Christmas.