

Safe Environment Training for Children and Youth Parent Information Letter

Dear Parents / Guardians of Students:

As Catholics, we believe that every human being is created in the image and likeness of God. Each of us is sacred and our lives—body, mind and soul—should be treated with respect. The safety of your child(ren) is always uppermost in our mind. Therefore, Safe Environment education is incorporated into EVERY Catholic school and religious education program EVERY year.

Safe Environment education for children focuses on identifying appropriate physical, emotional and spiritual boundaries. All children are reminded that they are loved and valued by God and the Church. In addition, the important message that they can talk to trusted adults if they or anyone they know are being hurt, is reinforced.

This year the safe environment lesson for **St. Charles Borromeo Roman Catholic Church** will be integrated into the classes held the **first week in the months of November and December**.

In **Kindergarten through 5th grade** the lesson will be 20 minutes of the class.

In **6th grade** the 2 part lesson plan program “Created in God’s Image for Youth” is utilized to teach boundaries.

Grades 7 through 12 utilize lessons that have been incorporated into the youth parish religious education programs and Catholic School classes.

Parents, as the primary educators of the church have the option to present this material to your child directly. If you choose to present this material yourself rather than having it provided in the school or religious education program, please inform the parish religious education or school coordinator and they will provide lesson plans to assist you. They will also make arrangements for you to pick up your child earlier from religious education or if in school they can go to another classroom on the day the program is offered. If your child is absent on the day safe environment program is presented you will be asked to sign an acknowledgement letter that you received the material.

If you have any questions, contact the parish religious education director at 623. 979.3418 or the Safe Environment Training Office at 602-354-2418.

Together, we can work towards the elimination of child sexual abuse.

Sincerely,

Leilani Betancourth

Director of Religious Education/Safe Environment

St. Charles Borromeo Roman Catholic Church

Roman Catholic Diocese of Phoenix

623.979.3418 ext. 103

General Overview for Parents

Every person is created in the image and likeness of God. Every child is loved by God and must know of the love that they are created in.

BOUNDARY DEFINITION Something that marks a limit, like a fence or the lines on a basketball court.

Each person has the right and responsibility to state when a boundary is being violated.

3 TYPES OF BOUNDARIES	EXAMPLES OF BOUNDARY VIOLATIONS
<p>Physical</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who can touch you • How much they can touch you • Where they can touch you 	<p>Physical</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inappropriate massages and wrestling by adults • Adults touching private areas • Inappropriate kissing
<p>Emotional</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How close you feel to a person • How much time you spend with a person • What information you share with a person 	<p>Emotional</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inappropriate questions about minors sexuality • Asking too personal of questions • Adult approaching minors inappropriately on phones, text, the internet
<p>Behavioral</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The things you will do • The things you will not do 	<p>Behavioral</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giving minors beer, drugs, pornography • Asking students to keep secrets from parents

REINFORCE through regular conversations

- When abuse or a boundary violation occurs, it is the adult that is in the wrong; it is never the child's fault.
- If a child is ever uncomfortable with the actions of an adult, they need to tell a trusted adult and keep telling until they are heard.
- Who to trust?
 - ❖ Parent, family member, teacher, pastor, catechist, youth minister
- That they understand they will always be loved no matter what they tell you
- What is the difference between keeping secrets and holding a surprise?