

# **SAFE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM DIOCESE OF FORT WAYNE-SOUTH BEND**

## **Preparing to Teach/Minister to Young People**

When thinking of how to best build good relationships with the youth in your classroom or group, think of Jesus, our Master Teacher. Jesus knew he had only a short time to teach his twelve disciples all they needed to know. But he didn't just set up a classroom, order books, and prepare outlines.

Jesus invited those twelve, and many others, to live, work, and walk with him. He invited them into relationship with him. And it was in the midst of living and relating that the disciples learned the most.

We most want for students to learn how to have genuine, positive, affirming relationships – with peers and with adults. One of our tasks then is to model and build good relationships.

Here are some things you can do to model and build good relationships:

- Really listen to the youth – individually and as a group.
- Show genuine interest in their lives and stories.
- Be encouraging and supportive.
- Pay attention to discover their gifts and talents.
- Invite them to use their gifts and talents in ministry – in the congregation and in the community.
- Look for something they do well and affirm it.
- Give sincere compliments.
- Say “thanks” for their time, their help, their ideas, their enthusiasm, and so forth.
- Use your sense of humor – but never be sarcastic.
- Do not speak ill of someone; those who hear will wonder what you will say about them.
- Practice and enforce the Golden Rule.
- Talk a little about your own life and spiritual journey (as appropriate).
- Make sure to tell their parents how well their children are doing.

Many of these relationship building blocks are ones your youth can use well. Model the behaviors, teach skills, encourage their use, and affirm youth as they practice building good relationships.

Following the Jesus way, you and your youth will create a safe and welcoming atmosphere where both relationships and learning will flourish.

Another very important component of creating and maintaining good relationship is setting and maintaining appropriate boundaries for the youth in your class. Setting and maintaining boundaries helps create a positive and safe learning environment. Such an environment helps foster spiritual growth in youth.

### **What Is a Boundary?**

- A boundary is a limit for behaviors.
- A boundary is a rule or guideline.
- A boundary is a standard; a specific description of what is expected and what is appropriate.

Some examples of boundaries are:

“One person speaks at a time.”

“Keep your hands to yourself.”

“Be on time.”

“Use appropriate language. No cussing or swear words.”

“Show respect for others by not putting them down.”

### **Why Do Youth Need Boundaries?**

We all need to know the limits: what is acceptable behavior, what to do and not to do. Established and enforced boundaries help youth recognize the limits and enable them to take more personal responsibility for their actions.

Boundaries keep us safe, emotionally and physically. They help us learn how to show respect for others, and in the process, help us feel better about ourselves. Establishing and reinforcing boundaries help to create an environment where youth can feel comfortable enough to share faith and safe enough to open themselves more to God’s love and grace.

Without boundaries, there are no clear limits for behaviors. When what is expected and appropriate is left unsaid or is unclear, we set you up to fail. Youth are much more likely to rise to the challenge and engage in respectful behaviors if boundaries are clearly stated and reinforced up front.

## **Types of Boundaries**

**Physical Boundaries** – enable us to protect and honor our bodies as the “Temple of the Holy Spirit” (Romans 8).

We are not only responsible for the spiritual well-being of the youth we work with, but also for their physical well-being. It is always important to give kids clear and specific instructions and rules. Whether in a classroom, on a youth group trip, at a community service project, or on a retreat, adults need to create and maintain a safe environment for youth.

**Emotional and Spiritual Boundaries** – enable us to protect personal thoughts, feelings, and experiences.

We undertake the awesome task of helping youth grow spirituality. One way to help foster spiritual growth is to create and maintain a welcoming atmosphere. Sprucing up your actual meeting place can help, but it’s even more effective to set and maintain specific expectations and rules for how to treat one another. Spiritual growth involves building good relationships with God and others, sharing one’s faith, self-disclosing, asking questions, and praying. Each of these activities involves risking and trusting. Our task is to create and maintain an environment with clear boundaries so that youth can be assured that they will be respected, listened to, and cared for, no matter what.

## **When to Set Boundaries**

The most effective time to set boundaries is at the beginning of the year, or at the first session of your planned meetings. Once established, list and post these boundaries so they can be referred to often. It can be helpful to remind youth of these boundaries:

- After holiday or vacation time
- Before an upcoming event – to proactively teach specific boundaries
- After a problem has occurred – in order to correct inappropriate behavior and remind the youth of boundaries and why we follow them.

## **Who Establishes the Boundaries?**

The principal, pastor, religious education director, and teachers, along with parents and adults from your community, should give specific input as to what behaviors are expected and appropriate for youth. Along with clarifying what is expected from youth,

these adults should also establish guidelines for what to do when boundaries are broken. It may be helpful to include selected youth leaders from your congregation or school to be a part of this initial conversation. These youth may be able to provide insights and situational examples that can help determine more clear, fair, and necessary recommendations.

After you have clear ideas and direction from adults and parents, the next step is to meet with the youth themselves. Try the following activity to help youth name, clarify, and take ownership of specific boundaries they will need to follow to create and maintain a caring Christian environment.

Step One: Ask the youth to brainstorm and list their responses to these two topics:

- What damages or destroys relationships?
- What builds or nourishes relationships?

Encourage youth to name specific actions and attitudes that fit into each list (Damages – rumors, cheating, two-faced behavior, talking behind one’s back; Nourishes – respect, spending time with, listening, etc.). Allow students plenty of time to add to the list. Make sure adults wait to add to either list until youth have finished.

Step Two: After completing this list, ask: “What do you notice about these lists?”

Again, allow plenty of time for their responses. Hopefully, they will notice that the contents of these lists are how we want to be treated or don’t want to be treated by others – the Golden Rule.

Step Three: Next, explain to the students: “The purpose of this activity was to help us begin to think about specific boundaries we need to keep in order to create an environment where relationships are nourished, not damaged. You have just listed how you want and don’t want to be treated by others. Let’s condense these two lists into one list of the Ten Most Important Boundaries / Rules for Behavior.” Before naming boundaries, offer youth these helpful suggestions:

1. Keep it simple. State the boundary clearly and concisely.

“One person speaks at a time.”

“Disagree appropriately.”

2. State it positively. Tell them what they should do and how to do it.

“Thou SHALL...” instead of “Thou shall NOT...”

“Be in the classroom, at your desk, before the bell rings.”

3. Stick to the “Golden Rule.” Always keep in mind how you want / deserve to be treated as a child of God.

When the students are finished listing their ideas, add any other boundaries you deem necessary.

Step Four: Create and post your new list of boundaries. Send copies home to parents to read and discuss. Refer to the list often!

Step Five: MAKE SURE to let kids know that these boundaries are expectations. If they break a boundary, let them know that there will be consistent consequences and what those consequences will be. Be sure to consult with your principal, director of religious education, or pastor for exact procedures regarding consequences. It is most important that the youth know that:

1. There are specific boundaries for behaviors that EVERYONE is expected to follow.
2. Maintaining these boundaries will help make this a Christian environment where all are safe and welcomed.
3. There are pre-established and appropriate consequences for breaking boundaries (more on how to set and enforce consequences later).
4. The teacher or another designated adult will address any broken boundaries in a fair and dignified way (more on this in the next section).

Be sure to explain why it is important for all of us to maintain appropriate and healthy boundaries.

- “They help us know how to treat one another and how we can expect to be treated.”
- “Following these rules will help us all learn to show respect to others.”
- “Maintaining boundaries helps us create good Christian relationships.”

### **Methods for Maintaining Boundaries**

Along with naming boundaries, you also need to know ways to maintain and reinforce boundaries with youth. Here are three tried and true methods from the Youth Care Specialists at Boys Town:

### **Proactive Teaching**

Set youth up for success by specifically naming and briefly explaining the boundaries / expected behaviors before each event / activity. A little preventive teaching goes a long way in stopping behaviors before they get started. The steps to proactive teaching are:

1. **Describe the behaviors** that are appropriate and / or expected for this event / activity.
2. **Give a reason.**
3. **Practice** (optional).

**Example** – In a Girls Support Group, gossiping and complaining can quickly ruin a good discussion. Use Proactive Teaching to remind the girls:

- a. “When describing a problem or situation, please do not use any names. Stick to talking only about yourself and your feelings. No blaming or complaining.”
- b. “It’s important to do this for many reasons: Because no one want to be talked about behind their backs; it is not fair to discuss someone who is not present; we are about solving problems, not laying blame and complaining.”

It’s amazing how these simple boundaries can prevent potentially serious problems and enable the girls to speak more freely, trust one another more, and resolve conflicts in a more responsible fashion!

### **Effective Praise**

One of the best ways to help youth do the right this is to “catch them doing the right thing.” We all need reassurance that we’re doing what we are suppose to do. We all like to receive praise and compliments. A great way to ensure that a positive behavior is repeated is to recognize it with praise. Tell youth what they’re doing right, when they’re doing a good job, and be sure to name exactly what it is that they are doing so well. They they’ll know exactly what to do right the next time!

The Steps to Effective Praise are:

1. **Show your approval.** Smile, speak a word of praise or thanks, or give a thumbs up.

2. **Describe the positive.** Name it specifically: "Alan, thanks for waiting for Juana to finish speaking before stating your point." or "Allison, I really appreciated your note to let me know that you'd be late for the planning meeting!"
3. **Give a reason.** Tell them why what they did was good, important, or helpful. To Alan: "Waiting for someone to finish speaking before you speak is a great way to show respect and to show that you were really listening!" To Allison: "Your note helped me use that extra time wisely instead of worrying and waiting."

### **Corrective Teaching**

Boundary breaking is "bound" to happen. We all cross a boundary now and then, sometimes by accident and sometimes on purpose. Our task as adults is to provide consistent management of boundaries, whether kept or broken. It is important to know, in advance, what to do when boundaries / rules are broken. **Corrective Teaching**, another tried and true method from the Youth Care Specialists at Boys Town, coupled with appropriate consequences, is a most effective method for transforming a broken boundary into a teachable moment.

The steps to Corrective Teaching are:

1. **Stop the problem behavior.** As soon as you notice a broken boundary, address it. Sometimes just moving closer to the problem behavior – moving to sit next to the two whispering teens, or catching the eye of those involved – can stop the problem. Other times a prompt, spoken in a calm and descriptive manner, can help kids get back on track: "Remember, no talking during the Prayer Service."
2. **Give a consequence.** Sometimes it is enough of a consequence to have an adult leader sit next to you or to be gently prompted in front of the whole group. Other times, a more substantial consequence is needed.

Following are some guidelines for consequences:

- Consequences should be established by adults and communicated to youth and parents in advance! Don't wait for a situation to arise before deciding what the consequence will be. It is best to have predetermined consequences that are well communicated to all before any boundaries are broken. Consequences decided on the spur of the moment can too easily become punishing, vengeful, or too drastic.
- Consequences should never be degrading or humiliating. They should be opportunities for learning responsibility.

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- Consequences should be given fairly and consistently. All youth should be held accountable for maintaining these boundaries. Don't play favorites or let youth talk their way out of owning up to their behavior.
  - Corrective teaching and consequences should be done one-to-one whenever possible, even if it means taking a youth aside for a moment. It is rarely effective to correct a youth in front of a group. Usually this causes anger and embarrassment and you run the risk of escalating the problem rather than correcting it.
  - Ask for help from parents and other adults. Sometimes the presence of other parents / adults helps youth stay on track. These "extra" adults could be used as "time-out" folks – someone to send a youth to be with if his or her behavior causes the youth to be removed from the large group activity. The "time-out" folks are not meant to be disciplinarians, but rather an option for a youth who may need some extra one-on-one time.
3. **Describe the positive behavior the youth should do.** Now that the youth knows what not to do, let him or her know what to do: "Instead of whispering to Shannon, please give your quiet attention to our guest speaker."
4. **Give youth a chance to engage in positive behavior.** Now is your change to back away and allow the youth to turn his or her behavior around. Watch for any steps in the right direction and give praise for it. Again, most of this can be done in low voice tones, one-on-one, without disturbing or calling attention from the rest of the group, although there may be times when you have to stop the group activity and address a major boundary breaking.

Addressing and correcting any problems promptly and without much disruption sends a powerful message to the whole group. It lets them know that you are watching out for them, that you care about how they treat one another, and that you keep your word. They need to see that you will be firm, yet gentle, in safeguarding their boundaries. Your actions speak much louder than words in these instances.

ALWAYS REMEMBER THE GOLDEN RULE WHEN CORRECTING BEHAVIORS. Treat the youth as you would want to be treated. Put yourself in that teen's place. Show genuine empathy and understanding rather than anger and dominance. When dealing with difficult situations, remember these two adages:

"A gentle response turns away wrath."  
"Love the sinner, hate the sin!"



### Top Ten Boundaries for Youth Group Activities

Here are some time-tested, success-inspiring, “catch ‘em being good” boundaries that address areas of behavior that are common to most religion education settings.

1. **One person speaks at a time.** Whether in small or large group discussions, this is an ever-present opportunity to show respect and to really listen to what everyone has to say.
2. **Disagree appropriately.** This is a very important skill to teach, model, role-play and use. Disagreeing appropriately allows opinions to be voiced without aggression or disrespect. It teaches us how to accept and allow others to be different. It can defuse tense situations.
3. **No put downs.** Show respect to others by refraining from making value judgments about them: “You may not use words like ‘stupid,’ ‘dumb,’ ‘ugly,’ ‘gross,’ or other judgmental, negative words to describe people or their thoughts. Say ‘please be quiet’ instead of ‘shut up.’ No teasing, even if only in fun.”
4. **Say whatever you want as long as it is appropriate** – as long as what is said is on topic and does not contain any obscene or offensive language.
5. **What is said here, stays here** – except for when an adult needs to seek help for a teen in danger. When anyone makes any reference to doing something harmful or illegal to himself or someone else, we need to speak up and seek help. Do not keep this information to yourself. This boundary helps create trust, safety, and a sense of community.
6. **Self-disclose appropriately.** Personal dumping, public confessions, blaming or complaining are never allowed. If it does happen, the teacher should politely interrupt and steer the conversation back on track.
7. **Practice good listening skills.** Looking at the person who is speaking, concentrating on what is being said, etc., all show respect and value of others.
8. **Observe school / church rules about public displays of affection (PDA).** YES, it is important to state this clearly. PDA can cause serious problems among youth groups. Some recommended PDA rules: “Refrain from hand holding, kissing, cuddling, or any other form of exclusive affection at school / church activities; ask permission before giving a hug – especially to newcomers.”
9. **Ask for help** – from adults or youth leaders whenever you need it.

10. **Participant.** "You get out of class what you put into class. So get into it!"

### **Boundaries for One-to-One with Teens**

When a teen asks to talk to you privately, there are some important boundaries to make known:

1. Some things cannot be kept secret. Let teens know that if they share thoughts of hurting themselves or someone else, or reveal involvement in illegal, sexual, or abusive activity, that you have a moral obligation to tell someone else who can help them. In these serious circumstances, a teen's physical and / or emotional life is at stake. We must let kids know that we value their life above all else, even about their possible anger at "telling" on them.
2. Meet in an open space where you can be seen, but not overheard, by others. If meeting in an office, keep the door open, or use only an office with uncovered windows. This can prevent any allegations of misconduct and provide you both with the security of knowing others are around.
3. Remind kids that you are not a trained counselor, but that you can point them in the right direction. Have referral sources available with names and phone numbers of professionals who can help.

### **Skills That Build Boundaries and Help Prevent Conflict**

The best way to resolve a conflict is to prevent it! We can help prevent some conflict by teaching, practicing, and modeling good social skills. What is a skill? It is a step-by-step approach, a "how to" method of learning proper social behaviors.

Many conflicts arise because of inappropriate or misunderstood verbal or non-verbal communications. Learning more about and practicing social skills can help youth learn how to relate to one another and to adults in a more appropriate and Christian fashion. Here are some examples:

- How to disagree appropriately
- How to accept criticism
- How to give / receive compliments
- How to ask for help
- How to self-disclose
- How to express empathy and understanding to others
- How to follow rules
- How to apologize / accept apologies



## **Grade 8 session 1 | Lesson Plan & Handouts**

### **How People Violate Boundaries**

**Time estimate:** 1 session of 45 minutes or this session may be combined with sessions 2 and 3 into one long session with breaks

**Session one objective:** Learn basic boundary violations

**Supplies needed:** ***Boundaries, A Guide for Teens*** (copy of book for presenter)  
***How do People Violate Boundaries*** (Handout 8-1, page 4 of this material) one copy for each student

*Note: Teacher should read over the grade 7 lesson plans, ***Boundaries for Good Relationships in God's Plan***, before teaching this lesson and chapters 4-7 of the book, ***Boundaries, a Guide for Teens*** by Rev. Val J. Peter and Tom Dowd.*

**Prayer:** Loving God, open our minds and hearts to you. Help us discover your loving plan for each of our lives – a plan to grow, to learn, to give, to receive and to love in relationships with all our brothers and sisters. Help us to know and live this plan which will lead us to happiness with you forever.

**Review:** Last year, during your annual safe environment training, you learned about personal boundaries and your boundary circle, the types of personal boundaries, the value of healthy boundaries, and some rules for creating good boundaries in our lives. You learned that you want to create boundaries that are strong enough to help you find safe, good people for relationships at the various levels in your lives. You also talked about developing healthy boundaries to enable you to become the kind of person that you yearn to be and the kind of people God yearns for you to be.

This year we will learn about boundary violations, that is, how boundaries are broken, including some tactics used in a process called grooming.

All of us suffer from the effects of original sin. People do not always obey God's plan for relationships. People can break the Ten Commandments, the laws of a country, state or city, or even the rules that parents, teachers and coaches create for our good. People can misunderstand what good boundaries are or they can violate the rules for good boundaries.

### **Lecture: Boundaries – Broken, Violated and more**

Problems can develop along the way with our boundaries. Sometimes as we develop our boundaries, they are too open or closed. If your boundaries are:

- **Too closed or rigid**—You never share personal thoughts and emotions with others.
- **Too open or loose**—You share too much information, especially private thoughts, feelings, and experiences with others who are not appropriately in the close boundary circle.

Both situations are unhealthy. If your boundaries are too closed, you shut yourself off from others. Ultimately you will be hurting yourself and those who truly want to care for you. Some ways of doing this are:

- Always saying "NO" to requests that require you to get close to someone
- Sharing little or nothing about yourself with family or close friends
- Never identifying your wants, needs and feelings or talking about them
- Never making friends
- Never letting trusted adults help you
- Never asking for help, even when needed
- Isolating yourself from family and classmates

If your boundaries are too loose or open, you may end up hurt by others. Some ways this could happen this include:

- Sharing too much personal information about yourself with acquaintances or strangers
- Taking responsibility for others' feelings
- Believing everything you hear
- Always doing what others say, never disagreeing or saying "NO"
- Doing anything to avoid conflict
- Displaying inappropriate affection
- Sitting or standing too close to another
- Saying or doing sexually suggestive things in front of others, including jokes, noises or comments
- Being tricked into being abused and not seeking help

Especially with boundaries that are too open, violations are bound to occur. They can range from the simple to extreme. *Hand out **How Do People Violate Boundaries** (Handout 8-1, page 4 of this material) worksheet to each student. Read together part one.*

We do not always need to be physical with another person for a boundary violation to occur. Many of us use a computer or telephone to communicate with our family, friends, and acquaintances. We are all familiar with emailing, texting, instant messaging, **Facebook**, **My Space**, etc. Boundary violations can occur through any of these means of communication. The items listed with an asterisk are some examples of violations that can occur in an email, text message, etc.

*Ask the students to complete part two and three. After all students have completed at least part two, read through the questions in part three together. Ask students to offer their answers.*

**Summary:** Today we learned about some boundary violations. The next time that we come together we will learn more about violations. Take home your handout on the boundary violations and keep it in a place where you can read it again.

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***End of lesson plan for session one. Handouts on following pages.***

## **How Do People Violate Boundaries?**

### **Part one – Read the list below of boundary violations.**

1. Interrupting a conversation when you are speaking with someone else.
2. Taking one of your possessions.
3. Teasing or making fun of you that hurts you.\*
4. Asking very personal questions that are inappropriate.\*
5. Gossiping about you.\*
6. Always hanging around you. Making you feel uncomfortable by invading your private space.
7. Excessive phoning, texting, instant messaging, emailing\*
8. Saying\* or doing things in front of you that are offensive or vulgar.
9. Always trying to sit or be next to you. Sitting on your lap.
10. Using inappropriate language\* or touching.
11. Physically, emotionally, or sexually abusing you.
12. Forcing you to do something sexual.

\* These boundary violations can occur using technology.

### **Part two – Follow these instructions:**

- a) Place a check mark next to any statement listed above that has happened to you.
- b) Underline any statement that you have done to another.

### **Part three**

1. How does violating others' boundaries hurt them? Explain.
2. How does violating someone else's boundaries affect you? Explain.
3. What can you do to make amends for the boundaries of others that you have violated?
4. If someone is constantly violating your boundaries, what should you do?

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#### Part two – Follow these instructions:

- a) Place a check mark next to any statement listed above that has happened to you.
- b) Underline any statement that you have done to another.

#### Part three

1. How does violating others' boundaries hurt them? Explain.  
*Breaking someone's boundary shows disrespect and can harm the person emotionally and/or physically.*
2. How does violating someone else's boundaries affect you? Explain.  
*May make me less sensitive and caring towards others. Makes it difficult for me to learn good boundaries for myself. Is sinful and hurtful to others, so could make me distant from God, guilty and ashamed.*
3. What can you do to make amends for the boundaries of others that you have violated?  
*Ask for forgiveness from God and from the person I harmed. Learn more about boundaries and keep them.*
4. If someone is constantly violating your boundaries, what should you do?  
*Talk to a trusted adult. Recognize that it is not a healthy relationship. End the relationship.*



## **Grade 8 session 2 | Lesson Plan & Handouts**

### **Grooming & Tactics**

**Time estimate:** 1 session of 45 minutes or this session may be combined with sessions 1 and 3 into one long session with breaks

**Session two objective:** Define grooming and some tactics used by groomers

**Supplies needed:** **Grooming & Tactics** (Student Handout 8-2, page 5 of this material) one for each student  
**Grooming Scenarios** (Student Handout 8-3, page 6 of this material) one for each student or each small group

*Note: Skip the **Prayer** and **Review** sections below if you are presenting all three sessions of the grade 8 material in one long presentation.*

**Prayer:** Loving God, open our minds and hearts to you. Help us discover your loving plan for each of our lives – a plan to grow, to learn, to give, to receive and to love in relationships with all our brothers and sisters. Help us to know and live this plan which will lead us to happiness with you forever.

**Review:** In the last session we began talking about how someone can break our personal boundaries. We also can do this to others. We learned that violations range from simple, such as interrupting a conversation, to very serious, such as abuse. Today we will learn more about the serious boundary violations and the process an abuser uses on a victim. We do this so that you can learn to spot these tactics and learn to protect yourself from those who would want to harm or use you.

### **Grooming**

Definition: When a person, whether male or female, plays with someone's feelings in order to gain control of the other person, that process is called grooming. There are adults who will take advantage of age difference to use a younger person in such a way. These people are



called groomers. The groomer wants to prepare the person (victim) for some type of behavior that will benefit the groomer's selfish goals. Emotional grooming is used to seduce or con youth into sexual activity. Peers can also groom one another for personal gain.

The "groomer"

- can be very friendly, charming, warm, etc., but is very skilled at manipulation and persuasion
- wants to control his/her victim(s) and prepare them for some type of unhealthy behavior.
- creates a false sense of trust with the victim by convincing the victim that the abuser is the only person to trust; in reality the groomer cannot be trusted at all
- uses secrecy to control others by persuading the victim to "keep this special thing just between us."

How does someone do this? There are many grooming tactics. *Give each student a copy of the **Grooming & Tactics** handout (Student Handout 8-2, page 5 of this material). As you read through this list with the students, give a simple example of each one, or ask a student to give an example.*

1. **Flattery**—Insincere compliments that are phony and overdone; these are always meant to get something in return; they are NOT the same as a compliment or praise.
2. **Bribery**—excessive gift giving, etc. to make someone feel obligated to another; groomers use the gift given to demand favors in return; gifts should be freely given with no expectations
3. **Status**—the groomer uses the lure of popularity, money, possessions to get the victim to do what the groomer wants;

These first three tactics—flattery, bribery and status—are called "soft" grooming tactics. They mimic good things and can be difficult to see through.

4. **Jealousy and possessiveness**—these are normal emotions that everyone feels at some time; groomers use them to control and manipulate a person; also the groomer isolates the victim as this is very important; the groomer treats the victim as an "object" rather than as a person to respect; examples include: telling another how to dress, where to go, how to talk, what to like
5. **Insecurity**—another normal emotion; It can be used two ways by groomers
  - a. groomers use it to play on the neediness of their victim; the groomer may exaggerate the victims flaws in order to control and keep him/her dependent on the groomer; a groomer will use insecurity to manipulate

- b. The groomer may act insecure to seek the comfort and reassurance of the victim; examples: "You are so great. I don't deserve your friendship."; "If you leave me, I don't know what I will do without you." If you break up with me, I will kill myself!"

Note: If a person goes so far as to threaten self harm, you must tell a trusted adult and get help. You cannot stay in a relationship with someone who threatens to hurt or kill him/herself. Threats can lead to actions.

- 6. **Accusations**—the groomer says the victim did things in order to scare, threaten, control and manipulate; often the accusations are said so others can hear in order to embarrass, humiliate, and intimidate the victim
- 7. **Intimidation**—scare tactics that can be a word, look, a stance that are meant to frighten, threaten, intimidate the victim into doing exactly what the groomer wants; can be verbal or nonverbal, physical or emotional; this is not healthy and has no place in any relationship; this is related to bullying behavior
  - a. Examples of verbal intimidation: vulgar language, sexual noises, howling, questions that are too personal
  - b. Examples of physical actions that intimidate: looming over a seated person, standing too close, touching/grabbing yourself or another; using loud and controlling voice tones and language; staring at sexual body parts; hitting hands together very hard; clothing that is too tight or revealing; faking a punch; holding a fist to another
- 8. **Anger**—this is another normal emotion; it is only a grooming tactic when used to control others; making the victim feel afraid of being hurt
- 9. **Control**—this is the goal of the groomer; the groomer wants the victim to feel powerless and helpless; Someone is too controlling if he/she does any of the following:
  - a. Calls constantly to check up on you
  - b. Tells you how to dress, be friends with, how to spend time or money
  - c. Forces you to do what he/she wants you to do
  - d. Sends harassing or threatening e mails, texts, notes
  - e. Physically, emotionally, or sexually abuses you
  - f. Uses violence or intimidation to get his/her own way
  - g. Puts you down or humiliates you in public
  - h. Makes demands or gives orders
  - i. Wants to keep your relationship or any part of it secret
  - j. Has sudden and explosive anger and may throw things, slam doors, punch walls
  - k. Refuses to respect you or others
  - l. Tries to keep you away from family and friends

- m. Gives gifts to get something from you
- n. Spreads rumors or gossips about you
- o. Threatens self harm or harm to others

The groomer will gain control of the relationship using any or all of the grooming tactics. Groomers will take their time. If one tactic is not working, they will use another.

**Activity:** *Separate the class into small groups of 2-4. Hand out to each small group **Grooming Scenarios** (Student Handout 8-3, pages 6-7 of this material). Assign one scenario to each small group and ask the small group to decide which grooming tactic it is. After several minutes, bring the class together. Ask each small group to share their scenario and answers.*

**Conclusion:** We have talked about this today so that each one of you can be safer in relationships with peers and adults. Our goal is to help you learn about the right way to have relationships so that each one of you can fulfill the dream that God dreamed for you. God desires that you have right relationships that help you become more loving, caring and holy people. Take home your handout and put it somewhere in your home that you can refer to it. We all need reminders and this list is good reminder of when a relationship is bad for you and time to get out.

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***End of lesson plan for session two. Handouts on following pages.***

## Grooming & Tactics

**Definition:** When a person, whether male or female, plays with someone's feelings in order to gain control of the other person, that process is called grooming. There are adults who will take advantage of age difference to use a younger person in such a way. These people are called groomers. The groomer wants to prepare the person (victim) for some type of behavior that will benefit the groomer's selfish goals. Emotional grooming is used to seduce or con youth into sexual activity. Peers can also groom one another for personal gain.

There are many grooming tactics.

1. **Flattery**—insincere compliments that are phony and overdone; these are always meant to get something in return; they are NOT the same as a compliment or praise.
2. **Bribery**—excessive gift giving, etc. to make someone feel obligated to another; groomers use the gift given to demand favors in return; gifts should be freely given with no expectations
3. **Status**—the groomer uses the lure of popularity, money, possessions to get the victim to do what the groomer wants;
4. **Jealousy and possessiveness**—these are normal emotions that everyone feels at some time; groomers use them to control and manipulate a person; also the groomer isolates the victim as this is very important; the groomer treats the victim as an "object" rather than as a person to respect; examples include: telling another how to dress, where to go, how to talk, what to like
5. **Insecurity**— another normal emotion; It can be used two ways by groomers
  - a. groomers use it to play on the neediness of their victim; the groomer may exaggerate the victims flaws in order to control and keep him/her dependent on the groomer; a groomer will use insecurity to manipulate
  - b. The groomer may act insecure to seek the comfort and reassurance of the victim; examples: "You are so great. I don't deserve your friendship."; "If you leave me, I don't know what I will do without you." If you break up with me, I will kill myself!"
6. **Accusations**—the groomer says the victim did things in order to scare, threaten, control and manipulate; often the accusations are said so others can hear in order to embarrass, humiliate, and intimidate the victim
7. **Intimidation**—scare tactics that can be a word, look, a stance that are meant to frighten, threaten, intimidate the victim into doing exactly what the groomer wants; can be verbal or nonverbal, physical or emotional; this is not healthy and has no place in any relationship; this is related to bullying behavior
8. **Anger**—this is another normal emotion; it is only a grooming tactic when used to control others; making the victim feel afraid of being hurt
9. **Control**—this is the goal of the groomer; the groomer wants the victim to feel powerless and helpless

**Grooming Scenarios**

***Identify which of the nine grooming tactics is used in each of these scenarios.***

1. "What kind of fool do you think I am? I have seen the way you look at him. You're my girl and you cannot have it both ways."
2. "I always knew you were too good for me. I knew it wouldn't last. Let me know when it's over."
3. "Do you ever think anyone will ever want you as a friend or treat you as well as I do? Are you kidding me? You are lucky I have stayed around as long as I have."
4. "She told you what about me? Just wait until I see her. She will regret saying that."
5. "I am so mad right now, I could kill you. I feel like tearing something apart!"
6. "Just let him try to mess with me. I could take him easily. He has no idea who he is dealing with."
7. "I saw what you did. I saw the way you looked at her. You flirted with her and you flirt with everyone."
8. "You are so cool. You are the best on the team. I would love to...."
9. "Why don't you come with me and my friends to this party? Everybody is going to be there. Don't you want to be with us?"
10. "Don't you think I care for you? Don't I give you nice things?"
11. "I have told you before that I don't like you wearing that outfit. I have told you what I want you to wear when you are with me."
12. "If you cared for me, you would do this for me."
13. "I don't know why I waste my time with you. You are such a loser."
14. "This is so special, let's just keep it between us."
15. "Your parents said what about me? They don't know you and care for you like I do. Let's just forget about them."

TEACHER COPY  
HANDOUT 8-3

### **Grooming Scenarios**

***Identify which of the nine grooming tactics is used in each of these scenarios.***

1. "What kind of fool do you think I am? I have seen the way you look at him. You're my girl and you cannot have it both ways." (*jealously and possessiveness*)
2. "I always knew you were too good for me. I knew it wouldn't last. Let me know when it's over." (*insecurity – of the groomer*)
3. Do you ever think anyone will ever want you as a friend or treat you as well as I do? Are you kidding me? You are lucky I have stayed around as long as I have." (*insecurity – of the victim*)
4. "She told you what about me? Just wait until I see her. She will regret saying that." (*anger, intimidation*)
5. "I am so mad right now, I could kill you. I feel like tearing something apart!" (*anger*)
6. "Just let him try to mess with me. I could take him easily. He has no idea who he is dealing with." (*intimidation*)
7. "I saw what you did. I saw the way you looked at her. You flirted with her and you flirt with everyone." (*accusation*)
8. "You are so cool. You are the best on the team. I would love to...." (*flattery*)
9. "Why don't you come with me and my friends to this party? Everybody is going to be there. Don't you want to be with us?" (*status*)
10. "Don't you think I care for you? Don't I give you nice things?" (*bribery*)
11. "I have told you before that I don't like you wearing that outfit. I have told you what I want you to wear when you are with me." (*control*)
12. "If you cared for me, you would do this for me." (*control*)
13. "I don't know why I wasted my time with you. You are such a loser." (*insecurity – of the victim*)
14. "This is so special, let's just keep it between us." (*control*)
15. "Your parents said what about me? They don't know you and care for you like I do. Let's just forget about them." (*control*)



## **Grade 8 session three | Lesson Plan & Handouts**

### **Friendships for Life**

**Time estimate:** 1 session of 45 minutes or this session may be combined with sessions 1 and 2 into one long session with breaks

**Session three objectives:**

1. Learn tactics to protect oneself from boundary violations
2. Learn strategies for building healthy friendships

**Supplies needed:** Chart paper or chalkboard  
Good Friend or Not? (Student Handout 8-4, page 5 of this material) one for each small group  
Parent letter for take home (page 9 of this material)

*Note: Skip the **Prayer** and **Review** sections below if you are presenting all three sessions together in one long presentation.*

**Prayer:** Loving God, open our minds and hearts to you. Help us discover your loving plan for each of our lives – a plan to grow, to learn, to give, to receive and to love in relationships with all our brothers and sisters. Help us to know and live this plan which will lead us to happiness with you forever.

**Review:** In our last session we learned about what grooming is and the tactics a groomer uses to control another person (victim) in a relationship. We learned that this is never a healthy, right relationship and we should get out of it. Many of these tactics are used by peers with one another. If you learn to spot this behavior in a person your own age and deal with it effectively, you will be better able to avoid the grooming attempts of an adult or someone several years older than you. Last year we talked about personal boundaries and how they keep us safe. If our boundaries are healthy and strong, we keep people and relationships in appropriate places in our lives.

But, things can happen in life. Some things do not always go as we plan or would like. Some times we get in over our heads. What can we do to protect ourselves from boundary violations and the tactics of a groomer? How do we know and stay away from unhealthy people and relationships? Some suggestions:

1. Write out your personal boundaries and plan to stick to them.
2. Resist peer pressure.
  - a. Stay calm. Use an assertive tone of voice.
  - b. Say clearly that you do not want to do the inappropriate activity.
  - c. Suggest an alternative.
  - d. Keep saying no if the person persists.
  - e. Ask the person to leave or you leave the situation.
3. Let teasing roll off your back. Shrug it off with a "So?" People who make fun of others are really dealing with great insecurity inside themselves.
4. Find friends who share your values and your family values. There is strength in numbers!
5. Walk away from an unhealthy relationship. Danger signs include: one-sidedness, manipulation, possessiveness, unrealistic demands, anger, sexual pressures, drug and alcohol use.
6. Seek adult advice or intervention.
7. Report sexual harassment, physical or sexual abuse or assaults immediately to a trusted adult.

Right now you are focusing much time and energy on being a good friend and finding good friends. Sometimes it is challenging to know who we should befriend. Girls should learn to be good friends with girls first. The same rule applies to boys. Teens should be friends with teens their age. Adults and other people several years older than you should not want to be close friends with you. Adults appropriately have their friendship needs met by other adults. The same goes for you.

### **Activity: Good Friend or Bad?**

*Divide the group into pairs. Hand out **Good Friend or Not?** (Student Handout 8-4, page 5 of this material). Assign each pair a scenario. Ask them to read it to themselves, decide if this is an example of good friendship or not. If it is not, ask the pair to think of a good way to respond. Give the pairs a few minutes. While the pairs are working, make a T-chart on the chart paper or chalkboard. Put the titles: "Good friends do" and "Good friends do not" on the T-chart. Ask each pair to read their scenario for the larger group. After each one presents their scene, ask the*



group, "Is this an example of good friendship or not?" If no, what response did the pair offer?  
Can the large group think of others?

Then create a list of what good friends do and what good friends do not do on the T-chart.  
Make sure to use the qualities highlighted in each scenario. Some friendship qualities are below.  
Your group's answers may vary.

<b>Good friends do:</b>	<b>Good friends do not:</b>
<i>Share and take turns</i>	<i>Ask you to lie, cheat or steal (do anything illegal or immoral)</i>
<i>Help each other in sad times</i>	<i>abandon you in tough times</i>
<i>Encourage each other to be better people</i>	<i>feel threatened by other friends</i>
<i>Are not exclusive of other friends</i>	<i>share personal or private information with others</i>
<i>Are faithful</i>	<i>Pressure, bully or manipulate others</i>
<i>Are flexible and understanding</i>	<i>Belittle, make fun of, mock, tease friend about how they are or what they like</i>
<i>Accept yourself &amp; others for who they are</i>	

Now that we have created a list of friendship qualities, we can discuss some suggestions to help you build good friendships. Being a good friend and developing good friendships is a task for your entire life.

- Remember your personal plan and boundaries
- Take your time.
- Balance the give and take.
- Don't worry too much.
- Adjust to change.
- Examine past relationships and learn from them
- Remember that friends should respect your wishes, dreams, and requests.  
Friends should lift you up.
- Friends respect you and your boundaries.
- Friends will never use, abuse, or groom you.
- Look for good qualities in others
- Seek the incite and wisdom of your parents or trusted adults
- Join your church youth group or volunteer at school, church or your community.

**Conclusion:** Remember God's plan. God created you in love and for loving relationships throughout your life. You are born into relationships from the first breath that you take. As you grow, relationships all over your boundary circles come and go. Seek good, appropriate relationships that help you become better people. If you ever need help, talk with a trusted adult. God has made you unique for a wonderful purpose. God is with you at each step of the journey.

*Note: Send home a copy of the parent letter. Please adapt the letter as necessary to fit your parish/school situation.*

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***End of lesson plan for session three. Handouts and parent letter on following pages.***

**Good Friend or Not?**

*Decide whether this is an example of good friendship or not. Tell why or why not. Think of a response if you are involved with this person.*

1. "I know I picked the movie last time, but I choose really good ones. I should pick it again because this is a great movie and you will love it."
2. "Hey, look, I am sorry that you had a fight with your parents, but I can't listen to all that depressing stuff right now. I am happy that I get to go to the school dance and we should talk about who might be there."
3. "You know what? It is not a good idea to send that text to your mom right now. Wait until you have calmed down a bit and thought it over."
4. "Why couldn't you have said something? You were the one with the idea to cheat on the math test. Then I get caught and the teacher asks who gave me the answers and you said nothing."
5. "I like her too. I think she is a fun. I don't see why she can't come with us. Why is it always just us and none of the other girls from school?"
6. "Why did you tell the entire class that I like her? I don't even like her; I just talked to her at the ball game."
7. "You can't go to the game because you have to watch your younger brothers? How about I come over and help you? We could play some games with them and still have fun."
8. "I really think you are worrying too much about this. Let's take a break from it and see how you feel about it tomorrow after a good night's sleep."
9. "If you were really a good friend you would do it for me. I have helped you lots of times. I don't think this is too much to ask, I don't care what your parents say. "
10. "Why are you always hassling me about being in the drama club? I really like it and wish you would cut it out."

### Good Friend or Not?

***Decide whether this is an example of good friendship or not. Tell why or why not. Think of a response if you are involved with this person.***

1. "I know I picked the movie last time, but I choose really good ones. I should pick it again because this is a great movie and you will love it."

Answer: No, friends should share and take turns.

Response: I would like a chance to pick the movie. It seems fair that we take turns.

2. "Hey, look, I am sorry that you had a fight with your parents, but I can't listen to all that depressing stuff right now. I am happy that I get to go to the school dance and we should talk about who might be there."

Answer: No, friends help each other in sad times.

Response: I really need a friend to listen to me now.

3. "You know what? It isn't a good idea to send that text to your mom right now. Wait until you have calmed down a bit and thought it over."

Answer: Yes, friends encourage each other to be better people.

Response:

4. "Why couldn't you have said something? You were the one with the idea to cheat on the math test. Then I get caught and the teacher asks who gave me the answers and you said nothing."

Answer: No, friends don't ask you to lie, cheat or steal. Friends don't leave you hanging out to dry.

Response:

5. "I like her too. I think she is a fun. I don't see why she can't come with us. Why is it always just us and none of the other girls from school?"

Answer: No, friends are not exclusive of others or threatened by other friendships.

Response: I want to be friend with you and others too.

6. "Why did you tell the entire class that I like her? I don't even like her; I just talked to her at the ball game."

Answer: No, friends do not make up things or exaggerate relationships.

Response: Hey, that was not a cool thing to do. I would never do that to you.

7. "You can't go to the game because you have to watch your younger brothers? How about I come over and help you? We could play some games with them and still have fun."

Answer: Yes, friends are flexible and understanding.

Response:

8. "I really think you are worrying too much about this. Let's take a break from it and see how you feel about it tomorrow after a good night's sleep."

Answer: Yes, friends help keep you balanced and offer good perspective.

Response:

9. "If you were really a good friend you would do it for me. I have helped you lots of times. I don't think this is too much to ask, I don't care what your parents say."

Answer: No, friends do not pressure or manipulate friends.

Response: I cannot do this for you. Please do not ask me to do it again.

10. "Why are you always hassling me about being in the drama club? I really like it and wish you would cut it out."

Answer: No, friends do not belittle, mock, put down or make fun of another or his/her interests

Response: I like some of the same things that you do. We like different things too. That should be okay with friends.

Date

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Today your son or daughter in eighth grade completed the last session in the safe environment series for grade eight. The three sessions were:

- 1. *How People Violate Boundaries***
- 2. *Grooming & Tactics***
- 3. *Friendship for Life.***

These sessions were created especially by our diocese for these students and built upon material from last year.

In addition to the basic safety training taught in previous years, these sessions helped the students explore boundary violations, grooming and grooming tactics. Grooming is the process in which a person, whether male or female, plays with someone's feelings in order to gain control of the other person. Adults or peers will groom young people in order to meet some selfish and unhealthy need that the groomer has. These are never good relationships and a young person should always end it. The final session summarized the material with a lesson on friendships.

As your son or daughter grows into adolescence, it can be difficult to speak with them about important things, such as the material in these sessions. Please make time to talk with them about it. An easy way to start the conversation will be to look over the handouts that were used throughout the sessions. Every student was given copies to take home. Please contact us if you have any concerns or would like a set of the handouts.

Sincerely,



DIOCESE OF  
**FORT WAYNE-SOUTH BEND**  
SAFE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM

## Verification Form

**To:** Parents/Guardians

**Date:** School Year 2020-21

**Re:** Training for students in Catholic schools and parish religious education programs

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After you have instructed your child(ren) in the safe environment lesson provided by your parish or school, please complete the information below and return as directed.

Name of student: \_\_\_\_\_

Parish/school name: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of lesson taught: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of student: \_\_\_\_\_

Parish/school name: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of lesson taught: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of student: \_\_\_\_\_

Parish/school name: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of lesson taught: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of student: \_\_\_\_\_

Parish/school name: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of lesson taught: \_\_\_\_\_

*I have received the training materials and used them to teach my child(ren) the lesson as requested.*

Signature of parent/guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_