

Children & Youth Personal Safety Program

Introduction

The *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, adopted by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in 2002, requires the parish or school to provide formation for children in the areas of safety and the integrity of their person. Our philosophy is to directly involve parents in the formation of their children. In addition to a classroom presentation of safety issues, adapted for different grade levels, parents will receive materials to help guide their own discussions with their children.

This program accomplishes these goals in two ways:

- (1) Parents will receive materials on teaching children about the issues of safety. This will take the form of two information sheets from a nationally recognized center on child safety, along with additional materials incorporated into the parent's letters.
- (2) Lesson plans are included with this program that teach children their role in maintaining a safe environment. The lesson plans are arranged for younger children, older elementary students and high school students.

If you are happy with the *Touching Safety Program* you are free to continue using that program. However, either the *Touching Safety Program* or this program, the *Children & Youth Personal Safety Program*, is mandatory for all Parish Religious Education programs, youth programs, and Catholic schools in the Diocese of St. Augustine. (Catholic school implementation of this mandate will be discussed with school principals by Pat Tierney later this summer.)

Implementation

During the initial year that this program is implemented in a parish religious education or youth program, or in a Catholic school, all children and young people in every grade levels will receive the classroom instruction (one lesson plan), and all parents will receive the safety information (letter to parents and attachments). In subsequent years, the primary level lesson is directed only to students in 1st and 3rd grades, the intermediate level lesson is directed only to students in 5th and 7th grades, and the high school level lesson is only for students in 9th and 11th grades. Information and letters sent to Parents will also follow this same pattern.

Program Materials

- (1) Information sheets: "Know the Rules" and "Questions & Answers" (in both English & Spanish)*
- (2) Primary Grades (1-4): Lesson plan for religious ed. program or school, and sample Parent letter (to include info sheets as attachments)
- (3) Intermediate Grades (5-8): Lesson plan for religious ed. program or school, and sample Parent letter (to include info sheets as attachments)

(4) High School: Lesson plan for religious ed. program, youth program or school, and sample Parent letter (to include info sheets as attachments)

Record Keeping

Except for keeping a record of the dates on which these lesson plans are taught, there is no other record keeping involved.

*The information is available from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. Copyright permission on their web site (www.missingkids.com) notes that these pages must be duplicated in their entirety and may not be sold. The information is provided as a service to the general public and does not constitute an endorsement of the diocesan program.