

## Lesson 3 for Grades 3-5

## Partnering with Parents & Guardians for Safety: *Boundaries: You Have Rights!*

### PRINCIPLE

Children must understand they have a right to be safe, and they are allowed to create boundaries to protect themselves in situations where they feel uncomfortable, or where they could be harmed.

### OBJECTIVES

After lesson 3, children should be able to:

- Identify various types of boundaries
- Begin to set their own boundaries and communicate them to others
- Honor appropriate boundaries in different types of relationships
- Understand boundaries can apply for Online activities

### CATECHISM / SCRIPTURE

*Freedom is exercised in relationships between human beings. Every human person, created in the image of God, has the natural right to be recognized as a free and responsible being. All owe to each other this duty of respect. The right to the exercise of freedom, especially in moral and religious matters, is an inalienable requirement of the dignity of the human person. This right must be recognized and protected by civil authority within the limits of the common good and public order.*

—Catechism of the Catholic Church, #1738 (1997)

### Background for Parents and Guardians:

In preparation for teaching this lesson and to lead the activities, review the *Teaching Boundaries and Safety Guide: Safe Environment Guide for Caring Adults, Parents and Guardians*.

Before sitting down with your child(ren) and beginning the activities, read through this entire lesson and view the video. Choose the activities that you are most comfortable with first and gradually moving to the others. You will find it is helpful to have the *Teaching Boundaries and Safety Guide* handy to navigate the lesson material. These activities are intended to empower young people to think about safety issues with you as their partner.

### Considerations for the age groups—

**Grades 3-5** This age group is learning how to function independently of their parents. They know how to read, and their comprehension levels are giving them a better sense of abstract ideas. Their writing skills are getting better as they become more refined with communicating their ideas. Children this age are away from home more often and are recognizing that safety issues can arise when they are off with friends. They like to be in constant motion and are always on the go. Groups are important. Capable of intense loyalty to others, they usually have a best friend in which to confide. They have a strong sense of right / wrong, fair / unfair and are more able to discern the difference between safe / unsafe. They are able to use logic, can argue and hold strong debates. Parents and guardians can include them in discussions establishing rules or guidelines.

### Activity #1: Introductory Video

**Directions:** View and discuss the introductory video with your child. The introductory video for all grades is designed to open a simple discussion with children about personal boundaries and touching safety. The video is approximately six minutes long and is *neither created nor intended as a substitute for the activities*. It's merely an intro designed to "break the ice" and assist the transition into completing the interactive Lesson Activity options. It can be used to introduce any of the following activities. Discussion and practice are the critical components needed to teach children how to protect themselves. They learn best by "doing"; not just listening or watching.

Grades 3-5 Video links:

English K – 5: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/As5weSq9Jw>

Spanish K – 5: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/-ELCTmNKsw4>

**Activity #2: Review and Discuss Vocabulary words in an age-appropriate way with your child**

**Rules**—a prescribed guide for conduct or action. We follow the rules to make sure we are safe—just like how we have a seatbelt rule to keep us safe in the car, or the safety rules before we cross the street. [For example, teach the child a simple rule for what to do if someone tries to touch him / her in an unsafe way, which is to say “No!”, try to get away, and tell an adult as soon as possible.]

**Limits**—the point or edge beyond which something cannot go. The furthest edge of something.

**Rights**—We are all born free and equal and have certain rights that are automatically ours. Everyone is entitled to these rights, and they should not be taken away from us. For example, teach children, “you have a right to be safe, and your body belongs to you!”

**Boundaries**—the limits that define one person as separate from another or from others. There are boundaries you can see (like a fence around a yard) and boundaries you can’t see with your eyes (like the comfort zone around us that we call our “personal space”). Boundaries vary depending on the relationship with the other person. For example, a boundary between a child and a grandparent is different than the boundary between a child and a teacher or coach.

**Saying “No”**—to say “no” means to refuse, deny, reject or express disapproval of. This word is used to express a boundary and communicate that you do not want something to happen or continue. [Let children know It’s OK to say “No” to an adult if they make you feel scared or uncomfortable, or if they touch your private body parts.]

**Secret**—something kept hidden, never told or explained. Secrets exclude others and have potential to harm, sometimes causing the person involved to feel frightened or uncomfortable. [For example, let children know that there are no secrets when it comes to personal and physical safety. Tell children that it’s wrong for an adult or another child to ask a child to keep a secret about safety—especially unsafe touches—because that’s a way for people to get hurt. If an individual tries to make a child keep a secret or makes him / her feel frightened, the child must know to communicate this information right away to a parent or caring adult—and be reassured that the child will be protected regardless of threats or seeming consequences of “telling”.]

**Activity #3: Establishing Boundaries**

**Activity:** This activity will allow you and your child to have an opportunity to discuss boundaries.

**Discussion:** Open the boundaries discussion with your child by asking the question, “Do you know what a “boundary” is?” Remind them of some of the boundaries you have helped them create, so that they have a firm understanding of ideas about “boundaries” and “limits.” For example:

- What kind of rules must be followed at your house?
- What are your family rules regarding when your homework must be completed?  
Are there other activities that aren’t allowed until your homework has been completed?
- How long and how late are you permitted to be on the phone?
- Where are you allowed to have food in your house?
- What are your family’s rules regarding the Internet?
- What are your family’s rules regarding gaming and video games?
- Does your family limit who can come into your room and when they are allowed to be in your room?
- Do you expect your best friend to sit next to you at lunch everyday?
- Do you want your parents to pretend that they don’t know you when you are to get her at a party or at the mall?
- Can you explain why you moved the chairs, sat closer to some people and away from others, left empty chairs between you and others, etc. when we started this class?

Explain to your child that these represent examples of boundaries. They are limits placed on us by our own instincts and by the rules established by others in our homes, our schools and in our society.

**Say:** *Boundaries are good!*

**Ask:** “Why are boundaries good?” **Points to make in the follow-up discussion:**

- Boundaries define us as individuals and bring order to our lives.
- Boundaries determine how we allow others to treat us.
- Boundaries determine how we treat others.

- Healthy boundaries keep us safe.

**Say:** *Boundaries are different depending on the relationship.*

**Ask:** “Why are boundaries different depending on the relationship?” **Points to make in the follow-up discussion:**

- Boundaries between best friends are different from boundaries between people who we just met.
- Boundaries between children and parents are different from boundaries between children and teachers.

**Statement:** *When someone crosses a personal boundary line, boundaries are violated.*

**Ask:** Give examples of boundary violations. These violations could be simple things such as, “My sister won’t stay out of my stuff” or more difficult things such as, “Sometimes the coach comes in the locker room and watches us change clothes after practice.” Here are some examples of boundary violations that can help begin the discussion:

- Coach pats you on the buttocks as you run past him on the way out to the playing field.
- You listen in on a private conversation between your brother and his girlfriend.
- Someone behind you copies your test answers.
- Your dad’s friend stares at you whenever he is around you.

One basic boundary we all have is our skin. When our skin is scratched or cut, our physical boundary is violated, and we become vulnerable to infection and scars. In the same way, violation of our emotional boundaries leaves us vulnerable to other types of harm and other kinds of scars.

**Statement:** *We can protect ourselves when someone violates our boundaries.*

**Ask:** Think of ways to deal with someone who violates boundaries. Use the following examples of ways we can

Speak up and let the person know that you want them to stop what they are doing.

Get away from the person.

Strengthening our boundaries and taking action to stop someone who is violating them protects us from other people’s ignorance, their thoughtlessness, and their malice. We deserve to be protected from these things.

Most people will respect our boundaries if we explain them clearly. However, some people will push the limits of our boundaries, violate them, and then expect us to go along—or at least not to tell on them. With these people, we must *actively* defend our boundaries.

#### Activity #4: NETSMARTZ

**Background:** This 8-minute video is shared with permission from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children and can be played for children as part of an activity to help them understand it’s “OK to tell” when feeling uncomfortable, sad, scared or confused. It is designed to open a simple discussion with children about boundaries and safety.

**Description:** Watch Clicky, Nettie and Webster race to stop Look-At-Dis Louie from spreading bad pictures online. But they better get to him fast, before he turns the whole town gray!

Click here for the link: <https://www.netsmartz.org/NetSmartzKids/ItsOkToTell>