

Grade 6 and 7: Circle of Grace Home Activities for Parent/Child- Honoring Relationships: Different Boundaries for Different Relationships



Dear Parent,

Thank you for using talking with your child about the “Honoring Relationships: Different Boundaries for Different Relationships” lesson in the **Circle of Grace** Program. The lesson describes how the type of relationship (family, friends, school) many times determines our behavior. Through discussion and activities, the lesson assists your child in understanding the difference between healthy and unhealthy behaviors within each type of relationships. It also helps them to identify how to respond when a behavior is unhealthy. The lesson encourages them to talk to a trusted adult when this occurs.

Many times young people have a difficult time discerning unhealthy/unsafe interactions via social media and technology including texting on phones. **Although the information below is not specifically mentioned in this lesson, we believed it is important to provide you with information that can help keep your child safe. We encourage you to review the below questions with your child** to help them discern their interactions with individuals via social media, networking, texting, gaming or other ways to communicate through technology. Many times young people will consider individuals they only met through technology as “friends”.

Ask your child to name several people they communicate with using technology: cell phones, social media, gaming, etc. For each person, ask the following questions:

1. How long have you known this person?
2. Is your knowledge of this person face-to-face?
3. How much do you know about this person?
4. How have you verified what this person has told you about themselves?
5. What do your feelings (instincts) tell you about this person or situation?
6. How many things do you have in common with this person?
7. Is the relationship respectful of your boundaries and the other person's?
8. Are you able to say, “No,” to this person?
9. Does this person's age or status influence your behavior in the relationship?
10. Does this person ever ask you to keep secrets? Caution your young person:
 - Not to reveal personal information on the internet. That includes full names, school, grade, address, phone, sports teams, church groups, etc. Perpetrators try to identify young people by learning about their activities and schedule patterns.
 - To let you know about any time they feel bullied. Help them understand how to respond to bullies, whether that is on social media, a text, at school, or in another setting.
 - To be sensitive to comments that devalue or criticize others for their physical attributes, race, religion, economic status, etc. Model appropriate respectful behavior yourself. Watch the jokes you tell, your children do.
 - To avoid unsafe situations involving alcohol, drugs, and smoking.
 - To be cautious about situations in which they are alone with an adult.

Thank you for your support of the Circle of Grace® Program. Your support is essential and appreciated as we strive to provide the safest possible environment for our young people. If you have any questions, please call your school or parish office.

Circle of Grace: Honoring Relationships: Different Boundaries for Different Relationships



Take a moment to review our Circle of Grace.

God is “Present” because He desires a relationship with us.

- God is with us when we are happy and sad. God does not cause bad things to happen to us. He loves us very much.
- God desires to help us when we are hurt, scared or confused (unsafe).
- Having faith may not take away all of life's struggles. It is because of these struggles, God promised to always “be present”; providing guidance and comfort in our time of need.

God helps us know what belongs in our Circle of Grace

- Our feelings help us know about ourselves and the world around us.
- God helps us know what belongs in our *Circle of Grace* by allowing us to experience peace, love or contentment when something or someone good comes into our *Circle of Grace*.

God helps us know what does not belong in our Circle of Grace

- God desires to help us when we are hurt, scared or confused (unsafe).
- The Holy Spirit prompts (alerts) us that something does not belong in our *Circle of Grace* by giving us “a funny or uncomfortable feeling” that something is not safe. This feeling is there because God wants us to be safe.

God helps us know when to ask for help from someone we trust.

- God gives us people in our lives to help us when we are troubled or struggling with a concern.
- God wants us to talk to trusted adults about our worries, concerns or “uncomfortable feelings” so they can help us be safe and take the right action.

Opening Activity – Family, Friends and School Relationships

Today we are going to talk about relationships. The type of relationship determines whether words/actions are appropriate or inappropriate. Our first activity will help us discuss these behaviors within different groups of people and how we can stay safe in our Circle of Grace by using guidelines for maintaining proper boundaries.

1. *You will need one or two pieces of paper.*
2. *Please divide two pages (or back and front) into three horizontal sections. At the top of the pages, write Family at the top of the First Column, Friends at the top of the second, and School at the top of the third as shown. Both parents and child may want to write their own sheets!*

Family	Friends	School

3. *Write down **appropriate behaviors** for each category in each column. Come up with as many as possible. Give 5-10 minutes to complete this activity.*
4. *When time is completed, discuss what you and your child have written in each column and why these behaviors are appropriate.*
5. *Discuss how appropriate behavior can improve our relationship with God and how it respects our Circle of Grace.*

6. Now, on the next sheet (or other side of the paper), each should write down **inappropriate behaviors** for each category in each column. Again, come up with as many as possible. Take 5-10 minutes to complete this activity.
7. When time is completed discuss what has been written in each column and why these behaviors are inappropriate and may be unsafe.
8. Discuss how these inappropriate behaviors can hurt our relationship with God and disrespect our Circle of Grace.

Appropriate behavior has everything to do with the situation or group of people we are with at the time. Those groups of people might be family, personal friends, or the larger community, such as at school. Obviously we share more, dress differently, or sometimes act differently depending on which group of people we are with at that time. Talk about the following questions.

1. Do you think people have different boundaries or levels of trust depending on which group of people they are with?
2. Should appropriate behavior be used in our everyday lives, even if others are not behaving as they ought to?
3. Do people sometimes use inappropriate behaviors or words that they are not aware they are using?
4. **What would you do if an inappropriate behavior was unsafe? (Discuss the term “Trusted Adult- A grown-up who helps me to stay safe in my *Circle of Grace* and to respect others within their *Circle of Grace*.”)**
5. **When you are unsure about a behavior or feeling or if inappropriate behaviors happen, what do you do?**
6. **Besides your parents, who are your trusted adult(s)? Name 3 other people who you could contact if you were unsure or if something had happened?**

Wrap Up Discussion

We are called to follow Jesus, so our behaviors, how we treat others, and the words we use should be consistent with His teaching and our Circle of Grace.

1. Which behaviors are more pleasing to God, others, and ourselves?
2. How do appropriate and inappropriate behaviors impact our lives and the lives of those with whom we have relationships?
3. What does God desire for our relationships?
4. How can we promote healthy behavior and boundaries in our relationships as Catholics?

Key responses:

- Desire to have a relationship with God & do what is right
- Participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation when we do wrong
- Call on God in prayer when we have questions about right and wrong
- Ask others to pray for us