

Intermediate Level, Grades 3, 4, 5 (ages 9 to 11 years)**Lesson 9: Speak Up! Speak Out! Be Heard!****Getting started with Lesson 9:**

- Principle:** Supporting children in learning to speak up, speak out, and make sure they are heard when they are confused or scared or when something happens that makes them uncomfortable or uneasy.
- 1) Choosing the right time and the right person to talk to about things.
 - 2) Knowing what to say and how to say it so that adults pay attention
- Catechism:** Man is obliged to follow the moral law, which urges him “to do what is good and avoid what is evil” (cf. GS 16). This law makes itself heard in his conscience. **#1713**
- Goal:** To assist children and young people in being able to speak up when they are confused or scared, to speak out when something happens that makes them feel uncomfortable and to make sure that they are heard when they talk to adults in their life about something that is important.
- Learning Goals:** To teach children and young people some guidelines about speaking up and speaking out when they experience situations that make them feel scared or confused or when they feel uncomfortable or uneasy with someone or something that is happening. Empowering children by providing communication skills that can be used in a variety of situations and focusing their application to circumstances that place them at risk related to their personal safety.
- Children and young people can learn age appropriate skills for that empower them to communicate powerfully.
 - Children and young people can start to learn to identify times, places, and people that provide the best chance for them to be heard when they have something important to communicate.
- Parent Notice:** Send out a letter to the parents and guardians outlining the goals and objectives of this lesson. Let parents and guardians know that the lessons this year will concentrate on developing communication skills. For this age group, it will focus on starting to identify the when, where, and to whom of communicating something important to the adults in their lives. The lessons also will give the children some beginning tools to help them know “how” to communicate confusing, scary, or simply important information.

If applicable, schedule a meeting before the first lesson for parents to come together and see the materials for both sessions. During the meeting go through the lesson plan and show the parents the activities, coloring pages, story boards, etc. that the children will be creating as well as the important elements of the lessons.

Parents and guardians are the primary educators of their own children. This right of adults to educate their children, particularly in the area of morals, values, and human sexuality, is also recognized by the Church as “an educational duty.”¹ These lessons in the *Touching Safety* program will provide children with some tools they can put to use every day in any number of ways. Of course, we will connect the dots for children between speaking up, speaking out, being heard, and the importance of telling a trusted adult when someone does something that makes them feel scared, confused, or uncomfortable. In addition, we will be reminding the children that bullying tactics by children and adults in their life are also actions they need to tell others about. However, the communication skills at the heart of these lessons will be useful for much more than reports resulting from following the Touching Rules.

Dealing with the primary age—key concept is “activity”

Small children have a natural curiosity, a lively and vivid imagination, and are growing less self-centered and becoming more conscious of others. Their attention span is short, approximately 20 minutes. They build on concrete experiences, love to learn, and are highly inquisitive. However, they rely almost entirely on others to define good and bad for them.

When establishing the guidelines for appropriate and inappropriate behavior, parents and teachers should make every effort to create an environment where children are free to ask questions. This early experience of honesty and trust will set the stage for each child's life-long relationships with significant adults. In addition, creating an atmosphere of open inquiry where questions are encouraged

¹ *Declaration on Christian Education, Gravissimum educationis*, Proclaimed by Pope Paul VI, October 28, 1965, Article 3 at 44.

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invites children and young people to begin to listen to and learn to trust their own instincts and to begin to learn how to evaluate potentially risky situations.

At this age, children are beginning to differentiate positive and negative aspects of everyday life and are beginning to question the adult's expectation of blind obedience. At the same time, they are learning how to respect and care for their own bodies. They are learning about hygiene and beginning to learn about eating properly and testing the limits for activity.

Caregivers need to be open, honest, and available to answer questions correctly with language children can understand. This is the time to talk about ways they can stand up for themselves when they are with adults and others whose behavior is risky or someone on the Internet wants information the children should not give.

Vocabulary words:

- Communication - The imparting or interchange of thoughts, opinions, or information by speech, writing, or signs.
- Trust — Reliance on the integrity, strength, ability, surety, etc., of a person or thing; confidence
- Heard — To listen to; give or pay attention to what is said.

Supplemental material is available as an additional resource for this lesson plan starting on page 5. This is optional information as a refresher on grooming that may be useful when presenting this lesson.

Intermediate Level, Grades 3, 4, 5 (ages 9 to 11 years)**Lesson 9: Speak Up! Speak Out! Be Heard!****Supplies and Preparation**

Activity #1: Play the introductory DVD to begin the lesson.

Activity #2: Classroom Discussion — Speaking Up, Speaking Out, and Being Heard

Activity #3: Reporter Activity

Supplies: Opening DVD
Prayer Handout/Poster
DVD Player and TV
CD player

Prayer: **[NOTE TO TEACHER: If you have a typical prayer service that you use to start class, use it for this session also. If not, please consider the suggestions provided and create an appropriate prayer opening for the class.]**

Suggested prayer formats:

- Place a small table at the front of the room next to the teacher. Cover it with a beautiful scarf. Place an open Bible on the table along with a candle and, if available, a flower or a symbol that represents all children or the children in the class. Use the same prayer for opening and closing the lesson. Light the candle and have someone lead the other young people in reciting the prayer on a poster.
- Form a circle of silence around a lighted candle and listen to (or sing along with) an appropriate Christian song in the background such as: "You are Mine" by David Haas, "Here I Am, Lord" by Dan Schutte, "You Are Near" by Dan Schutte, or another that you find appropriate. Invite the children to join together in saying the prayer.
- Have music playing in the background as the children come in to class. Ask everyone to be seated and to please be quiet. Listen to the music and offer this prayer and intentions:
 - Loving God, we come before you today to ask for your guidance and wisdom so that we may know and do your will and walk with you each day. We offer these intentions as we begin our prayer together today.
 - For all children who suffer abuse that they may feel God's loving arms enfold them and take away their pain.
 - For all those who harm children that they may seek forgiveness and turn away from harming others.
 - For all parents and others who care about children that they learn how to be protectors of children and make sure that all children are safe from intentional harm.
 - [Ask for other intentions that the children wish to bring.]

For these intentions and all those that we hold in our hearts, we ask this in the name of Jesus your Son. Amen.

Activity #1: Show DVD if appropriate.

Activity #2: Classroom Discussion: Speaking Up, Speaking Out, and Being Heard

The main purpose of this discussion is to help children develop communication skills that empower them to speak up, speak out, and make sure they are heard when they have something important to communicate, particularly when there is something to communicate to a trusted adult about behavior that is confusing, uncomfortable, scary, or deliberately hurtful. In the lessons, we want to concentrate on enhancing communication skills and practicing using those skills. We want children to be able to tell someone they trust and make sure that communication is as clear as possible so that what they have to communicate is actually heard.

- *When something important happens, who do you tell? Let the students identify the important, trusting people in their lives that they go to with things that are important and then ask them the following question. This question can begin to get the young*

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people present to how they tell things to others. They have the chance to begin to look closely at what information they share with the different people in their life such as family, parents, trusted adults, friends, siblings, teachers, etc.

- *What kinds of things do you tell them?* Once the question begins to open up, use this and the following questions to expand on the discussion of this conversation to have kids start to see that there are different people in their lives with whom they share different things.
- *Do you tell your friends different things than you tell your parents? What about teachers and other adults you trust? What do you tell them?* Remember this is a time when they are testing their independence and beginning to create important friendships and establish peer relationships. **Make sure you do not make judgments about what they tell others and who they tell.** The key in this part of the discussion is to raise their own awareness about how, when, and what they share about what's happening to them.
- *Are there things you keep to yourself? Why?* This is an opportunity for the students to start noticing that they are already weighing things carefully to determine whether to share or not, and if "yes" what to share and with whom. Regardless of the age group engaged in this conversation, these questions will begin to uncover or reveal something about each person's willingness to share and to trust others with sensitive information.
- *Does it sometimes seem like people just don't get what you are saying? Do they seem confused or ask you many questions after you tell them something?* If kids say that it sometimes seems like the adults in their life don't understand them, ask them to look and see if they know why that happens. The point is to have them start to see that sometimes when they have something to tell, they just don't know what to say and sometimes when things are upsetting, they are not sure why they are upset or what happened that left them upset.
- *When we want to share something scary, confusing, or hurtful with others, it is important that we are clear about what we are saying and tell them what they need to know so they can help us. Sometimes we just don't know what to say to explain why we are upset.*
- *Sometimes we can talk about what's making us upset if we think about what to say and how to say it first so we are clear about what we want to say.*
- *How do you suppose we can practice that?*
- *One way to make sure we communicate effectively is – if there is time - think about what to say and how to say it so that the person we talk to gets the message.*

Activity #3: Reporter Activity

Print out attached Reporter's Questions for each student. This is an activity to allow the young person to enhance the way they communicate effectively.

- *An easy and effective way to accomplish our goal to effectively communicate is to think like a reporter. If you think about it, there is a way reporters tell us about things that gives us a lot of information.*
- *How do you suppose that thinking like a reporter can help us get our story told? Listen to their answers as they struggle with what it is that is distinct about how a reporter talks about the news compared to how they try to talk about something difficult with a parent or trusted adults.*
- *Do you know what "journalism" is? Make the following points:*
 - Journalism is a particular kind of writing or talking used by reporters.
 - Journalism is about facts and information and telling a story that provides that to the reader.
- *When reporters begin to research a story, they answer six questions before they report. These questions help them gather the facts about a situation or circumstance so they can tell the story, be understood, and get any help they need? Does anyone know what those questions are?*
- *Here are the questions? Hand out the worksheet with the six questions.*
 - **Who** is it about?
 - **What** happened?
 - **Where** did it take place?
 - **When** did it take place?
 - **Why** did it happen?
 - **How** did it happen?
- *What is different about these questions? Steer the conversation toward awareness that none of the questions can be answered with a simple "yes" or "no." Asking these questions of themselves or others will help them learn what's important when there is something hard to talk to people about or something scary or confusing to tell.*
- *Why is it important to have the facts? Listen as the children start to get present to the importance of the facts in any situation – particularly one that can be upsetting for others or are difficult to talk about.*
- *Speaking up about something that makes us feel uncomfortable or scared begins with being able to tell someone as much about the fact as we can. We are going to practice telling a story using these six questions to figure out what to say. Everyone is going to write a story about this situation using these six questions to figure out what to say.*
- *Use the worksheet we just gave you with the six questions on it to identify the important facts in the story and then write out what you would say to tell your parents or another trusted adult what is happening in a way that lets them know this is a serious situation.*

- **NOTE:** Begin to tell them the following story about a new teacher and a 10-year-old student. Give the children one section at a time and stop so they can write down the facts they heard in that part of the story. Give them about a minute to write and then add the second part of the story.

Part 1: There is a new science teacher this year named Mr. Wilson, and he is really a cool guy. He dresses like a regular teacher, but he has an earring and he rides a big Harley to school every day. The students say he has made science a lot more interesting and fun by creating some great experiments and activities. Casey never cared about science before Mr. Wilson came to the school. Now she seems to be interested in learning about it. Maybe Casey has learned to like science, but it seems more likely that she is interested in the motorcycle. Casey loves cycles. Yesterday, Mr. Wilson offered to give Casey a ride on his Harley.

Part 2: Tuesday, Casey's mom could not pick her up and she needed to get a ride home. So, she decided this was her chance to take Mr. Wilson up on his offer. After school, Casey waited for him in the parking lot and asked if his offer for a ride on the motorcycle was still open. Mr. Wilson patted her on the shoulder and said, "Sure, hop on."

Part 3: Mr. Wilson put on his own helmet and gave Casey one to wear. Before he took off, he grabbed Casey's hands and pulled them around his waist and told her to hold on tight. Then he squeezed the top of her leg and started the engine.

Part 4: On the ride home, Mr. Wilson reached back and ran his hands up Casey's leg. Casey was holding on to keep from falling off and could not brush his hand away. He took the long way to Casey's house and when they arrived, he grabbed her under the arms and helped her off the motorcycle—and his hands "accidentally" touched her chest. By this time, Casey was really upset. She brushed Mr. Wilson's hands off her, grabbed her books and headed to her house. He grabbed her arm, apologized and smiled and told Casey that he would see her at school. Before he left, he reminded her that the entire ride home should probably be their little secret. After all, some people might be upset that she was on a motorcycle and, after all, it was her idea.

- *Now that you have heard what happened, write out the story in your own words as if you were going to tell it to someone you trust. Give the students about five minutes to write and ask some of them to read their version of what happened out loud. One of the things they may start to hear is that the stories are basically the same but also very different. This exercise can help the students begin to understand how important it is to speak up when something happens that is confusing or scary, and the value of being able to tell someone WHAT HAPPENED!*
- *In our next lesson we will talk about what to do next. Once you are clear about what there is to tell, how do you tell it to someone you trust and make sure they hear what you are saying? Between now and the next lesson, pay attention to how many times you think about telling your parents about something and then decide not to tell or how often you hold back telling something when you think it will be upsetting to someone.*
- *As we complete our lesson today, let's remind ourselves of the importance of speaking up and speaking out when something bad or uncomfortable happens. God wants us to be safe and happy. Sometimes that means we have to speak up for ourselves and let the adults in our life know that something is scary or confusing or even dangerous.*

Prayer to end the lesson

[Have this prayer on a poster on the wall and as a handout for the students to pray along with you and take home with them. It is a variation of an Old Catholic Traveler's Prayer to be said before beginning the journey. Remind the students that as they grow up, they are on a kind of journey through life. Each time they leave their own home or their own room to go out on their own, they are traveling. Prayer can help prepare them for the journey and guide them along the way.]

My holy Angel Guardian,
Ask the Lord to bless the journey that I undertake,
That it may benefit the health of my soul and body;
That I may reach its end,
And that, returning safe and sound,
I may find my family in good health.
Guard, guide and preserve us throughout the day and night.

Amen.

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Supplemental Resource Material for Teachers

The complete grooming process employed by a child molester is usually three-pronged and involves physical as well as psychological behaviors. In person, the process may take months, even years to accomplish with regular face to face contact but through the Internet, predators can break down the child's defenses in a very short amount of time, particularly if the child is vulnerable or uninformed about the risks of the Internet.

The three aspects of the typical grooming process are *physical grooming*, *psychological grooming*, and *community grooming*. All three are going on at the same time.

Physical grooming usually begins early in the process. This is why it is so important for children to know how to tell the trusted adults in their life when something happens that puts them at risk. They need to know that they can speak up and be heard, and they need to know how to communicate in a way that gets the attention of the adult they trust.

One of the most important aspects of grooming is the *psychological grooming*. The molester's goal is to establish a trust relationship early in order to secure the promise of secrecy from the child. Through a number of identifiable behaviors designed to trap the child in a bubble of secrecy, the molester attempts to gain the child's compliance and set him or her up to be victimized. The child is either convinced that the molester is trustworthy and believes this person to be a trusted friend, or the child is scared of the molester and the threats made about what will happen if the child tells. In this situation, the child is confused and afraid, which often results in the child becoming more and more withdrawn and quiet. When this happens, a wall goes up between the parents/adults and the predator and everything about the relationship between the child and the potential molester is distorted.

Among the ways the behavioral warning signs that potential predators use to seduce a child to secrecy are:

1. *Give gifts to children, often without permission.* Predators give gifts to children and tell them to keep it secret. The gifts may be as simple as candy or soda that parents won't allow. However, gifts are often either entirely inappropriate such as perfume, flowers, lingerie or expensive items such as an MP3 player that parents cannot afford, or a bouquet of roses or a box of lingerie for a nine or 10 year old girl.
2. *Allows a child to engage in activities that parents would not allow.* One of the most effective tools predators use is allowing children to do things their parents would not permit. Everything from using alcohol to eating junk food to allowing unlimited, unsupervised Internet access is on the agenda here. This behavior is extremely effective at driving a wedge between children and parent(s). It is important for children to be reminded that when an adult lets them do things they are not allowed to do, the real person who is wrong is the adult, not the child. Give children the freedom to tell you what happened without risking serious consequences, so they will be willing to talk to you when they need to do so.
3. *Uses sexually explicit language and tells dirty jokes.* Children are often curious about things they know are reserved for "adults only." That means that engaging them in language that is sexual in nature will often be intriguing to them and can evoke conspiratorial laughter. The problem is that afterwards, the children are afraid to tell parents because they know it was wrong. Once again, it is important to remember to remind both the children and their parents that the wrongful acts here are those of the child molester, not the child. Encouraging children to share what they have heard from others – new words, jokes, stories – can create an opening for powerful communication. As adults it is also important to remember to keep a calm head about you when a child is sharing. Listen and learn – and then take action to deal with the adult and, at the same time, remind the child that you are proud of him or her for telling; however, those words and those jokes are not used by nice people.
4. *Goes overboard touching.* Potential predators are skilled at finding ways to get their hands on children in ways that could be intimate and still be explained away as "accidental." Wrestling, tickling, and hugging them or picking them up are some examples of the types of "touch" this can include. Obviously we teach children they have the right to say "no" to being touched at all, but we also need to notice this kind of physical contact and teach our children to tell us when anyone touches them this way. Encouraging children to share about these physical encounters will accomplish a couple of things. First, the child learns to trust his or her own feelings, thoughts, and experiences and to express them effectively. Second, the potential predator is less likely to engage in physical contact if he or she thinks the child will tell what happened.

Generally, the grooming process is complex. It can be difficult to identify and interrupt. In addition, placing the burden of prevention on the shoulders of small children is not the best way to accomplish the goals. However, creating partnership with children to assure that environments are safe for everyone is a great way to stop sexual abuse from happening. Teaching them to speak up, speak out, and make sure they are heard is a great way to proceed. This lesson is designed to focus on building those communication skills and encouraging children to be very vocal about inappropriate, confusing, or scary behavior being exhibited by others in the environment.

REPORTER'S QUESTIONS
GATHERING THE FACTS

Who is it about? _____

What happened? _____

Where did it take place? _____

When did it take place? _____

Why did it happen? _____

How did it happen? _____
