

Grade 2- Circle of Grace Home Activity Sheet for Parents

Thank you for using these activities to help teach your child about their Circle of Grace and how it can help us protect them. The children are taught that God does not want or cause bad things to happen to them, to understand that God is with them always, even when they are hurting or sad. We want them to be able to identify when someone comes into their *Circle of Grace*, to recognize safe and unsafe touch/situations and how to talk to a trusted adult if they feel unsafe or are confused.



Stoplight activity: We use the analogy of a stoplight to connect a green signal with safe situations, a red signal with unsafe situations, and a yellow signal with situations in which a child might feel confused or unsure.

It is important for you as parents and guardians to talk with your child about real situations in his or her everyday life and invite your child to identify whether the situations are green (GO AHEAD, this is safe), red (STOP, this is unsafe always talk to a trusted adult before acting), or yellow (BE CAREFUL), always talk to a trusted adult before acting). Being aware of these signals helps children recognize them as one way the Holy Spirit helps to guide us.

Please come up with some scenarios of your own to help your child decide what whether a situation is green, yellow or red. Remind them that when a situation is yellow, we still always ask an adult for help before we proceed, just like when it is red.

- **Some possible scenarios are: Green-** Your mom or dad kisses you goodnight when you go to bed. (*loved, comforted*); you are at the doctor and your mom is with you. The doctor checks your body to make sure it is healthy (*safe, secure, embarrassed*); You see your brother crying and you ask if you can give him a hug (*sad, caring*). Your grandmother/grandfather wipes your tears when you fall down and hurt yourself (*loved, comforted, safe*).
- **Yellow or Red:** (Remember to always talk to a trusted adult for a yellow situation.) - You are waiting for your parent to pick you up from school when an older kid asks you to come over to the playground because he wants to show you something cool on his phone. (*curious, confused*); You notice that your older sister is on the computer late at night when you get up to go to the bathroom. Your sister says not to tell anyone because both of you will get into trouble (*guilty, afraid of punishment*). Someone acts like your friend but then tries to get you to do something you don't want to do because you know it is wrong or because it makes you feel confused or funny. They say, "If you tell, I will tell everyone that this was your idea," (*confused, funny feeling, trapped*).

What belongs in my Circle of Grace? 2nd graders are old enough to start discerning what people or situation are safe or unsafe. Attached is a game to help discuss your child's choices.

We also talk about secrets. Most offenders use secrecy as a tactic to control the child from telling about the abuse. It is important that the students understand the difference between a safe secret and an unsafe secret. This understanding could be key to them seeking help. Sometimes it is hard for a child to distinguish between the two. When that happens, children need to talk to someone they trust like their parents, leader, or other trusted adult. Learning to be more aware of these uncomfortable feelings helps children recognize them as one of the main ways the Holy Spirit helps to guide us.

The Safety Plan is the last part of the lesson. It includes asking children to name and draw a picture of trusted adults (in addition to their parents). Please help your child identify several adults in their lives who you think would help keep your child safe.

Please contact these individuals to let them know you and your child have identified them as trusted adults. This can be done in person, by phone, or a letter. (Letter-writing is a fun activity you can do with your child.) Being identified as a trusted adult will most likely make them feel honored as well as alert them to your safety plan for your child.

Thank you for your support of the *Circle of Grace* program and helping us provide the safest possible environment for our children. Please call the parish, school, or religious education office if you have questions.

Summary of the Key Concepts of “Circle of Grace”



God gives each of us a Circle of Grace (see below) where He is always “Present”:

Raise your hands above your head, then bring your outstretched arms slowly down.

*Extend your arms in front of you and then behind you embrace all of the space around you
slowly reach down to your feet.*

*Know that **God** is in this space with you. This is your **Circle of Grace**; you are in it.*

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 grownups about our worries, concerns or “funny/ uncomfortable feelings” so they can help us be safe and take the right action.

What belongs in my *Circle of Grace* Game?

Below are words describing people, objects, situations and activities that may be part of our everyday lives. Working together, help your child decide if each item is safe to be within his/her *Circle of Grace* or if the item is unsafe to be in their *Circle of Grace*. (Please listen to your child's reasoning. Some children are already able to discern that car keys are safe for grown-ups, but not children.)



- Ball in the water
- Sisters fighting
- Family
- Hugs
- Computer
- Birthday cake
- Heart
- Cigarette
- Bike helmet
- Matchstick
- Grandparents
- Parents arguing
- Clenched fist
- Girl holding hands
- Boy waving hello

- Puppy and kitten
- Garbage
- Bully
- Gun
- Drinks
- Butterfly
- Family praying
- Car keys
- Phone
- Growling dog
- Rosary
- Bible
- Man with binoculars
- Flower
- Girl praying

Secrets

Sometimes secrets can even give us a funny feeling in our heart or tummy. A safe secret is one that does not hurt others or me and it is eventually told. A secret is unsafe when I think that someone, including me, might be hurt or get in trouble if I do not tell.

It is never safe if someone tells you to not ever tell your parents/trusted adult.

A good way to decide if a secret is safe or unsafe is to ask ourselves, "Can this secret hurt me or someone else?" "Is it a secret I can eventually tell someone else?"

Talk about some things people might say as a secret, and help your child decide if it is a safe or an unsafe secret.

Five Safety Tips on Secrets

- 1- To be a good friend, I must share their secret with a trusted adult if it hurts others or themselves.
- 2- I will not get in trouble for telling an "unsafe secret" even if someone tells me differently.
- 3- It is never safe if someone tells you not to tell your parent/parents the secret.
- 4- I should always tell the secret if it makes me feel uncomfortable.
- 5- I should always tell the secret if I am unsure if it is safe.

Have your child draw a sign about the dangers of bad secrets.

Below are examples.



HOW TO ASK FOR HELP



LOOK AT THE PERSON



SAY TO THE PERSON "I NEED HELP. I DO NOT FEEL SAFE."



TELL THE PERSON WHY YOU DO NOT FEEL SAFE



TELL THE PERSON "THANK YOU"