

Suggestions for Parents of Minors
Safe Environment Program
Diocese of Tyler

November 30, 2005

Minors should be directed toward closer communication with their parents /guardians, and secondarily with other “safe” adults. Here is a list of some practical points to inform minors about:

1. Don't keep secrets from Mom and Dad or your guardians. Tell your Mom and Dad or your guardian what goes on, it is especially important if someone ever says “Don't tell your Mom or your Dad or your guardian.” Keeping a surprise secret helps to make someone happy, but keeping other secrets can be dangerous or scary.
2. The Domestic Church or household of faith is the best place to learn and come to ongoing understanding of appropriate and inappropriate touches. If someone other than your Mom or Dad or your guardian is talking to you about touches, be sure to tell your Mom and Dad or your guardian right away.
3. If someone “does something” or “says something” that makes you feel uncomfortable, afraid, or sad, tell your Mom and Dad or your guardian or another “safe adult”. There is an important difference between something you do not like (like if your Mom says you have to eat your vegetables, or that you can't play video games), as opposed to something that makes you feel bad (like when someone makes fun of you). If you aren't sure always talk to your Mom and Dad or your guardian or to another safe adult. Talk to your parents or guardian about who are “safe adults”. Besides your parents: teachers, coaches, scout leaders, or aunts and uncles might be “safe adults”.
4. Always say “thank you” for a gift, but always ask your Mom and Dad or your guardian's permission to keep the gift. If anyone gives you a gift when your parents/guardian aren't around, be sure to show it to them when you see them.
5. Your Mom and Dad or your guardian should always know if an adult is going to be with you alone. They should tell you it is ok to be alone with a particular adult before it happens. Be sure to tell your Mom and Dad or your guardian whenever an adult is with you alone.
6. If something different or unusual happens always tell your Mom and Dad or your guardian. The something different may be good, or bad or something you are not sure about.
7. If you have a friend or classmate who had something happen to them, help them talk to a “safe adult”.

8. Sneaky adults are dangerous. They look like everyone else, but you have to watch out for them. Sometimes people you know are sneaky and try to do things they should not do.
9. In a dangerous situation, run and scream. Look for some adult who is “safe” to help you like a police officer, parents with their children, and people behind the counter in a store. Say, “Help keep me safe from danger. I think someone might be out to hurt me. Call the police or my parents. Please help me.”
10. Everyone who works at the Church should always act in a very safely. This includes being very careful to respect each person. They agree to extra safe rules so that children will be extra safe. Tell you Mom and Dad or your guardian if anyone at Church ever fails to be extra safe around you.
11. If an adult wants to be your friend, you have to ask your Mom and Dad or your guardian first. Adults should be friends with adults. They should be nice to children and young people, but they should also protect them and help keep them safe. If an adult tries to be your friend and treats you as an equal tell your Mom and Dad or your guardian. Adults can genuinely like children and enjoy their company, but healthy, safe adults understand there is a difference between a child (even a teenager) and an adult.
12. Some children don’t have a Mom and Dad to talk to. Who can they go to share or talk about these important things? Maybe another Mom or Dad can help them. Or a teacher is usually a smart choice or someone in the school office, a police officer or their doctor or a minister. Adults are supposed to want to help keep you safe, not try to play you or use you.