

**SAFE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM  
DIOCESE OF FORT WAYNE-SOUTH BEND  
GRADE 8 – SESSION 3  
LESSON PLAN & HANDOUTS**

**Friendships for Life**

**Time estimate:** 1 session of 45 minutes or this session may be combined with sessions 1 and 2 into one long session with breaks

**Session three objectives:**

1. Learn tactics to protect oneself from boundary violations
2. Learn strategies for building healthy friendships

**Supplies needed:** Chart paper or chalkboard  
***Good Friend or Not?*** (Student Handout 8-4, page 5 of this material) one for each small group  
Parent letter for take home (page 9 of this material)

*Note: Skip the **Prayer** and **Review** sections below if you are presenting all three sessions together in one long presentation.*

**Prayer:** Loving God, open our minds and hearts to you. Help us discover your loving plan for each of our lives – a plan to grow, to learn, to give, to receive and to love in relationships with all our brothers and sisters. Help us to know and live this plan which will lead us to happiness with you forever.

**Review:** In our last session we learned about what grooming is and the tactics a groomer uses to control another person (victim) in a relationship. We learned that this is never a healthy, right relationship and we should get out of it. Many of these tactics are used by peers with one another. If you learn to spot this behavior in a person your own age and deal with it effectively, you will be better able to avoid the grooming attempts of an adult or someone several years older than you. Last year we talked about personal boundaries and how they keep us safe. If our boundaries are healthy and strong, we keep people and relationships in appropriate places in our lives.

## Friendships for Life

### Grade 8 – session 3

But, things can happen in life. Some things do not always go as we plan or would like. Some times we get in over our heads. What can we do to protect ourselves from boundary violations and the tactics of a groomer? How do we know and stay away from unhealthy people and relationships? Some suggestions:

1. Write out your personal boundaries and plan to stick to them.
2. Resist peer pressure.
  - a. Stay calm. Use an assertive tone of voice.
  - b. Say clearly that you do not want to do the inappropriate activity.
  - c. Suggest an alternative.
  - d. Keep saying no if the person persists.
  - e. Ask the person to leave or you leave the situation.
3. Let teasing roll off your back. Shrug it off with a “So?” People who make fun of others are really dealing with great insecurity inside themselves.
4. Find friends who share your values and your family values. There is strength in numbers!
5. Walk away from an unhealthy relationship. Danger signs include: one-sidedness, manipulation, possessiveness, unrealistic demands, anger, sexual pressures, drug and alcohol use.
6. Seek adult advice or intervention.
7. Report sexual harassment, physical or sexual abuse or assaults immediately to a trusted adult.

Right now you are focusing much time and energy on being a good friend and finding good friends. Sometimes it is challenging to know who we should befriend. Girls should learn to be good friends with girls first. The same rule applies to boys. Teens should be friends with teens their age. Adults and other people several years older than you should not want to be close friends with you. Adults appropriately have their friendship needs met by other adults. The same goes for you.

#### **Activity: Good Friend or Bad?**

*Divide the group into pairs. Hand out **Good Friend or Not?** (Student Handout 8-4, page 5 of this material). Assign each pair a scenario. Ask them to read it to themselves, decide if this is an example of good friendship or not. If it is not, ask the pair to think of a good way to respond. Give the pairs a few minutes. While the pairs are working, make a T-chart on the*

## Friendships for Life

### Grade 8 – session 3

chart paper or chalkboard. Put the titles: “Good friends do” and “Good friends do not” on the T-chart. Ask each pair to read their scenario for the larger group. After each one presents their scene, ask the group, “Is this an example of good friendship or not?” If no, what response did the pair offer? Can the large group think of others?

Then create a list of what good friends do and what good friends do not do on the T-chart. Make sure to use the qualities highlighted in each scenario. Some friendship qualities are below. Your group’s answers may vary.

| <b>Good friends do:</b>                              | <b>Good friends do not:</b>   |
|--|---|
| <i>Share and take turns</i>                          | <i>Ask you to lie, cheat or steal (do anything illegal or immoral)</i>                |
| <i>Help each other in sad times</i>                  | <i>abandon you in tough times</i>   |
| <i>Encourage each other to be better people</i>      | <i>feel threatened by other friends</i>   |
| <i>Are not exclusive of other friends</i>            | <i>share personal or private information with others</i>                              |
| <i>Are faithful</i>                                  | <i>Pressure, bully or manipulate others</i>   |
| <i>Are flexible and understanding</i>                | <i>Belittle, make fun of, mock, tease friend about how they are or what they like</i> |
| <i>Accept yourself &amp; others for who they are</i> |   |
|  |   |

Now that we have created a list of friendship qualities, we can discuss some suggestions to help you build good friendships. Being a good friend and developing good friendships is a task for your entire life.

- Remember your personal plan and boundaries
- Take your time.
- Balance the give and take.
- Don’t worry too much.
- Adjust to change.
- Examine past relationships and learn from them
- Remember that friends should respect your wishes, dreams, and requests.  
Friends should lift you up.
- Friends respect you and your boundaries.
- Friends will never use, abuse, or groom you.
- Look for good qualities in others

## Friendships for Life

### Grade 8 – session 3

- Seek the incite and wisdom of your parents or trusted adults
- Join your church youth group or volunteer at school, church or your community.

**Conclusion:** Remember God’s plan. God created you in love and for loving relationships throughout your life. You are born into relationships from the first breath that you take. As you grow, relationships all over your boundary circles come and go. Seek good, appropriate relationships that help you become better people. If you ever need help, talk with a trusted adult. God has made you unique for a wonderful purpose. God is with you at each step of the journey.

*Note: Send home a copy of the parent letter. Please adapt the letter as necessary to fit your parish/school situation.*

---

***End of lesson plan for session three. Handouts and parent letter on following pages.***

**Good Friend or Not?**

***Decide whether this is an example of good friendship or not. Tell why or why not. Think of a response if you are involved with this person.***

1. "I know I picked the movie last time, but I choose really good ones. I should pick it again because this is a great movie and you will love it."
2. "Hey, look, I am sorry that you had a fight with your parents, but I can't listen to all that depressing stuff right now. I am happy that I get to go to the school dance and we should talk about who might be there."
3. "You know what? It is not a good idea to send that text to your mom right now. Wait until you have calmed down a bit and thought it over."
4. "Why couldn't you have said something? You were the one with the idea to cheat on the math test. Then I get caught and the teacher asks who gave me the answers and you said nothing."
5. "I like her too. I think she is a fun. I don't see why she can't come with us. Why is it always just us and none of the other girls from school?"
6. "Why did you tell the entire class that I like her? I don't even like her; I just talked to her at the ball game."
7. "You can't go to the game because you have to watch your younger brothers? How about I come over and help you? We could play some games with them and still have fun."
8. "I really think you are worrying too much about this. Let's take a break from it and see how you feel about it tomorrow after a good night's sleep."
9. "If you were really a good friend you would do it for me. I have helped you lots of times. I don't think this is too much to ask, I don't care what your parents say. "
10. "Why are you always hassling me about being in the drama club? I really like it and wish you would cut it out."

### **Good Friend or Not?**

***Decide whether this is an example of good friendship or not. Tell why or why not. Think of a response if you are involved with this person.***

1. “I know I picked the movie last time, but I choose really good ones. I should pick it again because this is a great movie and you will love it.”

Answer: No, friends should share and take turns.

Response: I would like a chance to pick the movie. It seems fair that we take turns.

2. “Hey, look, I am sorry that you had a fight with your parents, but I can’t listen to all that depressing stuff right now. I am happy that I get to go to the school dance and we should talk about who might be there.”

Answer: No, friends help each other in sad times.

Response: I really need a friend to listen to me now.

3. “You know what? It isn’t a good idea to send that text to your mom right now. Wait until you have calmed down a bit and thought it over.”

Answer: Yes, friends encourage each other to be better people.

Response:

4. “Why couldn’t you have said something? You were the one with the idea to cheat on the math test. Then I get caught and the teacher asks who gave me the answers and you said nothing.”

Answer: No, friends don’t ask you to lie, cheat or steal. Friends don’t leave you hanging out to dry.

Response:

## Friendships for Life

### Grade 8 – session 3

5. “I like her too. I think she is a fun. I don’t see why she can’t come with us. Why is it always just us and none of the other girls from school?”

Answer: No, friends are not exclusive of others or threatened by other friendships.

Response: I want to be friend with you and others too.

6. “Why did you tell the entire class that I like her? I don’t even like her; I just talked to her at the ball game.”

Answer: No, friends do not make up things or exaggerate relationships.

Response: Hey, that was not a cool thing to do. I would never do that to you.

7. “You can’t go to the game because you have to watch your younger brothers? How about I come over and help you? We could play some games with them and still have fun.”

Answer: Yes, friends are flexible and understanding.

Response:

8. “I really think you are worrying too much about this. Let’s take a break from it and see how you feel about it tomorrow after a good night’s sleep.”

Answer: Yes, friends help keep you balanced and offer good perspective.

Response:

9. “If you were really a good friend you would do it for me. I have helped you lots of times. I don’t think this is too much to ask, I don’t care what your parents say. “

Answer: No, friends do not pressure or manipulate friends.

Response: I cannot do this for you. Please do not ask me to do it again.

10. “Why are you always hassling me about being in the drama club? I really like it and wish you would cut it out.”

## **Friendships for Life**

### **Grade 8 – session 3**

Answer: No, friends do not belittle, mock, put down or make fun of another or his/her interests

Response: I like some of the same things that you do. We like different things too. That should be okay with friends.



## Friendships for Life

### Grade 8 – session 3

Date

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Today your son or daughter in eighth grade completed the last session in the safe environment series for grade eight. The three sessions were:

1. ***How People Violate Boundaries***
2. ***Grooming & Tactics***
3. ***Friendship for Life.***

These sessions were created especially by our diocese for these students and built upon material from last year.

In addition to the basic safety training taught in previous years, these sessions helped the students explore boundary violations, grooming and grooming tactics. Grooming is the process in which a person, whether male or female, plays with someone's feelings in order to gain control of the other person. Adults or peers will groom young people in order to meet some selfish and unhealthy need that the groomer has. These are never good relationships and a young person should always end it. The final session summarized the material with a lesson on friendships.

As your son or daughter grows into adolescence, it can be difficult to speak with them about important things, such as the material in these sessions. Please make time to talk with them about it. An easy way to start the conversation will be to look over the handouts that were used throughout the sessions. Every student was given copies to take home. Please contact us if you have any concerns or would like a set of the handouts.

Sincerely,