

SAFE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM

DIOCESE OF FORT WAYNE-SOUTH BEND

GRADE 7 – SESSION 2

LESSON PLAN AND HANDOUTS

Rules for Good Boundaries

Session two objectives:

1. Learn rules for developing healthy boundaries
2. Review the Ten Commandments and discuss how they relate to personal boundaries and relationships

Supplies needed: Poster or list of the Ten Commandments
Rules for Good Boundaries (Student Handout 7-3, page 5 of this material) one copy for each student
Reflection Questions (Student Handout 7-4, page 6 of this material) one for each student
Parent letter for take home

*Note: Post the chart paper from session one titled: **Persons with healthy boundaries: if desired.***

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:

- A boundary is the personal space that you keep between yourself and others
- There are two types of boundaries: external and internal.

Tell me a few other things you learned about personal boundaries or the value of healthy boundaries from our last session. *Allow the students a few minutes to recall some of the important points from the previous session.*

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Today we are going to develop some rules or guidelines that will help us develop good boundaries.

- We have talked about the Golden Rule. Jesus taught us that the Golden Rule is part of the Greatest Commandment: Matthew 22:34-40 (Mark 12:28-31)

³⁴When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, ³⁵and one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. ³⁶"Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" ³⁷He said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.'³⁸ This is the greatest and first commandment. ³⁹ And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'⁴⁰ On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

- Jesus summarized the Ten Commandments that God gave us.
- The Ten Commandments teach us God's plan for our relationship with God and our neighbors. The first three teach about our relationship with God, and the next seven about our relationships with others.
- *Point to a poster or copy of Ten Commandments.*
- God gave us the Ten Commandments to help us. They are to teach us about our relationship with God, with yourself and with others.
- These were some of the first rules that God shared with us to teach us about boundaries and how we are to live in relationship with each other.
- Knowing your boundaries and respecting others' boundaries helps you know when and how to go forward in a relationship.

*Hand out to each student a copy of the worksheet – **Rules for Good Boundaries** (Student Handout 7-3, page 5 of this material).*

- On this page are some questions we can ask ourselves that will help us develop healthier friendships.

(Ask a student to read aloud number one. Some additional comments are below for this discussion. Continue reading all rules until done.)

Number 1: *(Read this after student has read the questions from the handout.)* How closely you allow others within your physical and emotional boundaries usually depends upon how long you have known them and how much you like and trust them. What information you share with them depends on what your relationship is.

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With co-workers – not much information, maybe only social.

With schoolmates – mostly social information, and a little private information

With friends – lots of information, both private and social

Number 2: Trust your feelings of comfort or discomfort when you are around others. If someone makes you uncomfortable, your boundary “radar” should go on alert. Pay attention to these internal warning signs.

Number 4: The amount of self-disclosure should be based upon how well you know others and how much you can trust them in appropriate ways.

Number 8: You need to have reciprocal trust that is appropriate.

If your “friend” is not worthy of trust, he or she should not be in your inner circle.

If you expect others to respect your boundaries, you must respect theirs. If you are not worthy of trust, you should not be in their inner circle.

Number 9: When someone tries to violate your boundaries, use that experience to decide how you can handle similar situations in the future. Never hesitate to ask a trusted adult questions about your boundaries and whether they are appropriate. If you have been abused, your boundary “radar” may be mixed up. You may be ignoring feelings of discomfort, which prevents you from realizing the person is violating your boundaries. It is important to talk with a trusted adult. Over time this can help you get your own “radar” back on track. Speak up when someone or something bothers you. Let people know what you won’t tolerate. Don’t be afraid to say no to anyone who may be trying to hurt or take advantage of you.

Activity 3: *Divide the group into pairs. Hand out to each student a copy of the **Reflection Questions** (Student Handout 7-4, page 6 of this material). Assign each pair a different question to read and discuss. After 5-10 minutes, ask each pair to report to the group their thoughts.*

Summary:

In our two sessions this year, we have built upon our safety training. In past years, we taught you about safe and unsafe touches and to tell a trusted adult if someone ever touched you in an unsafe way. This is still true and very important for you to remember. But as you grow older

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and mature, so will your relationships with others. All relationships are important, those with younger people, peers, and older persons. God gives us many different kinds of relationships so that we can grow into the children God calls us to be. In grade six, we learned that all types of relationships have specific purposes. Relationships are so important that God tells us in many places in Scripture about how we are to live in these relationships. God desires a loving relationship with each one of us. And God desires that we have many wonderful relationships so that we fulfill God's plan to live with God forever in happiness. This year we developed our understanding of relationships by learning about our personal boundaries, the four types of boundaries, the value of strong, healthy boundaries, and some rules for how to develop them. All of this information helps each of us become the person God has called us to be.

Ask the students to take home their worksheets and keep them in a special place where they can find them again. We all need reminders. Give the students the parent letter for take home.

End of lesson plan. Handout and parent letter on following pages.

Some Rules for Good Boundaries

1. Length of time – How long have you known this person? How is knowing someone longer beneficial to you? How long is long enough before a stranger becomes a friend? How do you decide?
2. Knowledge about the other person – What, and how much, do you really know about this person? Some important things to know about someone you are considering making a closer friend are:
 - How does this person react when given “No” for an answer?
 - How does this person handle frustrations and disappointments?
 - How does she/he express anger?
 - How does this person treat his/her parents?
 - How does this person speak about/treat the other gender?How can this knowledge help you make good choices in a relationship? Explain or give examples.
3. Sharing Events – How many different kinds of events have you shared together? What are they? How have these events helped you get to know the other person?
4. Amount of Self-Disclosure – How much personal information have you shared? How much has the other person shared? Are you comfortable with the sharing? Why or why not? Is the amount of sharing reciprocal?
5. Number of Different Experiences – What has this person experienced in life? How has it affected him or her? What can you learn from knowing about these experiences?
6. Role Appropriate – We all have certain roles in life. Some roles are incompatible for friendships. Teachers don’t hang out socially with students; coaches don’t date the athletes they coach, etc. What role does this person have in your life?
7. Age Appropriate – As adolescents, close friendships/relationships with those two or more years older or younger than us can be harmful. What is the age difference between you? How could this be harmful?
8. Level of Reciprocal Trust – Can I trust this person? How do I know? Am I worthy of his or her trust? Why? How do you know when someone is trustworthy? What happens when trust is broken?
9. Levels of Commitment – As adolescents, some types of commitments are harmful or detrimental. What kind of commitment is appropriate for someone your age? Ask your parents and other trusted adults for guidance and counsel in this area.

Reflection Questions

Directions: Based on the boundary information presented in the last two sessions, answer the following questions.

1. Which of the Rules for Good Boundaries do you need to put into practice to help you have healthier...
...friendships? Why?

...family relationships? Why?

2. Which of the Ten Commandments can help you have healthier relationships with...
...family? Why?

...friends? Why?

3. Which “Rule” do you most need to put into practice to help you have better relationships?

4. How will this rule help you?

5. List the social skills that will help you live this rule.

6. Which of the Ten Commandments will help you live this rule?

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Date

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Today your son or daughter in seventh grade completed two special sessions at school or religious education. The sessions, ***Boundaries for Good Relationships in God's Plan***, comprised the annual safe environment training created especially by our diocese for these students. This session built upon material from last year and will be developed further next year in grade eight.

In addition to the basic safety training taught in previous years, these sessions helped the students explore personal boundaries, their boundary circle, the value of healthy boundaries, rules for developing healthy boundaries, and a review of the Ten Commandments.

The content of the session included the following points:

- ❖ God's love and care has no boundaries, but our relationships with other people do.
- ❖ A boundary is the personal space that you keep between yourself and others.
- ❖ God wants us to have healthy boundaries so that we can grow into the persons God created us to be. If a boundary is too closed (not allowing anyone to be close to us) or too open (example: telling everyone our deepest feeling) it is unhealthy. Unhealthy boundaries cause us all kinds of trouble.
- ❖ The Ten Commandments teach us God's plan for our relationship with God and our neighbors. The first three teach about our relationship with God, and the next seven about our relationships with others.
- ❖ Knowing your boundaries and respecting others' boundaries helps you know when and how to go forward in a relationship.
- ❖ We can ask ourselves some important questions in order to know our boundaries in a particular relationship.

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 a copy to take home. Please contact us if you have any concerns or would like additional copies of the handouts.

Sincerely,