

**Lesson 3 for Grade Pre-Kindergarten**

**Boundaries: You Have Rights**

**PRINCIPLE**

To empower children to recognize they have a right to be safe, and they are allowed to create boundaries to protect themselves in situations where they feel uncomfortable, or where they could be harmed.

**OBJECTIVES**

Through safety activities for Pre-Kindergarten, the adult lesson leader reinforces the parent's message about basic rules for personal safety. After completion of the Lesson for Pre-Kindergarten, children will be able to:

- Develop personal safety knowledge
- Understand the meaning of boundaries and personal space
- Communicate when they feel unsafe
- Follow basic safety rules

**CATECHISM / SCRIPTURE**

*The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. Genesis 2:15 (RSV 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.)*

**Background for Lesson Leaders:\***

While adults are the chief protectors of children, there are still ways we can teach children to better protect themselves when faced with tough situations. To empower children with safety skills, they must be equipped with some basic safety rules, and have an understanding of safe friends and safe adults. Personal boundaries are established during our early years, and adults must help children to create their own proper boundaries and respect the ones that are in place—understanding that children will model adult behavior.

During this lesson, it's extremely important that the Lesson Leader avoids saying that touches that *feel* good are "safe, loving or show someone loves you". Rather, a safe touch is a touch that isn't intended to confuse, scare or deliberately harm the child.

Whenever possible, Pre-Kindergarten safety lessons should be taught in connection with other learning happening in the classroom. This can be the time to expand the conversation and discuss safe friends, safe adults, and other behaviors, so children can practice safety when they are with anyone other than you.

Children who know they can ask their parents and safe adults questions are more likely to speak up if someone exhibits inappropriate behavior toward them, and are less vulnerable to potential predators.

**Interacting with this age group: key concept is "movement"**

Children this age need to be able to "move" around. Physical movement is essential for their development and allows them to connect concepts into action—and so, even the lessons should allow for movement. In their lives, the freedom of exploration and getting around could put them in danger. They are learning to make choices, and understand they need help when they have problems. They are capable of following a few simple rules. They seek approval of others and are overly curious about almost everything. They are capable of understanding the need for rules and following them, especially personal safety rules. People and the relationships they form are important to them. Teaching children of this age and developmental stage the skills for setting and maintaining appropriate boundaries is important. They should frequently practice control of their actions no matter what emotional state they may be experiencing. Repetition, reminders and active practice, involving movement, are keys to their success.

### Prior to Teaching the Lessons—A Map for Lesson Leaders

1. **Complete the VIRTUS Children's Programs Lesson Leader Orientation and Certification Training.** This training module will provide the foundational knowledge necessary for any Lesson Leader to successfully lead a safe environment lesson. For access to this training, please communicate with your diocesan coordinator.
2. **Review the *Teaching Boundaries and Safety Guide: Safe Environment Guide for Caring Adults, Parents and Guardians*.** This document (also available in module format) gives a wealth of information regarding boundaries. While adults are the main protectors of children, there are skills children can learn to better protect themselves and each other when faced with tough situations where caring adults aren't present. For access to this resource, please communicate with your diocesan coordinator.
3. **Review the Key Vocabulary Words for Lesson Leaders to Know** (below). These key words and concepts should be woven throughout the entire lesson. The lesson leader should read through and understand these terms and apply them to each activity.

### Key Vocabulary Words for Lesson Leaders to Know

- **Private body parts**—those body parts covered by a bathing suit.
- **Rules**—a prescribed guide for conduct or action. We follow the rules to make sure we are safe—just like how we have a seatbelt rule to keep us safe in the car, or the safety rules before we cross the street. [For example, teach the child a simple rule for what to do if someone tries to touch him / her in an unsafe way, which is to say “No!”, try to get away, and tell an adult as soon as possible.]
- **Boundaries**—the limits that define one person as separate from another or from others. There are boundaries you can see (like a fence around a yard) and boundaries you can't see with your eyes (like the comfort zone around us that we call our “personal space”). Boundaries vary depending on the relationship with the other person. [For example, a boundary between a child and a grandparent is different than the boundary between a child and a teacher or coach.]
- **Saying “No”**—to say “no” means to refuse, deny, reject or express disapproval of. This word is used to express a boundary and communicate that you do not want something to happen or continue. [Let children know It's OK to say “No” to an adult if they make you feel scared or uncomfortable, or if they touch your private body parts.]
- **Respecting boundaries**—we should have respect for ourselves, and respect for others. Respect for ourselves means we understand our dignity and value as a person, and work to create or maintain boundaries to protect ourselves. We feel upset or uncomfortable when someone doesn't honor our own boundaries, and we communicate with the right person if we need help. Respecting another's boundaries means you care about them, and won't do anything that would bring them harm, and that you communicate with the right person to get them help if they are being harmed by someone else. [Give children examples of respecting others, i.e. not calling people mean names, not hitting others, following rules at school or at home, stopping an activity when someone asks, letting an adult know when someone is in pain or hurt, etc.]
- **Safe friends and safe adults**—safe people won't hurt you without a good reason and won't intentionally confuse you. They listen to and consistently respect boundaries, and follow the rules. [Explain that a child may have many safe friends and adults. Give children examples of adult behavior that could hurt them, but may be necessary for the child's safety, i.e. medical exams, vaccinations, throat swabs, removing splinters, stopping a child from running into the road, etc.] There are also some adults, in certain circumstances, who could see or touch a child's private body parts—but *only* for the purpose of keeping a child safe, clean and healthy. Not everybody is allowed to do this, and it is only for certain occasions or reasons (such as to keep a child clean or healthy, or when needing to see a doctor/dentist/nurse—and when a parent or caretaker is also present).
- **Unsafe friends and unsafe adults**—unsafe friends and unsafe adults put a child at risk for emotional, spiritual and physical harm. These are people who place a child in danger for their own purposes without concern for the welfare of the child. They also do not consistently listen to the parents' wishes or the child's boundaries. [Tell children we can know when someone is unsafe if they do not follow the rules or listen to our boundaries.]
- **Safe touches**—touches that have a good purpose, aren't intended to hurt and should be familiar. They're safe and can also be meant to keep you healthy, even if the person isn't known well, as long as the touches are appropriate for the particular relationship, such as when mom kisses your forehead at night, when you high-five your teammate, etc. [Avoid saying safe touches that feel good are “safe, loving or show someone loves you” since sometimes touches are safe and necessary, but can also hurt—although they hurt for a good reason to keep children safe, such as stitches, a doctor shot or dental cleanings.]
- **Unsafe touches**—touches that are inappropriate, could be meant to hurt or scare, or are contrary to the touching rules. If unsure about a touch, ask a parent. [Provide examples of unsafe touches, such as hitting, punching, tripping, kicking, spitting, touching private parts, etc.]

- **Secret**—something kept hidden, never told or unexplained. Secrets exclude others and have potential to harm, sometimes causing the person involved to feel frightened or uncomfortable. [For example, let children know that there are no secrets when it comes to personal and physical safety. Tell children it's wrong for an adult or another child to ask to keep a secret about safety—especially unsafe touches—because that's a way for people to get hurt. If an individual tries to make a child keep a secret or makes him / her feel frightened, the child must know to communicate this information right away to a parent or caring adult—and be reassured that the child will be protected regardless of threats or seeming consequences of "telling".]
- **Surprise**—Surprises are typically happy. They cause feelings of happiness and joy. They are exciting, and temporary—meaning they will be revealed within a specific timeframe. As surprises are usually fun, they include activities like birthday surprises, gifts, trips and special treats. Surprises are inclusive and meant to be shared with others. Safe adults can talk about surprises with children, because they should only last for a short timeframe and surprises are meant to be revealed to others.

## DURING THE LESSON

Each lesson should begin with the Introductory Video. Following the video, you are able to choose which activity options you would like to do with your students. There are multiple activities to choose from, and you may choose to do one, or all, of the activities. Each activity can also be tailored to the needs and grade level of your students.

### STEP 1: Play Introductory Video

The introductory video for youth in this age range is designed to open a simple discussion about personal boundary safety. The brief video is not intended to be a substitute for the lesson itself. It's merely an introduction designed to "break the ice" and assist the transition of completing the interactive Lesson Activity Options. If the video is shown as an optional activity, please use in conjunction with one of the additional activity options, because discussion and practice are critical components needed to teach youth how to protect themselves. They learn best by "doing;" not just listening. Please communicate with your coordinator to obtain video access.

### ACTIVITY #1: BOUNDARIES—My Personal Space Bubble (Worksheet)

**Background:** In this activity, you are helping children to know that God wants them to feel safe and healthy, that we have a right to boundaries and should be respectful of each other's space and bodies. Children will participate in a role-playing discussion, then complete a worksheet to draw themselves with a circle around them to illustrate their boundaries—and will then take the worksheet home to finish the discussion with parents.

**Directions:** The Lesson Leader will gather the children together in a large group, initiate a discussion with questions/answers, and give the children opportunities for role-playing. Then, the Lesson Leader will print and distribute the worksheet and allow children time to complete it. After, the Lesson Leader will ask the children to take the worksheet home to discuss the questions at the bottom with their parents.

**Preparation:** The Lesson Leader will need to be familiar with the material in the lesson, and have the "My Personal Space Bubble" worksheet printed out for each student.

**Discussion:** Begin Lesson with prayer.

BOUNDARIES—Our Personal Space Bubble

**Say:** *Your whole body is your own personal space or 'personal bubble'. Everybody has their own personal space bubble, even grown-ups! Your personal bubble is more than just your body, it's all the physical space around you.*

**Say:** Here is my *personal space bubble*. (While you are saying this, gesture to your body, and the space around it and above it by drawing an imaginary bubble/circle around yourself in the air.) (Spread your arms out and spin slowly in a circle, then say the following). **Say:** And, your body and the space around your body is your invisible "personal bubble." If you spread your arms out as wide as they can go, this is the space of your own personal bubble.

- (Raise your arms up as high as you can, and draw an imaginary dome bubble from above your head, all around your body to the floor). **Say:** "Let's imagine a big bubble surrounding us—starting up high, and surrounding our whole body—like we are inside of a big bubble!"

#### SUPPLIES

Printed handout of the "My Personal Space Bubble" for each student

Crayons or colored pencils

**Note:** Depending on the attention-span of the children in this pre-K group, you may want to split this lesson into two separate parts, on two separate days. If so, part one could be the discussion, and part two could be the coloring sheet.

**Say:** Now, let's do it together! Let's all stand and spread our arms out. Look around you, we want to make sure that we don't accidentally burst someone else's bubble! If someone else is in your bubble and touching any part of you or your space, you both will need to move and spread out to respect each other's space. This imaginary bubble is your space, and the most important and special part of this space is your body.

**Activity:**

Hand out the "My Personal Space Bubble" worksheet to all students, along with crayons or colored pencils.

**Say:** Now let's sit back down, and look at this "My Personal Space Bubble" worksheet. Inside the box, write your name. Then, draw a picture of yourself.

Give students a few minutes to draw a picture of themselves. Then, **Say:** What beautiful pictures! Now draw a circle around yourself in the picture. This is your "personal space bubble."

**Ask:** Who can come into your "personal space bubble"?

- *Responses could include parents, siblings, other family, our friends, etc.*

**Ask:** Are you happy when those you love, such as your family, sometimes come into your personal space bubble?

- *Responses may include yes, no or sometimes (keep in mind that their feelings on this subject are not "wrong"; if they say "no" then that is OK).*
- **Say:** We usually feel more comfortable with our families, and we usually feel more comfortable with them being closer to us in our bubble. Sometimes we might want more space, and that's OK. Even if it is your family, no one is allowed to see or touch your private parts unless the reason is to keep you clean or healthy. When we say healthy, we mean, our safe adults help us to be healthy so we take care of our "boo boos," pain or sickness.

**Ask:** Is it okay if our friends come into our "personal space bubble," such as if we are playing a fun game, like tag?

- *Responses may include yes, no or sometimes (keep in mind that their feelings on this subject are not "wrong"; if they say "no" then that is OK).*
- **Say:** We might feel more comfortable with some friends and family being in our personal space bubbles, but we might also want a bit more space, and that's OK. Our friends should never ask to see, or try to touch our private parts. And we should never ask to see or touch anyone else's private parts.

**Ask:** Is it okay if you don't want anyone in your "personal space bubble"?

- *Yes! You can get to decide who you want or don't want in your personal space bubble. And there may be times where you want to be the only one in your personal space bubble—and that's OK!*
- **Say:** We might not feel very comfortable when we are in a place with a LOT of other people—like a big crowd, and that's OK, too. We might want more space in those situations. Whether we are with a person we know, or someone we don't know or recognize, it's never OK for them to ask us questions about our private parts, or try to do any touching of our private parts, or show us theirs.

**Ask:** Is it okay for people such as a doctor, dentist, a police officer or a fire fighter to enter our "personal space bubble"?

- *Yes, under certain circumstances (keep in mind that while their feelings are not "wrong," you may need to follow-up by saying something along the lines of: it just depends on what is going on. If we are hurt, and our parents are not around, we might need extra help).*
- **Say:** We might not always feel very comfortable with a doctor or dentist, especially if we have to get a shot or vaccine, or take medicine. But, we should *still feel safe* with them because their job is to help us be safe or healthy. This is especially true with police officers or fire fighters—even though they might be strangers. They are people who we might not know, but they are helpers, and their goal is to keep us healthy and safe when we are hurt, or afraid, or when we need a medical checkup.

**Ask:** Do you think each of our bubbles are the same size?

- *Responses may include yes, no or sometimes.*
- **Say:** Actually, we all have different bubbles! How big our bubbles are might be different for everyone. Some people might decide that their own bubbles don't need to be so wide (spread your arms a moderate amount) and other people might decide that their bubbles are wider than their arms (extend your arms wider). The important thing is to care for and respect everyone's personal space AND to speak up when we feel uncomfortable about someone being in our space.

Lesson 3 for Pre-Kindergarten


Boundaries: You Have Rights

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**ACTIVITY #1: My Personal Space Bubble (Worksheet)**

**Background:** Your whole body is your own personal space or "personal space bubble." Everybody has this bubble, even grownups! Your personal bubble is more than just your body; it's the physical space near you. Our bubbles are invisible, but we can imagine them around us and other people. Even though most people and touches are safe, you're allowed to tell adults and other kids when you feel uncomfortable with someone in, or near, your personal space bubble. **And,** you can always ask for space. When you feel uncomfortable or unsafe, and especially when people don't listen to you when you ask for space, you can speak to a safe adult to ask for help.

**Instructions:** This page shows kids who have drawn imaginary space bubbles. It's your turn, now! Write your name and draw a picture of yourself in the box. Then draw your own "personal space bubble" around your body.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**At home, you can talk about these questions with your parents:**

- When is it okay for someone to cross into your "personal space bubble"? What are some examples of when that might happen?
  - When you want to give grandma a hug, or if a doctor needs to give you an exam with mom or dad in the room.
- What can you do if an adult or another child is too close to your "personal space bubble" and it makes you feel uncomfortable, scared or unsafe?
  - You can ask them to please give you more space, and you can tell a safe adult when you feel unsafe or uncomfortable.
- To be respectful of others and their space bubbles, what should you do if someone asks you for space?
  - You can say, "no!" and then step up and give them more space.

**ROLE PLAYING QUESTIONS TO PRESENT TO THE CHILDREN:**

**Ask:** What can we say to an adult, or to another child, when they are too close to our personal bubble, or if they are inside of our personal bubble?

- “No, stop.”
- “I need some space, please back up.”
- “You are too close to my personal space bubble, I want you to back up.”
- “I don’t like how close you are to me. I need more space.”
- “No, I don’t like that. Give me more space, please.”
- “It’s not OK to be so close to me. I need “this” much space. I’m going to move, and I don’t want you to follow me.”

**Ask:** What can we say if they don’t listen to us when we ask for space? (invite the children to give their own suggestions, first). Then reiterate: You can repeat yourself, in a louder or firmer voice, and try some of these statements—but if that doesn’t work, you can go straight to an adult:

- “Stop. I am going to talk to the teacher now.”
- “Now I will talk to the teacher, because you are not listening to my space boundary.”
- “It’s not OK to be in my space, I need to talk to an adult about what you’re doing.”

**Ask:** Then, what should WE do if someone asks US to give them space? (wait for answers) Sometimes we accidentally bump or fall on people and burst their personal space bubble, and we need to explain what happened and back up so that the person can form a new one (like this, make a sound effect and mime creating a new invisible bubble). Sometimes, though, we are having fun and thinking the other person is also having fun—but we might hear them say, “no!” or “stop!” or “I don’t like that!” and then we know that we need to stop what we are doing and give space. One way to be kind is to be respectful of others’ bodies and their space. These examples are ways to show respect to other people’s space, just like we want our space to be respected!

- “I’m sorry. I will back up a little bit.”
- “Oh, OK. Could you move over? I don’t have any room left on my side.”
- “Whoops, that was an accident. I’ll back up.”
- “I did not realize I was so close and that you did not like it. I will move over.”
- “I didn’t realize that you didn’t like our game. I will stop and back up. Do you want to play something else?”

**Ask:** What should WE do if: we see someone messing around in someone else’s personal space bubble, and that person isn’t listening to the person asking them to stop or back up? You can always be a helper, and helping others is a good, kind thing to do. We can always go and tell a safe adult, like a teacher, a coach, a principal, a person in charge, a parent, a grandparent... Here are some words you can use:

- Teacher, that person isn’t listening to my friend, and my friend needs help.
- Dad, at school there’s a person who keeps bothering my friend, and they won’t listen when my friend says to stop.
- Mom, I don’t like it when my friends look sad. My friend is sad when someone gets into their personal safety bubble and won’t back away.

**Concluding statements:** We all have personal bubbles, and they are all special and unique—just like us! Even though our bubbles are invisible, we can imagine them around us and around other people.

Most people and most touches are safe. But, if people are too close to your bubble and making you feel uncomfortable, or you don’t like it, you’re allowed to say so, and ask for space. And, we should give other people space by moving away from their bubbles when they say they need space. If we accidentally get too close, we can move away so that the bubble can be formed again.

If anyone makes us feel scared, uncomfortable or unsafe, then we need to tell a safe adult—like one of our teachers or counselors at our school, a parent, grandparent, aunt/uncle or neighbor. Actually, you can always go to a safe adult for help.

**Note:** Children learn best when they are able to role play and practice what they have learned. Here, you will be inviting children to give examples, then reiterate the ones listed. Feel free to “role play” and have the children repeat the phrases after you state them first. It will also benefit the children, especially in the beginning of this role-playing exercise, to show puppets, stuffies, figurines, dolls, characters or hands acting out the scenarios, and then having children join or interact with the character that is speaking up.

There are intentionally more responses than necessary. Feel free to only give the children one or two examples of the responses to help with recall.

**End the lesson with a Prayer**

The Lesson Leader may invite the children to create their own prayer, he/she may lead a prayer, or may use the suggested prayer below.

*Dear God,  
Each one of us is special and different.  
We are made in your image.  
I want to live like you want me to live.  
Please help me respect myself, and others.  
Please give me courage to speak up for myself, and my friends if we are being harmed.  
Amen*

**Book Suggestions** (please see note about utilizing books in the “Background for Lesson Leaders” section)

*Do You Have a Secret?* Jennifer Moore- Mallinois B.E.S. Publishing  
*Please Stop! Go Tell!* Michelle Brown, LCSW  
*No Means No!* Jayneen Sanders, Upload Publishing

Theology of the Body Building Blocks for Tots by Monica Ashour, Pauline Books & Media:  
*Every Body is Smart* (board book); *Every Body Is a Gift* (board book); *Everybody Has a Body* (board book)

Theology of the Body Building Blocks for Kids by Monica Ashour, Pauline Books & Media:  
*God Has a Plan for Boys and for Girls*; *Every Body Has Something to Say*; *Every Body Has Something to Give*

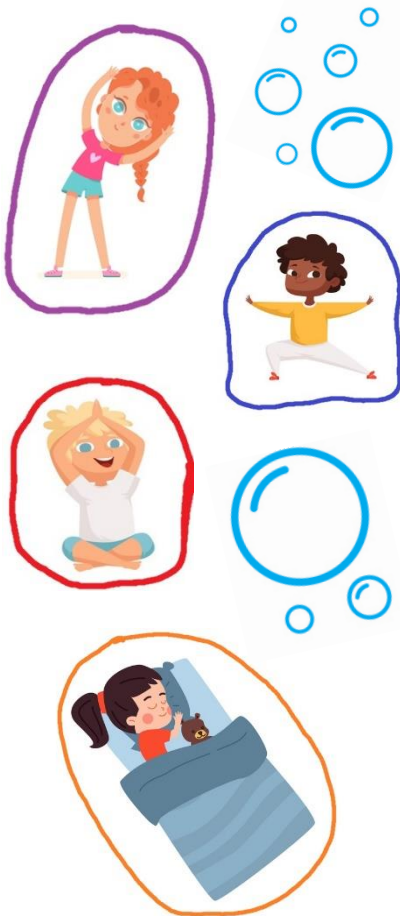
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**Instructions:** This page shows kids who have drawn imaginary space bubbles. It’s your turn, now! Write your name and draw a picture of yourself in the box. Then draw your own “personal space bubble” around your body.



**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**At home, you can talk about these questions with your parents:**

- When is it okay for someone to cross into your “personal space bubble”? What are some examples of when that might happen?
  - *When you want to give grandma a hug, or if a doctor needs to give you an exam with mom or dad in the room.*
- What can you do if an adult or another child is too close to your “personal space bubble” and it makes you feel uncomfortable, scared or unsafe?
  - *You can ask them to please give you more space, and you can tell a safe adult when you feel unsafe or uncomfortable.*
- To be respectful of others and their space bubbles, what should you do if someone asks you for space?
  - *You can say, “OK,” and then back up and give them more space.*