Lesson 4 for Grades K, 1 & 2 — Secrets, Surprises and Promises

PRINCIPLE

Children must learn how to respect their own health and safety, and that of others, by understanding the safety rules about secrets. They have a right to be safe, and they are allowed to create boundaries to protect themselves in situations that cause discomfort or violate the safety rules.

CATECHISM / SCRIPTURE

"Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you, says the LORD."
—Jeremiah 1:8, New Revised Standard Version of the Bible (NRSV)

OBJECTIVES

Through this lesson, the adult lesson leader reinforces the parent's message about boundaries. After Lesson 4, children should be better able to:

- Identify the boundary differences between secrets, surprises and promises
- Understand the safety rules with regard to secrets and promises:
  - Say "No!" when someone tries to make you keep a secret regarding safety
  - Try to leave the situation if you feel uncomfortable
  - Tell a safe adult as soon as possible (even if it didn't happen to you)
- Technology component: Understand similar boundary rules apply for Online activities, too
- Begin to understand that if anybody does make them keep a secret, gives them an unsafe touch or shows them inappropriate material, it isn't the child's fault

Background for Lesson Leaders:

Before beginning this session, the Lesson Leader should read the *Teaching Boundary and Safety Guide*, as it gives a wealth of information regarding boundaries and how to address them.

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. 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. Some boundaries are "non-negotiables" for children (such as touching/physical boundaries), but others are unique and are impacted based on the youth's individual perceptions, personal history, values, goals, culture and concerns.

Using our voice, and the word "no" are effective ways to establish a boundary. Sometimes children may not be aware they're allowed to say "no" to an adult or older youth.

Most people will accept and respect our boundaries if we are clear about them. But, with some people, we must frequently and clearly uphold and reset our boundaries.

Children may have difficulty with this concept at this age. They can see boundaries in a very literal and visual way (such as a fence around a yard), but they can also learn that words create boundaries. One boundary is created if, for example, a child says, "I don't need any help. I can do it myself." Some other words and phrases that can create boundaries for children are "no," "don't do that," "give me five" (instead of a hug), and "leave me alone." Obviously, when you think about it, there are many examples of using words to create boundaries. By using as many examples as possible, you can help young children begin to develop an understanding of the more abstract meaning of the term boundary—and, obviously, that abstract meaning is most germane to helping children learn to protect themselves from sexual abuse.

This age group: Dealing with the primary age—key concept is "activity"

Young children have lively and vivid imaginations, are growing less self-centered, and are becoming more conscious of others. Their attention span is short—approximately 20 minutes. They build on concrete experiences, love to learn, and are highly inquisitive. However, they rely almost entirely on others to define good and bad, and safe versus unsafe behavior—but they do understand "rules", which is another phrase for boundaries. At this age, children are beginning to differentiate between the positive and negative aspects of everyday life. They are beginning to question adults' expectations of blind obedience. At the same time, they are learning how to respect and care for their own bodies in terms of hygiene, eating, and activity. Parents and caring adults should make every effort to create an environment with honesty and trust, where children are free to ask questions about life and their own bodies to set the stage for each child's life-long relationships with others. This is the time to discuss safe and unsafe behaviors, and to enable children to practice safety away from home.

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ACTIVITY OPTION #1: Play the (optional) introductory video as an icebreaker

The introductory video for children and youth in this age range is designed to open a simple discussion about personal boundary safety. The video is brief and 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 the critical components needed to teach children and youth how to protect themselves. They learn best by "doing"; not just listening.

ACTIVITY OPTION #2: Review and discuss key vocabulary words

- **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.]
- **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.]
- **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.]
- **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, fearful or sad. Secrets also send the message to children that they, or someone else, will get into trouble if the secret is shared [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.
- **Problem**—Problems can be big and small; they can be small, little things like puzzles or big things like emergencies—and often need to be solved. They can involve fears and emotions. Sometimes we put boundaries in place to prevent problems, or to be more prepared for them. Whenever we have a problem that we don't know how to solve, we should talk to a safe adult for help. If we have problems about safety issues, boundaries and secrets, we definitely need to talk to a safe adult. [For example, a house fire is a big problem for everyone who lives there, and for the people who live near that house. It's a problem because it's unsafe, and it could hurt people. When a house is on fire, help is needed help right away. How do we get help with the problem of house fires? As soon as it's safe, we "stop, drop and roll", try to get out and call 911, and the fire department comes to help us fix the problem of the fire that's too big to fix on our own.]
- **Threat**—When someone threatens you, they are stating that they are going to hurt, injure, damage or do something dangerous if you don't do what they want you to do. You never have to listen to threats, but you should be prepared in case you experience them. [For example, someone might threaten you and say if you tell about an unsafe secret, they're going to hurt your someone/something you know, and that you're going to get into trouble. When you hear someone threaten you about an unsafe secret, that is when we definitely need to tell a safe adult.]
- **Promise**—When you make a promise, you are declaring that something specific will happen—that you will either "do" or "not do" something. Promises can be good! But, we should never make promises about keeping quiet regarding unsafe secrets.

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ACTIVITY OPTION #3: Song—Secrets are unsafe to keep

Activity: The purpose of this 2-part activity is to create an activity for children using discussion and music to help them better understand appropriate boundaries regarding unsafe secrets, and the importance of communicating them to a safe adult.

Note: The worksheet template for this activity is included in the downloaded set of materials at the end of this packet.

SUPPLIES (optional)

Piano / Keyboard
Pre-printed worksheets
Internet access

Directions: The Lesson Leader should review the Key Vocabulary words located in Activity 2. For the lesson itself, you'll be inviting the children to sit in a circle with you, where you'll lead the discussion about secrets and surprises in Part 1. Then, in Part 2, you'll teach them the introductory song below to the tune of, "*Mary had a little lamb*" along with dance movement.

Discussion:

PART I. Lead a discussion about the following items:

There are big differences between secrets and surprises.

Unsafe secrets are supposed to be kept hidden and aren't meant to be told. They keep other people in the dark, and can make us feel scared or uncomfortable, or sad. They also sometimes involve situations where someone will get into trouble if the secret is shared. Sometimes people have problems, and try to keep their problems secret from others—but that could hurt people. Problems should never be a secret, and neither should there be secrets about safety rules!

Surprises, on the other hand, are happy and joyful. They're temporary, and meant to be shared with others, like when we have a surprise party, when we buy a special present for someone's birthday, or if we've made a special desert for someone because they did a good job. These can always be shared with safe adults.

Note: In this activity, it's important for the Lesson Leader to acknowledge that there are adults and children who do have good intentions, who attempt to make children keep secrets without realizing that they might be dangerous. All types of secrets are dangerous because they might condition children to keep secrets from unsafe people. With this in mind, be sure not to vilify anyone who does ask to keep a secret, and instead stress the importance of always taking that information to a safe adult. Remember that there will be children who have already promised others to keep secrets, and they should not be made to feel guilty or ashamed about this.

Boundary safety involves rules like when we tell a safe adult when we're uncomfortable or scared, and how we tell a safe adult right away if someone tries to touch or see our private parts. Knowing about secrets is an important part of our boundary safety plan, because they impact our safety. When it comes to your safety and the boundary rules, it's not OK to keep secrets.

There are some adults and children who will ask you to keep unsafe secrets. If someone tries to make you keep a secret, it's important to tell a safe adult. Unsafe secrets are not OK to keep, and we have to tell the safe adult.

PART II. Ask the children to listen carefully as you introduce a song to them that will have a familiar tune.

Leading the sing-along: Tell the children that you're going to sing a line of the song and ask them to sing the lyric line the same way after you finish. Teach children the song lyrics while they are sitting.

The song should be sung to the tune of "*Mary Had a Little Lamb*."

Here's the example of the first section. The rest of the lyrics/verses are shown below.

Lesson Leader: *Secrets are unsafe to keep, unsafe to keep, unsafe to keep*
Children repeat: *Secrets are unsafe to keep, unsafe to keep, unsafe to keep*

Lesson Leader: *Secrets are unsafe to keep, they can be sad and hurt.*
Children repeat: *Secrets are unsafe to keep, they can be sad and hurt.*

Note: The Lesson Leader may invite a pianist or musician to the class setting for additional sensory input. The Lesson Leader could also utilize an electronic instrumental version of the song by searching the Internet for options—not for visual options; just an instrumental soundtrack for background music. This option requires a device connected to the Internet, and speaker capabilities. If utilizing either of these options, the children should learn the words first, and then hear it with the accompanying music and dance moves.

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Dancy party: When they become restless, invite them to stand for the physical part of the activity. As they sing, begin to walk together single-file in the shape of their circle (clockwise), and clap twice quickly at the end of each verse. For each verse they sing, have them jump to switch directions during the final two claps, and continue to switch back and forth until the song is complete. You can also invite them to come up with their own dance moves for each verse (i.e., wag your finger for the first verse, thumbs up for the second verse, a cheering motion for the last phrase of the third verse, etc.).

Below is the full song (to the tune of "*Mary Had a Little Lamb*").

I.
Secrets are unsafe to keep,
Unsafe to keep,
Unsafe to keep.
Secrets are unsafe to keep,
They can be sad and hurt.

II.
(It's) OK to tell a safe adult,
Safe adult, safe adult.
(It's) OK to tell a safe adult,
Whenever we're unsure.

III.
Since secrets are unsafe to keep,
Unsafe to keep, unsafe to keep,
Since secrets are unsafe to keep,
Instead we do surprises!

IV.
[Since] They're temporary, fun and shared,
Fun and shared,
Fun and shared—
Temporary fun and shared,
Safe to have surprises!

V.
Always tell a safe adult,
When scared or uncomfortable,
Always tell a safe adult,
Whenever you need help!

ACTIVITY OPTION #4: Thumbs up or down?

Background: This hands-on, interactive activity gives children specific scenarios on secrets and surprises to work out how they would respond if confronted with the situation.

Directions: Take children through the interactive discussion by asking questions and guiding the answers. Then, present the scenarios to them by asking them to show their agreement or disagreement. Children will show that they agree or disagree with the statements provided by the Lesson Leader by showing a "Thumbs up" or a "Thumbs down" sign/gesture with their hands. Model the behavior so the children understand what is being asked of them.

Discussion: **Talk to children about secrets and ask them the following questions while gently guiding the answers:**

- Does anyone know what a secret is? Who can share?
  - Answer: A secret is something that is intended to never be told. They're unsafe, especially when they have to do with our boundary safety rules. Boundary safety involves rules like when we tell a safe adult when we're uncomfortable or scared, and how we tell a safe adult right away if someone tries to touch or see our private parts. Knowing about secrets is an important part of our boundary safety plan, because they impact our safety.
- Who can tell me what some of our boundary and safety rules are?
  - Say "No!" if someone shares unsafe or inappropriate material/images
  - Try to leave the situation if possible
  - Tell a safe adult as soon as possible if you're scared, uncomfortable, or if someone tries to touch your private parts
- When it comes to your safety and the boundary rules, is it ever OK to keep secrets about them?
  - No, it's never OK!

Note: In this activity, it's important for the Lesson Leader to acknowledge that there are adults and children who do have good intentions, who attempt to make children keep secrets without realizing that they might be dangerous. All types of secrets are dangerous because they might condition children to keep secrets from unsafe people. With this in mind, be sure not to vilify anyone who does ask to keep a secret, and instead stress the importance of always taking that information to a safe adult. Remember that there will be children who have already promised others to keep secrets, and they should not be made to feel guilty or ashamed about this.

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- How do you think people feel when someone tries to make them keep a secret and they don't want to?
  - When someone asks you to keep a secret, it can make you feel sad and scared, uncomfortable or yucky.
  - Sometimes they might even make you feel special, because you might like the person who is asking you to keep a secret.

- Is it right, or wrong for an adult or another child to ask you to keep a secret about safety or about the safety rules?
  - It's wrong to ask someone to keep a secret about safety or boundaries, because that's a way for people to get hurt.

- What should you do if someone asks you to keep a secret about something unsafe?
  - If someone asks you to keep a secret about something unsafe, you have to tell a safe adult, even if the person told you not to. Sometimes this is scary, but telling a safe adult is the right thing to do.

- What if the person said you would get into trouble if you told? Or if they said they would be mad at you?
  - Sometimes people will try to scare you into making a promise about keeping secrets. The person might say that you'll get into trouble if you tell, or they might threaten you and say they'll hurt your animal, or a friend or family member. If this happens, it's really important that you talk to your safe adult.
  - It's OK to talk about the secret with one of your safe adults, even if you promised not to tell. You can always talk to your safe adults!

- What if you've already promised someone you would keep an unsafe secret?
  - If you've already kept a secret with someone, it is important to go to your safe adult and talk to them.

- Are secrets and surprises the same thing?
  - No, sometimes they might look similar, but they aren't the same. Surprises are happy and joyful. They're temporary, and meant to be shared with others, like when we have a surprise party, or when we buy a special present for someone's birthday, or if we've made a special desert for someone because they did a good job. These can always be shared with safe adults.

Talk to children about their safe adults:

- Let's talk about the safe adults in your life. What are 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.]

- Who are some of your safe adults?
  - (Examples include: teachers, someone at church, principal, aunt, uncle, mom or dad, police officer, firefighter, etc.)

Give the following examples to children, and ask them to demonstrate whether the scenarios are unsafe secrets (thumbs down) or safe surprises (thumbs up). Allow the children to also shout out "thumbs down" or "thumbs up" as loudly as they'd like:

1) What if someone tries to touch our private parts, or our friends' private parts, and tells us not to tell? Thumbs up or thumbs down?
   - Thumbs down: Unsafe secret!

Note: The Lesson Leader may list these examples, or may pose them as questions to the children, depending on the age-comprehension level.

2) What if someone at your church gives you a present and makes you "pinky promise" that you won't tell anyone else about it?
   - Thumbs down: Unsafe secret!

3) What if your mom asks you to not tell your dad about a present that you bought for him together?
   - Thumbs up: Safe surprise!

4) What if an aunt or uncle says, "it's our little secret" when they tell you about something?
   - Thumbs down: Unsafe secret!

5) What if your teacher gives you AND everybody else in the class a cookie at the same time—is this an unsafe secret or a safe surprise?

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- Thumbs up: Safe surprise!

6) What if you and your friend want to throw a party for another friend. Is that an unsafe secret or a safe surprise?
   - Thumbs up: Safe surprise!

7) What if your friend tells you that someone hurt them, and tells you that they won't be your friend anymore if you tell?
   - Thumbs down: Unsafe secret!

Concluding statements to tell the children:

If you're in a situation where you don't feel right, or you feel scared or uncomfortable, or nervous, anxious, humiliated or embarrassing, listen to your intuition! If someone is asking you to keep a secret, it's ALWAYS OK to say "no" and it's very important to tell a safe adult.

ACTIVITY OPTION #5: Boundary Rules and Safety Badge

Background: The Lesson Leader should review the Key Vocabulary words as part of the preparation for this lesson.

It's important that we teach children that it's not OK to keep secrets—not even seemingly little ones like eating sweets when we're not supposed to or watching a movie we know we aren't supposed to see. The reason for this is because we are letting children know beyond a shadow of a doubt that it's not their responsibility to keep larger, graver secrets either—such as someone who is violating the safety rules with unsafe actions or unsafe touches.

Note: The worksheet template for this activity is included in the downloaded set of materials at the end of this packet.

SUPPLIES

Writing utensils
Pre-printed worksheets
Scissors

The Lesson Leader should allow for enough time to include the discussion and the completion of the certificate during the class period.

Activity: This activity addresses appropriate boundaries, secrets, surprises and safety plans via interactive discussion, and then gives children an opportunity to share what they've learned by completing a safety certificate badge in class that will be shared with parents at home.

Discussion: **Ask children the following questions, listen to their responses, gently correct if necessary, and explain the Answers (that are shown under each question):**

- Have you ever thought about your safety boundaries? What are they?
  - Say "No!" if someone shares unsafe or inappropriate material/images
  - Try to leave the situation if possible
  - Tell a safe adult as soon as possible if you're scared, uncomfortable, or if someone tries to touch your private parts

- Why are safety boundaries important?
  - They're important because they keep us safe, and they let us know that we have a right to be safe. They also give us tools to communicate with a safe adult if we have a problem, if we're scared, or if we're uncomfortable.

- What are secrets?
  - Secrets are pieces of information or actions that people don't want us to share, or that we are scared of sharing.

- How do we know how to identify secrets?
  - They're kept hidden and are meant to never be told. They keep other people in the dark, and can make us feel scared or uncomfortable, or sad. They also sometimes involve situations where someone might get into trouble if the secret is shared.

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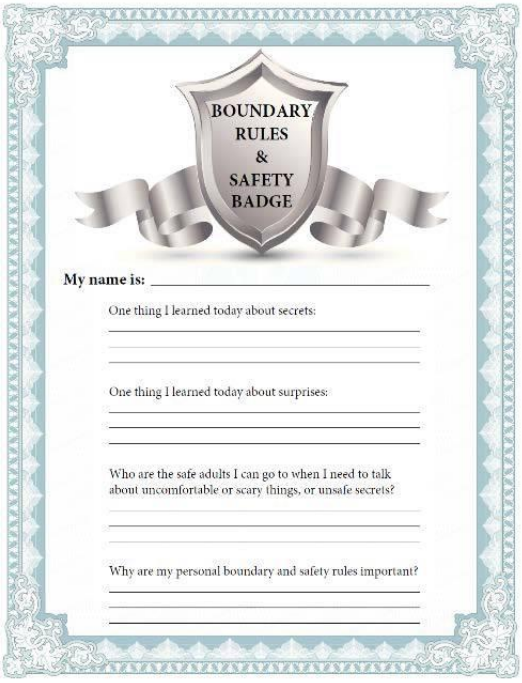

- How do secrets relate to safety boundaries?
  - Boundary safety involves rules like when we tell a safe adult when we're uncomfortable or scared, and how we tell a safe adult right away if someone tries to touch or see our private parts. Secrets are an important part of our boundary safety plan, because they impact our safety. When it comes to your safety and the boundary rules, it's not OK to keep secrets.
- Can we keep little secrets?
  - If someone tells us that it's just a little secret and that it's OK to keep it, it's still not ok! We can keep surprises for a very short amount of time because we know we will eventually share the surprise, but must always tell secrets to our safe adults.
- What if our best friend asks us to?
  - Sometimes our best friends might ask us to keep secrets, but even in those situations it isn't OK to keep them.
- What if no one told us a secret, but we feel like we have a problem? Can we keep that a secret?
  - Problems can be big and small; they can be small, little things like puzzles or big things like emergencies—and often need to be solved. They can involve fears and emotions. Sometimes we put boundaries in place to prevent problems, or to be more prepared for them.
  - We must also talk to our safe adults when we feel like we have a big or little problem. Problems are never meant to be kept silent or kept secret, because that is unsafe. Problems should always be shared with people who can help us, because we shouldn't carry heavy burdens on our own. (Give age-appropriate examples of sharing the load).
- Are secrets and surprises the same thing?
  - No, sometimes they might look similar but they aren't the same. Surprises are happy and joyful. They're temporary, and meant to be shared with others, like when we have a surprise party, or when we buy a special present for someone's birthday, or if we've made a special desert for someone because they did a good job. These can always be shared with safe adults.
- What do we know about 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.]
  - If you have a problem or encounter a situation that violates the safety rules—or even just makes you feel uncomfortable, it is right to tell a safe adult about it. No one should ever ask you to keep unsafe touches a secret—even if they tickled or felt good. It's never OK for anyone to make you feel uncomfortable, or unsafe. You have a right to be safe!

Say the following to children as you pass out the template sheets:

Now that we have a better idea of our boundary rules, and unsafe secrets and safe surprises, we're going to fill out this certificate that is our *Boundary Rules & Safety Badge*!

Children will write their names in the space provided. Then provide responses for the four sections, which are:

- One thing I learned today about secrets…
- One thing I learned today about surprises…
- Who are the safe adults I can go to when I need to talk about uncomfortable or scary things, or unsafe secrets?
- Why are my personal boundary and safety rules important?

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Concluding remarks: We're going to take our *Boundary Rules & Safety Badges* home and show our parents about the important things we learned today. We will share our badge of honor because we did a good job learning about how to keep ourselves safer.

ACTIVITY OPTION #6: Maze of Confusion—Identifying Secrets and Safe Adults, and Carrying Problems to Them

Background: This activity presents scenarios involving problematic secrets children might encounter and asks them to work through how they would respond. Ultimately, children will learn that there are no secrets when it comes to personal safety, and that they must always communicate with a safe adult.

Note: The worksheet template for this activity is included in the downloaded set of materials at the end of this packet.

SUPPLIES

Writing utensils
Pre-printed worksheets

Activity: The purpose of this 2-part activity is to utilize a safety discussion to help children apply their safety knowledge to successfully complete the worksheet and be better prepared in the event that they are in a tough situation involving secrets.

After the discussion, children will be presented with worksheet scenarios involving unsafe secrets and asked how they should respond. Proper response—the safe response—always involves communicating with a safe adult. This activity gives children an opportunity to review the problem of unsafe secrets, identify a safe adult to carry them to, and bring the problem to the safe adult through a maze—which mimics how carrying unsafe secrets can feel for youth.

Some children may need additional assistance with identifying their safe adults.

Children will complete questions A and B in the class for each scenario and will need assistance at home for question C. A guardian at home will be involved in the activity after the lesson because of the contact information that needs to be supplied for the safe adults that are listed in the worksheet. Children should be given the worksheet to take home, complete the contact information (phone number, email, address) and post in a safe place for easy referencing in the future.

Discussion: **<u>Part I.</u> The Lesson Leader will discuss the following items before providing and explaining the worksheet:**

All of us have safe people in our lives who are there to protect us. They won't hurt us without a good reason, such as having to take us to the doctor to get a shot, get medicine or remove a splinter, etc.,—which aren't fun, but they do protect us and we need them to be healthy. Safe adults and friends won't try to confuse or scare us. They listen to our boundaries and the rules that our parents have given us, and they follow the rules. You might have lots of safe friends and safe adults.

Sometimes there are also people in our life who are unsafe. They do risky things, and sometimes scare us. They don't always listen to our boundaries, and sometimes they do things that we know are wrong, and make us feel uncomfortable. We know when someone is unsafe because they don't follow the rules or listen to our boundaries—like when we say "NO" or tell them that we don't like something. You're allowed to say "no" when it comes to your boundaries and the safety rules. That's what it means to place a boundary, and you have a right to be safe and have boundaries.

Unsafe people sometimes also ask us to keep a secret. They might make us promise not to tell, and we might be fearful that we are going to get into trouble if we do tell about the secret. They might even threaten to do something bad to us or someone else we know. Sometimes it makes us feel uncomfortable, and sad.

It's important to know that there can't be any secrets when it comes to your safety. It's wrong for an adult or another child to ask you to keep a secret about your safety—especially unsafe touches—because that's a way for people to get hurt.

It's also possible that our *safe* friends and *safe* adults might tell us to keep a secret. They might not realize that asking you to keep secrets is unsafe for everyone. It's also OK if someone has made you promise to keep a secret in the past, because maybe they didn't know the safety rules. However, it's really important, regardless of whether it's a safe or unsafe person, that we always tell another safe adult when someone makes us feel uncomfortable or makes us promise to keep a secret.

<u>Part II.</u> The Lesson Leader will pass out the worksheet and will narrate instructions. Children will only complete A and B in class for each Problem.

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The Lesson Leader will explain the following: Together, let's look at Problem #1 on the worksheet.

- **Do you see where it says "A"?** The first part, "A", has examples of what people might say, or do to us, to try to get us to keep a secret. Remember, the most important aspect to know is that you have a right to be safe, and that it's OK to tell a safe adult about what happened.

  So, which one do we circle and why?
  - *The correct answer is "tell a safe adult right away", because that's the right thing to do.*

  How come we wouldn't pick the option to "tell no one"?
  - *Because that isn't safe.*

  How come we wouldn't tell the option of just "tell a friend instead"?
  - *Because friends might not know how to help us the way a safe adult would be able to help us.*

Note: Some children may want to tell a friend. Children should be aware that if a friend tells them about a problem they're experiencing, they must always still communicate that information to a safe adult. Friends can help one another go to the safe adult, and can even talk to the safe adult for their friend. That's the right thing to do, and what real friends do for one another.

Note: Ensure that children understand a different adult will be listed in section B for each of the "problems." If they cannot think of an adult to include for each scenario, they can leave it blank and simply answer the "A" section and complete the maze during class time.

- **Now look at "B".** Can you list one of your safe adults in the line under section B?
- **We are going to skip part "C" for now, because you'll do that at home with your parents.**
- **The next section asks us to complete the maze.** When people ask us to keep unsafe secrets, it's a problem. And problems should never be kept secret. So, the maze is what it feels like when you have a problem. It can feel all "tangled" up, confusing with lots of different possible directions—that can make you feel stuck when you hit a dead end. Sometimes it might even feel hopeless. But that's not true! There's always someone who can help. Our job in this part of the activity is to take the problem we read about in "A", and bring it through the maze to our safe adult! Go ahead and complete the maze part now.
- **When you've successfully navigated through the maze, you can move on to the next Problem and complete sections A & B on your own.**

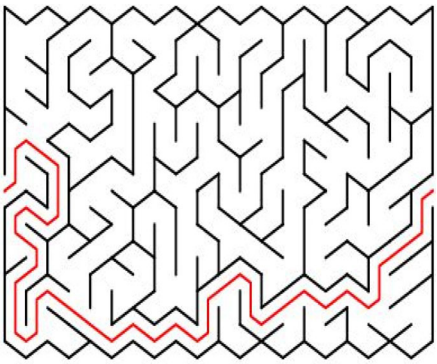
Concluding statements: Even if it feels like you have a really big problem, there's nothing that is so big that you can't get help. You always need to communicate scary problems or unsafe secrets to a safe adult.

WORKSHEET ANSWER KEY:

Problem #1:

A. **If an adult or another youth tries to touch your private parts and then tries to make you keep it a secret, what do you do?**

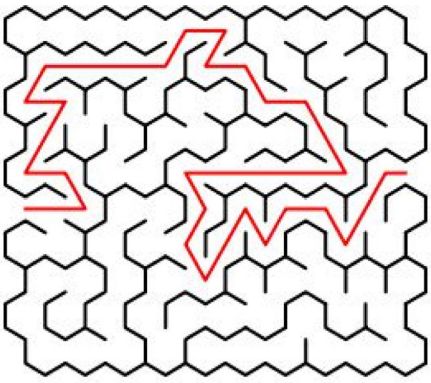
i. *Tell no one*
ii. *Tell a friend instead*
iii. *Tell a safe adult right away* **[correct answer]**



Problem #2:

A. **If an adult or another youth gives you a gift and makes you promise to keep it a secret, what do you do?**

i. *Tell no one*
ii. *Tell a friend instead*
iii. *Tell a safe adult right away* **[correct answer]**



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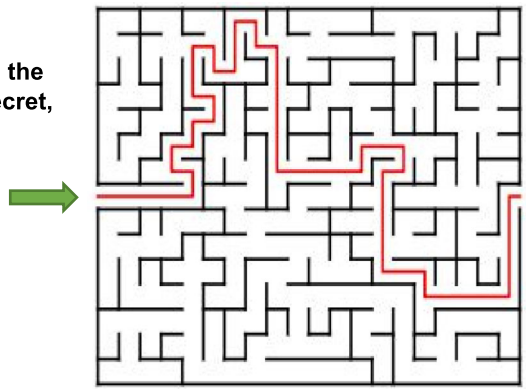
Problem #3:

A. **If an adult or another youth shows you something on the Internet and tries to make you promise to keep it a secret, what do you do?**

i. *Tell no one*
ii. *Tell a friend instead*
iii. *Tell a safe adult right away* **[correct answer]**



ACTIVITY OPTION #7: Netsmartz—Router's Birthday Surprise

Background: This 24-minute video is shared with permission from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, and can be played for children as part of an activity to help them understand the difference between secrets and surprises, and the importance of telling when feeling uncomfortable, sad, scared or confused. It is designed to open a simple discussion with children about boundaries and safety.

Description: Watch Clicky, Nettie and Webster work together to plan a surprise party, and also deal with tricky people in the world. After the video, children will participate in a discussion.

Click here for the link: https://www.netsmartzkids.org/RoutersBirthdaySurprise

Discussion: **Say the following to children after you watch the video:**

You saw in the video that Router the Dog's friends were planning a surprise birthday party. Was it a secret or a surprise?

- It was a surprise!

What's the difference between a secret and a surprise?

- A secret is 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, fearful or sad. Secrets also send the message to children that they, or someone else, will get into trouble if the secret is shared [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".]
- 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.

Are surprises OK to talk about with our safe adults?

- Yes, surprises are always OK to talk about with our safe adults.

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,
Even though we are each special and different, there are ways that we are alike because you made each of us in your image and therefore worthy of respect. I want to live as you have commanded me to live, with peace even in times of confusion or uncertainty. Please help me to remember to respect myself, just as I want others to respect me. Help me to keep strong boundaries, and to be kind and respectful toward others. Please also give me the courage and confidence to speak up for myself, and for my friends if I see them being harmed or threatened. Amen

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ACTIVITY OPTION #3: Song—Secrets are unsafe to keep

Instructions: Now that you've learned more in class about secrets and surprises, you'll learn a new song. Take the time to learn the song to the tune of "Mary had a little lamb", and then stand in a circle with your lesson leader. Once you begin to sing, you'll walk in a circle clockwise and clap twice quickly after the end of each verse and jump at the same time! Do the claps and jumps all over again until you're all out of verses!

I. *Secrets are unsafe to keep,*
Unsafe to keep,
Unsafe to keep.
Secrets are unsafe to keep,
They can be sad and hurt.

II. *(It's) OK to tell a safe adult,*
Safe adult, safe adult.
(It's) OK to tell a safe adult,
Whenever we're unsure.

III. *Since secrets are unsafe to keep,*
Unsafe to keep, unsafe to keep,
Since secrets are unsafe to keep,
Instead we do surprises!

IV. *[Since] They're temporary, fun and shared,*
Fun and shared,
Fun and shared—
Temporary fun and shared,
Safe to have surprises!

V. *Always tell a safe adult,*
When scared or uncomfortable,
Always tell a safe adult,
Whenever you need help!

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ACTIVITY OPTION #5: Boundary Rules and Safety Badge

Instructions: Fill out the certificate, and cut the page across the dotted lines if necessary.

My name is: _____

One thing I learned today about secrets:

_____

_____

_____

One thing I learned today about surprises:

_____

_____

_____

Who are the safe adults I can go to when I need to talk about uncomfortable or scary things, or unsafe secrets?

_____

_____

_____

Why are my personal boundary and safety rules important?

_____

_____

_____

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ACTIVITY OPTION #6: Maze of Confusion—Identifying Secrets and Safe Adults, and Carrying Problems to Them

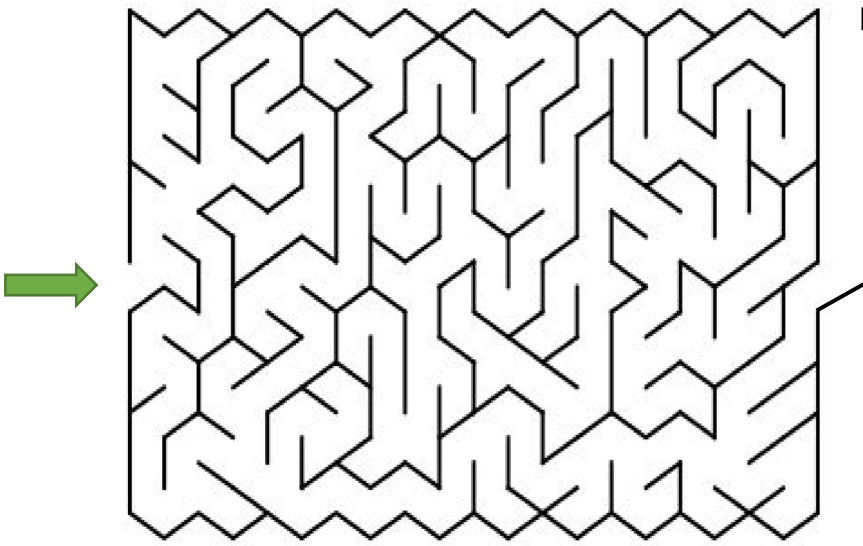
Background: This activity presents scenarios involving problematic secrets children might encounter and asks them to work through how they would respond. Ultimately, children will learn that there are no secrets when it comes to personal safety, and that they must always communicate with a safe adult. Some children may need additional assistance with identifying their safe adults. Children will complete questions A and B in the class for each scenario and will need parental assistance at home for question C.

Instructions: Below are three different maze scenarios. For each section, first answer questions A and B. Then beginning at the arrow, draw a line through the maze to take the problem to your safe adult. Answer question C at home.

Problem #1:

A. If an adult or another youth tries to touch your private parts and then tries to make you keep it a secret, what do you do?

(circle one: i. *Tell no one* **ii.** *Tell a friend instead* **iii.** *Tell a safe adult right away***)**



B. Who is one of your Safe Adults? List the name on the line below:

_____

C. What is their contact info? (phone #, email & address)

_____

_____

_____

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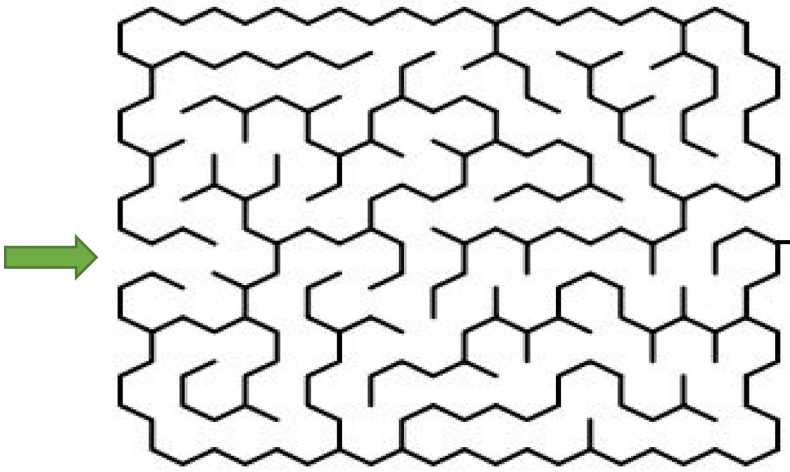
ACTIVITY OPTION #6: Identifying Safe Adults & Carrying Problems to Them Through the Maze (cont.)

Problem #2:

A. If an adult or another youth gives you a gift and makes you promise to keep it a secret, what do you do?

(circle one: i. *Tell no one* **ii.** *Tell a friend instead* **iii.** *Tell a safe adult right away***)**



B. Who is one of your Safe Adults? (List the name on the line below)

_____

C. What is their contact info? (phone #, email & address)

_____

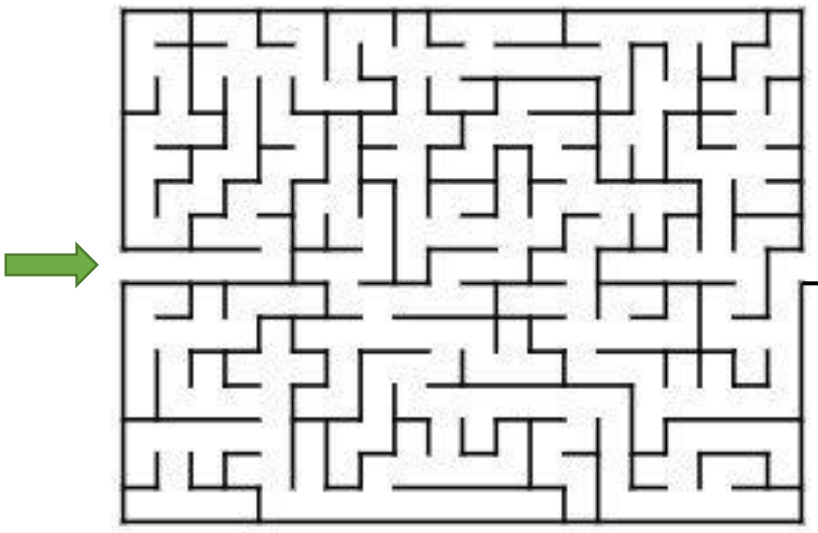
_____

_____

Problem #3:

A. If an adult or another youth shows you something on the Internet and tries to make you keep it a secret, what do you do?

(circle one: i. *Tell no one* **ii.** *Tell a friend instead* **iii.** *Tell a safe adult right away***)**



B. Who is one of your Safe Adults? (List the name on the line below)

_____

C. What is their contact info? (phone #, email & address)

_____

_____

_____

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