

Dear Parent(s) or Guardian(s),

The safety and well-being of all our children in our parish and school communities are our highest priorities. To serve the goal of creating a safe environment, every year in our schools and religious education programs, the children receive classroom lessons in personal safety, as required by the *Bishops Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, which was adopted by the U.S. Bishops in 2002.

Our Safe Environment lesson plans have been designed to address each grade level, with a lesson which is age-appropriate, user-friendly, and consistent with the moral teachings of the Catholic Church. These lessons are designed to promote respect for the dignity of the human person and virtuous living. Our goal is to equip teachers, parents/guardians, and students with knowledge that can help keep children and young people safe, while providing this instruction in a way that fosters the formation of Christian virtues. These revised lessons were developed by the Safe Environment Office of the Archdiocese, in consultation with professional educators and child safety experts.

The full lesson plans for each grade level can be reviewed online at <https://www.archny.org/child-protection-childrens-curriculum>. These lessons will cover such topics as internet safety, how to develop good boundaries in relationships, how to deal with uncomfortable or threatening situations, and how to get help from a trusted adult. Each year, parents/guardians will receive a short overview of the lesson that your child will receive during their Safe Environment instruction class period. This will enable you to reinforce the lessons your children have received, and to assure them of your support in their safety. Resources will also be available at the website noted above, to help parents/guardians further educate themselves and their children in this important area.

If you have any questions about the material presented in your child's Safe Environment lesson plan, please feel free to contact your principal or director of religious education.

We thank you for the sacred trust you have given us in the care and protection of your children. May the collective vigilance and efforts of the entire Catholic community renew trust and confidence. We must trust Christ's promise: "for God all things are possible" (Matt. 19:26).