

# *Circle of Grace*

## *Parent Letter and Activity*

### *What is a Circle of Grace?*

#### *Preschool Lesson*

Dear Parent,

Circle of Grace is a faith-based curriculum used by your arch/diocese. The lesson focused on the Traffic Signal Activity and Safety Plan. The discussion and activity begins to help your child identify safe and unsafe situations/secrets and know how to talk to a trusted adult. The children are taught that God does not want or cause bad things to happen to them, to understand that God is with them and for them even when they are hurting or sad. They begin to understand when someone comes into their *Circle of Grace*, and to recognize safe and unsafe touch/situations and how to talk to a trusted adult if they feel unsafe or are confused.

In this lesson, we use the analogy of a traffic signal to connect a green signal with safe situations, a red signal with unsafe situations, and a yellow signal with situations in which a child might feel confused or unsure. We also talk about secrets. Most offenders use secrecy as a tactic to control the child from talking about the abuse. It is important that the students understand the difference between a good secret and a bad secret. This understanding could be key to them seeking help. Sometimes it is hard for a child to distinguish between the yellow and red situations. When that happens, children need to talk to someone they trust like their parents, leader, or other trusted adult. Learning to be more aware of these signals helps children recognize them as one of the main ways the Holy Spirit helps to guide us.

It is important for you as parents and guardians to reinforce this lesson at home with your child. You are encouraged to talk with your child about real situations in his or her everyday life and invite your child to identify whether the situations are green (GO AHEAD, this is safe), red (STOP, this is unsafe always talk to a trusted adult before acting), or yellow (BE CAREFUL, always talk to a trusted adult before acting). There is a take home “secrets” and “how to ask for help” handout for you to review with your child.

The last part of the lesson is the safety plan. It includes asking children to name and draw a picture of trusted adults (in addition to their parents). Please ask your child to show you this drawing and tell you who is the trusted adult in the picture. If your child names someone you find inappropriate, please help him/her to identify someone else.

Please contact these individuals to let them know you and your child have identified them as trusted adults. This can be done in person, by phone, or a letter. (Letter-writing is a fun activity you can do with your child.) Being identified as a trusted adult will most likely make them feel honored as well as alert them to your safety plan for your child.

Please have your child return the drawing with your signature as a confirmation for us that you received this information and discussed it with your child. Please call the parish, school, or religious education office if you have questions.

Thank you for allowing us to partner in providing a Safe Environment for your child!