

MADE IN HIS IMAGE



Safe Environment Curriculum
Grade 8

Diocese of Steubenville

MADE IN HIS IMAGE

A SAFE ENVIRONMENT CURRICULUM

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

MADE IN HIS IMAGE is focused on the fundamental belief that **each person is made in the Image of God and therefore deserves to be respected**. The curriculum is rooted in a Catholic understanding of the human person (including human sexuality) as taught by the Magisterium. Educators using these materials must form themselves according to the principles taught by the Church.¹

MADE IN HIS IMAGE proceeds from the conviction that **parents are key to the safety of children and youth**. When children are younger, parents are called to take on a very active role in providing a safe environment for their children, in discerning risks involved in any given situation or relationship, and in assisting their children in discerning the various challenges they are presented with as they grow and develop. As children mature and proceed into adolescents the role of parents, although different, is still essential. While attempting to offer insights and information to adolescents, MADE IN HIS IMAGE also seeks to promote the sacred relationship between parents and their children, encouraging both parents and children to develop, maintain and deepen communication between them. MADE IN HIS IMAGE is intended to **supplement** the education provided by parents, and to **assist** parents in their task of educating and protecting the children entrusted to their care.

MADE IN HIS IMAGE follows a set pattern and strategy:

1. Information for Parents

Each lesson is preceded by a letter sent home to the parents.² Intending to respect their role as ***primary educators and protectors of their children***, this letter informs parents about the topics being addressed, providing the scope of the content covered, and offering them the opportunity to withhold their children from this instruction if they so wish. Explaining that classroom activities are only intended to serve as a supplement to the primary education in this area that takes place at home,³ the letter also serves as an invitation to parents to embrace their role as primary educators and protectors of their children by providing additional information and resources that they can use to ***instruct*** their children, and ***engage them in dialogue*** in this delicate area.

¹ See *Guiding Principles from Church Documents for Addressing Sexuality and Sexual Abuse* from the Diocese of Steubenville Safe Environment Program.

² "It is clear that the assistance of others must be given first and foremost to parents rather than to their children" (*The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality*, 145).

³ See *Guiding Principles from Church Documents*, 48.

2. Prayer and Catechesis

Each lesson begins with prayer which is followed by a catechetical lesson that seeks to instill in the students a greater sense of *God's love for them*, and the *inviolable dignity* that each and every person enjoys since they are made in the image of God. MADE IN HIS IMAGE is, in essence, a catechesis on the *Church's vision of human dignity* with very *practical implications* about the *choices* that we make.

3. Moral Formation

Each lesson seeks to assist students in understanding the importance of *making good choices*, as well as the *consequences* that follow from the decisions that we make.⁴ Students learn the basic concept that *virtuous living leads to freedom whereas and sin leads to unhappiness*.

4. Safety Information

Following the discussion on making choices, and flowing from it, students engage in activities that seek to instill *basic safety guidelines* in them. They are encouraged to make choices that protect their safety and the safety of others, and to reach out for help when they have experienced abusive behavior or feel unsafe.

5. Health Friendships and Relationships (Grades 4 – 12)

Formation in healthy friendships and relationships is an integral component of MADE IN HIS IMAGE. Students explore the *difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships* in order to become aware of negative (and possibly harmful) influences in their lives, and to promote healthy relationships that will assist them in living according to God's design.⁵

6. Communication

Each lesson concludes with a reflection on the *role of parents*. Students are challenged to see their parents as gifts from God, and to recognize that they play a vital role in keeping them safe and helping them to become who God has created them to be. Students are encouraged to work to *develop and maintain open lines of communication with their parents*.

MADE IN HIS IMAGE was written and illustrated by Joseph and Christine Schmidt.

⁴ "In accomplishing her mission the Church has the duty and the right to take care of the moral education of the baptised" (*Educational Guidance in Human Love*, 108).

⁵ "Children, adolescents and young people should be taught how to enter into healthy relationships with God, with their parents, their brothers and sisters, with their companions of the same or the opposite sex, and with adults." (*The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality*, 53).



Diocese of Steubenville
Safe Environment Program

WHAT CAN PARENTS DO TO PROTECT THEIR TEENS?

Ten action steps for keeping teens safe.

- 1. Spend time** with your son or daughter; develop **open** and **honest** lines of communication.

Many argue that the greatest defense against abuse is the healthy relationship between parent and child itself. This not only applies to children; it also applies to teens as well. Information is not enough. Teens need the ongoing guidance of their parents to assimilate and apply the information they have learned, as well as to process and deal with the various situations they will encounter in their lives.

- 2. Teach** them that they are **loved by God**, have infinite value, and they deserve to be respected. **Model respect** in the way you speak and act. Visibly live out your faith.

The greatest gift you can give your son or daughter is a healthy relationship with God, rooted in the firm conviction that He loves them unconditionally. Nothing will sustain them more through the trials of life. It's important to talk to them about God's love. And it's even more important for them to witness your own faith by how you live. So, go to Mass, receive the Sacraments, and practice Catholic morality. You should be able to say to your teenagers: follow my example!⁶

- 3. Be clear** about your expectations for their behavior. Communicate **safety rules** and **moral rules** that you want them to follow.

Don't simply rely on safety programs or classroom lessons. Parents need to clearly articulate the expectations they have for their teens. Explain to your son or daughter the choices that you want them to make and why. Help them to see that following the moral rules of the Church will help them to preserve their safety and avoid many of the pitfalls and heartaches that young people suffer in our culture.

- 4. Use "teachable moments"** to reinforce and apply safety rules.

Life is full of opportunities to teach about health, safety and morality. Take passing opportunities to challenge your son or daughter to apply your safety rules. Present them with different scenarios and ask them what choices they would make. They may complain about this, but it will help them to assimilate these important lessons.

- 5. Talk** to your son or daughter about the choices they face day to day. Offer them **guidance** as they try to make various decisions. Help them to **process** their thoughts and feelings.

As much as they don't want to admit it, teens need their parents. You may think they are not listening to you, but your guidance plays a tremendous role in your teen's self-image, and in the choices they make. It's especially important to offer your guidance in love, patience and respect.

⁶ Living your faith is not only good for your soul, it's also has many other positive benefits. Research studies have shown an astonishing number of positive effects of religious practice. Visit www.marri.us and search for "religious practice" to learn more.

- 6. Listen** to your teenager. **Pay attention** to their behaviors and attitudes. Be vigilant about anything suspicious that might point to a problem.

Abuse and unhealthy behaviors often stay hidden for quite some time. For example, in the vast majority of sexual abuse cases, the sexual offender is not a stranger, but rather someone who is known to the victim and the victim's family. And whether the offender is a family friend, a relative, a teacher, or some other person, they often will try many tactics (including lies, manipulation, and force) to keep the abuse secret. Parents need to be vigilant.

- 7. Be involved** in your teen's life. Know their teachers, coaches, and other adults that work with them. Know their friends. Know where they spend their time. Be vigilant and cautious about the people in their lives, without being paranoid or overbearing.

Let's face it: teenagers often will make foolish mistakes. They will put themselves in situations where they can get hurt. And they can often be deceived by people that want to manipulate, use and hurt them. When it comes to safety, there is no substitute for the careful vigilance of loving parents.

- 8. Be vigilant** with your teen's **media use**. Be sure they know safety rules for using the internet, texting, social networking, playing video games, etc.

*The tools, devices, and services for media use have increased dramatically in recent years. While this is positive in many ways, these new methods of getting connected also pose many new threats, especially for youth. Statistics about exposure to pornography, outright sexual solicitation and cyberbullying demonstrate the need to be vigilant.⁷ The reality is that **the internet is the biggest threat facing your son or daughter right now – and the access they have to the internet is staggering.** Parents need to be educated and vigilant when it comes to internet safety.*

*The good news is that **great resources are available for parents.** Netsmartz.org is an excellent source to become familiar with the risks associated with various media devices and sources, as well as the steps parents can take to ensure the safety of their children.*

*One danger that is often overlooked by parents is **video games.** Video and computer games are everywhere. Many of them involve innocent entertainment and learning. But a great number (and more than you might think) involve **extremely graphic displays of violence and sexuality.** In many of the most popular games the players are often encouraged (and even rewarded in the game) for brutal displays of violence, even sexual violence. Parents are strongly encouraged to learn about the dangers of video games and monitor their teen's exposure to them. *Plugged In* (www.pluggedin.com) is excellent source for reviews from a Christian perspective of a great variety of games, movies, music and more.*

- 9. Don't be afraid to ask for help** when you need it! Teach your son or daughter that it's okay to ask for help.

- 10. Don't forget to pray!**

*Pray alone. Pray with your spouse. And be sure to **pray together as a family!** Ask the Lord to protect your son or daughter. Ask Him to strengthen your faith and the faith of your family. Ask Him to teach you to be a good parent, and to make your marriage and family healthy and holy. **Don't underestimate the power of God's grace!***

*Keep in mind: **"The family that prays together stays together."** (Fr. Patrick Payten)*

⁷ <http://www.internetsafety101.org/Pornographystatistics.htm>

MADE IN HIS IMAGE

A Safe Environment Curriculum

- Grade 8 -

THEME:

“God made us in love. We need to act in ways pleasing to Him.
God gives us special people in our lives (parents/guardians) to help us be happy and safe.”

1. PRAYER: Our Father

2. CATECHESIS: God and Us

Objectives

- ✓ The students will recognize that they should be treated with love and respect because they are made in the very image of God.
- ✓ The students will come to a deeper understanding of God’s love for them.
- ✓ The students will review some examples of respectful behavior and disrespectful behavior.

Every person, from the first moment of his life in the womb, has an inviolable dignity, because from all eternity God willed, loved, created, and redeemed that person and destined him for eternal happiness. If human dignity were based solely on the successes and accomplishments of individuals, then those who are weak, sick, or helpless would have no dignity. Christians believe that human dignity is, in the first place, the result of God’s respect for us. He looks at every person and loves him as though he were the only creature in the world. (YOUCAT, #280)

Teaching the Lesson (NOTE: The text printed in **bold** can be read to the students.)

- The Bible teaches us that we are made in the image of God.**
- Since we are made in the image of God, we have a very special relationship with God. In the prayer we just said together, we called God our Father. God loves each of you intensely as an individual person. His love for you is greater than you can even imagine!**
- Every person in the world is loved by God, regardless of their situation or abilities. It doesn’t matter if the person is male or female, old or young, healthy or sick, born or unborn – every person is made in God’s image and is loved by Him as a priceless treasure.**
- Never think that it’s okay for someone to hurt you, or say cruel things to you, or to touch you in ways that make you feel bad, or ask you to do things that make you feel uncomfortable or dirty.**
- If this has ever happened to you know that it’s NOT YOUR FAULT! Be sure to talk to your mom or dad, or another trusted adult, about this as soon as you can.**
- You are God’s treasure! God made you in His image and you deserve to be respected!**

⇒ ACTIVITY: PSALM 139 – SEE PAGE 12 (See page 18 for a time-saving answer key!)

3. MORAL FORMATION: Making Good Choices

Objectives

- ✓ The students will recognize that we should always act in ways pleasing to God.
- ✓ The students will discover that we need to do what is right in order to be happy.
- ✓ The students will define terms connected with moral living.

Teaching the Lesson (NOTE: The text printed in **bold** can be read to the students.)

⇒ DISCUSSION: GOD'S LOVE AND OUR RESPONSE

- OPTIONAL: Before your discussion, play "Psalm 139" by Rebecca St. James. (You may be able to find it on YouTube.) She emphasizes that God loves us "even though" He sees our sins and shortcomings.
- Ask the students: **If God loves you, He accepts you for who you are with all of your flaws, right? ... But wait! If God accepts you for who you are, why is there so much emphasis in the Church and the Bible about how we act? How could God accept us and still want us to be different?**
- Let the students think and struggle with that apparent contradiction. Let them express their thoughts out loud as they try to find a solution, but be sure to (respectfully) reject any of the following **FALSE** ideas:
 - *God doesn't care about our choices.*
 - *Our choices don't really matter since God will love us anyway.*
 - *The Bible and the Church are too concerned about the choices that people make; we should just be free to do what we want.*
 - *What's right for you may not be right for me.* (This is called relativism and it denies the reality of objective truth.)
 - *People should just do what feels right to them because God wants them to be happy.*
- Explain to the students: **Sometimes we have false ideas of what love is all about. Loving someone does NOT mean letting people do whatever they want without any challenges. To love someone is to want what's best for that person, and to help them to reach their full potential.**
- God does love us – each and every one of us – intensely and personally. He knows everything about us and loves us as His children. It is precisely this love for us that compels Him to nurture us, encourage us, and even challenge us to do what's right.**
- Think of it this way: Imagine that you suddenly started developing a craving for rat poison. It's the weirdest thing....you just start nibbling on bits of rat poison every day. It will probably kill you, or make you grow a third eye or something, but there you are eating rat poison. So one day, your mom and dad find out that you're eating rat poison. And they say, "Well, if that really makes you happy, I guess it's okay with us." That's what they'd say, right? NO, OF COURSE NOT! They would tell you how crazy you are and rush you off to the hospital to get the poison out of your body before it kills you!**
- Here's the deal: sin is a poison for our souls! We might think that sin is fun, but God knows that it keeps us from being healthy and from reaching our full potential.**

- God wants you to be happy. When we listen to God and the Church, and do what's right, it helps us to be happy.**
- Now we're going to do an activity about some of the virtues and qualities God would like us to practice.**

⇒ ACTIVITY: MORAL LIVING – SEE PAGE 12

4. SAFETY INFORMATION: Promoting Safe Choices

Objectives

- ✓ The students will recognize that making good choices helps to keep them safe.
- ✓ The students will review basic safety rules.

Teaching the Lesson (NOTE: The text printed in **bold** can be read to the students.)

- Making good choices helps to keep us safe. When your parents tell you not to run into the street or talk to strangers, and you listen to them, it keeps you from getting hurt. Following basic safety rules helps to keep you safe.**
- Give each student a copy of the activity page and ask them to answer the questions. After a few minutes, go over the answers together.

⇒ ACTIVITY: SAFETY CROSSWORD – SEE PAGE 13

5. RELATIONSHIPS: Promoting healthy friendships and relationships

Objectives

- ✓ The students will recognize that God made them to be in relationship with other people.
- ✓ The students will reflect on the influences that other people have on their lives, helping them to follow God and be happy or hurting them and leading them into sin.

Teaching the Lesson (NOTE: The text printed in **bold** can be read to the students.)

- God made us in His Image. He made us to be in relationships with other people: parents, family, friends, etc.**
- The people in our lives can help us to follow God and be happy. But they can also hurt us and lead us into sin.**
- It's important to understand the difference between healthy friendships and unhealthy ones, so that we can be more aware of the influences in our lives.**

⇒ ACTIVITY: TO MYSELF – SEE PAGE 15

6. COMMUNICATION: Fostering Communication with Parents and Guardians

Objectives

- ✓ The students will recognize that God gave them their parents (or guardians) to love them, teach them and keep them safe.
- ✓ The students will recognize the importance of strengthening their relationship with their parents or guardians by talking to them about the things that happen to them on a day to day basis.
- ✓ The students will realize the importance of telling their parents if anything happens to them that makes them feel uncomfortable or scared.
- ✓ The students will identify ways to improve or maintain open lines of communication with their parents.

“A fool despises a parent’s instructions.”
(Proverbs 15:5)

Teaching the Lesson (NOTE: The text printed in **bold** can be read to the students.)

- Friendships and relationships are very important. But there is another relationship in your life that probably doesn’t get a lot of attention: your relationship with your parents or guardians.**
- Maybe you have a great relationship with your mom and dad already.**
- Or maybe you struggle. Maybe you feel like they don’t understand you, or even try to understand you!**
- Whatever your situation is, your relationship with your mom and dad is extremely important for your development and well-being. They have, and will continue, to affect you in countless ways.**
- An open and honest relationship with your parents will be a great asset to you as you continue through High School and into adulthood.**
- It’s especially important to talk to them when you feel hurt or unsafe. First and foremost, your parents are there to protect you from harm. And that is the first thing in their minds: they want to make sure that you are safe.**
- It’s extremely important for you to talk to them when you are faced with situations where you feel unsafe, scared, worried, and unsure. More than anyone else, they can guide you to make good and healthy decisions in your life. They can help you to be safe.**
- Developing and maintaining an open and honest relationship with your parents takes work from both parents and teens to have a good relationship.**

⇒ DISCUSSION: COMMUNICATING WITH PARENTS

- Ask the students: **How can you improve your relationship with your parents?**
- Try to get the students to move beyond complaining about their parents, and to think of concrete ways they can reach out to them.

7. REVIEW

- Read the theme for the lesson to the students.
- Review the key points in each section.

8. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- HANDOUT: CALLED TO GREATNESS – PAGE 17
- HANDOUT: DON'T SETTLE FOR LESS – SEE PAGE 20
- VIDEOS ABOUT MEDIA AND INTERNET SAFETY:
 - **Your Photo Fate** – This eye-opening video is about the consequences of sending photos. **Once you send a photo online, there's no way to control it.** It's out of your hands. Stream it or download it: www.netsmartz.org/RealLifeStories/
 - **You Can't Take It Back** – A teen **regrets his participation on a website** created to rate others at his school. Stream it or download it: www.netsmartz.org/RealLifeStories/
 - **Survivor Diaries** - Ryan and Noah share their stories to show that **online victimization** can happen to **boys too**. Stream it or download it: www.netsmartz.org/RealLifeStories/
 - **Broken Friendship** – A friendship is broken when a teen gives her best friend's **password** to some other girls at school. Stream it or download it: www.netsmartz.org/RealLifeStories/
- START TALKING! **Building a Drug Free Future**
 - A new effort is underway across Ohio to **prevent drug abuse**. The **Catholic Bishops of Ohio** [issued a statement](#) about the initiative. “*Start Talking* is a program designed by the state of Ohio to help equip families and communities to clearly communicate the important message of drug prevention,” the Bishops said. “We support this critical initiative and we encourage Ohioans to visit www.starttalking.ohio.gov for details.”
 - Among the resources available is an email newsletter for educators. Their website explains: “Teachers are powerful influencers in their students’ lives. What is shared in the classroom can positively impact a child’s decision not to use alcohol, tobacco, marijuana or other drugs. Teachers have an incredible opportunity to guide students toward making healthy, drug-free lifestyle choices. That is why Drug Free Action Alliance created **TEACHable Moments**, which are specially designed tips for educators, sent out via email twice monthly for FREE. They contain news that teachers can use to get those critical prevention talks started in the classroom.” Learn more at www.starttalking.ohio.gov/SchoolLeaders.aspx

PSALM 139

One of the most beautiful passages in the Bible is Psalm 139. In this psalm the author (traditionally recognized to be King David) reflects on the wonder of God's presence, and His amazing love in creating him.

DIRECTIONS: Read the excerpts below and fill in the missing words. (HINT: The translation below is from the New American Bible. Since every translation is a little different, you may want to use this version, which you can find online at www.usccb.org/bible.)

LORD, you have _____ me, you _____ me:
you know when I sit and stand;
you understand my _____ from afar.
You sift through my travels and my rest;
with all my _____ you are _____.
Even before a _____ is on my tongue,
LORD, you _____ it all.
Behind and before you _____ me
and rest your _____ upon me.

Where can I _____ from your spirit?
From your _____, where can I _____?
If I ascend to the _____, you are there;
if I lie down in Sheol, there you are.
If I take the wings of dawn
and dwell beyond the _____,
_____ there your hand guides me,
your right hand _____ me fast.

You _____ my inmost being;
you _____ me in my mother's _____.
I praise you, because I am _____ made;
wonderful are your _____!
My very _____ you _____.
My bones are not _____ from you,
When I was being made in _____,
fashioned in the depths of the earth.
Your eyes _____ me unformed;
in your _____ all are written down;
my days were _____, before one came to _____.

MORAL LIVING

DIRECTIONS: Match the following definitions and quotes from YOUCAT with the correct terms.

1. ____ This is the "inner voice in a man that moves him to do good under any circumstances and to avoid evil by all means. At the same time it is the ability to distinguish the one from the other." (#295)
2. ____ "At the core of _____ is a rejection of God and the refusal to accept his love. This is manifested in a disregard for his commandments." (#67)
3. ____ "God, the merciful Father, by the death and Resurrection of his Son has reconciled the world to himself and sent the Holy Spirit for the _____ of sins. Through the ministry of the Church may he give you pardon and peace. And I absolve you from your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."
4. ____ This is "God's free, loving gift to us, his helping goodness, the vitality that comes from him...[It] is everything God grants us, without our deserving it in the least." (#338)
5. ____ This is "an interior disposition, a positive habit, a passion that has been placed at the service of the good." (#299)
6. ____ "We must work at forming our _____ so that we can freely, joyfully, and easily accomplish what is good. A firm faith in God, in the first place, helps us to do this, but also the practice of the *virtues*, which means developing within ourselves, with God's help, firm dispositions, not giving ourselves over to disorderly passions, and directing our faculties of intellect and will more and more consistently toward the good." (#300)
7. ____ These are "negative habits that deaden and dull the conscience, incline a person to evil, and habitually prepare him for sin." (#318)
8. ____ "In talking about _____, Pope Benedict XVI says that we must understand 'that we all carry within us a drop of the poison of that way of thinking, illustrated by the images in the Book of *Genesis*. . . . The human being does not trust God. Tempted by the serpent, he harbors the suspicion . . . that God is a rival who curtails our freedom and that we will be fully human only when we have cast him aside. . . . Man does not want to receive his existence and the fullness of his life from God. . . . And in doing so, he trusts in deceit rather than in truth and thereby sinks with his life into emptiness, into death.'" (#68)
9. ____ This "destroys the divine power of love in a person's heart, without which there can be no eternal beatitude... [It] cuts a person off from God...[It is] opposed to an important value, for instance, directed against *life* or *God* (for example, murder, blasphemy, adultery, and so on) and that it [is] committed with full knowledge and full consent." (#316)
10. ____ This is opposed to "secondary values (honor, truth, property, and so on) or [is] committed without full knowledge of [its] seriousness or without full consent of the will. [It disrupts] the relationship with God but do not sever it." (#316)

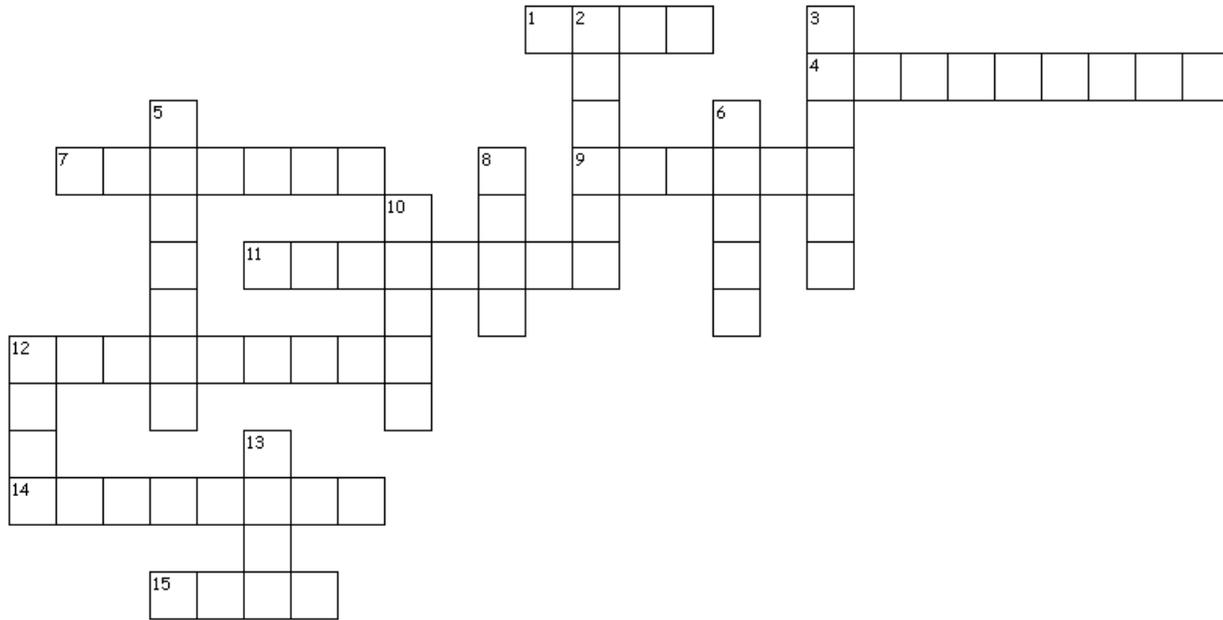
A. Character
B. Conscience
C. Forgiveness
D. Free will
E. Grace
F. Laws

G. Love
H. Mortal Sin
I. Obedience
J. Original Sin
K. Scripture
L. Sin

M. Venial Sin
N. Vices
O. Virtue
P. Wisdom

SAFETY CROSSWORD

DIRECTIONS: Complete the puzzle using the clues and the word bank.



ABUSED
ALONE
ATTENTION
AWAY
BODY
CHOICES

DRINK
HELP
HOPE
INSTINCTS
LISTEN
SECLUDED

SECRET
TALK
TOUCHES
YOURSELF

ACROSS

1. Always _____ to your parents or other adult about where you are going and who you are with.
4. If you are in a situation that makes you feel scared or unsafe, trust your _____. Try to remove yourself from that situation as soon as possible.
7. Strive to make safe and healthy _____. Be polite to everyone without allowing others to take advantage of you or those around you.
9. Never feel obligated to keep a _____ when it involves someone's safety or wellbeing.

11. When you are at a party or some other event, never go off to a _____ area, especially with someone you just met. This places you in a dangerous situation - spiritually or physically.
12. Be cautious about adults (or teens who are much older than you) who seem to give you an undue amount of _____, or give you special gifts, routinely compliment you about your appearance, or single you out in other ways. This may be the beginnings of an unhealthy attachment or attempted abuse.
14. Avoid going places by _____, such as walking to school, going to the mall, etc.
15. Never forget that you are loved by God and you can never lose your dignity as a child of God - no matter what you do, or what others do to you! There is always _____ and healing with Jesus Christ!

DOWN

2. Avoid any situation where drugs or alcohol are being _____. Apart from being illegal and immoral, these situations pose many dangers and risks.
3. Always _____ if a friend tells you they feel unsafe, depressed or have been victimized in any way. Take them seriously. Encourage them to seek help, and go with them to talk to their parents or another adult.
5. Tell your parents no matter what if anyone _____ you in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable.
6. When you are at a party, never leave your _____ unattended. This gives someone the opportunity to put alcohol or a knock out drug in your drink. Always finish or throw out your drink and get a new one in case someone put something in it when you weren't looking.
8. Tell your parents, and an adult in authority, if anyone makes indecent, rude or suggestive comments about your _____ or bodily activities, or if anyone uses obscene gestures. This is called sexual harassment. It is illegal, immoral, and should not be tolerated.
10. If you are home alone and someone calls your house looking for your parents, don't let them know that you are home _____. Tell them your parents can't come to the phone and offer to take a message for them.
12. If an adult you don't know pulls up and asks you for directions, or asks you to come to their car for any reasons, play it safe by walking _____ and letting an adult help them. Be very careful to never get close to a stranger's car.
13. Don't be afraid to ask for _____ when you feel unsafe or depressed.

TO MYSELF

You are preparing for a big transition - moving from eighth grade to high school. You will be faced with a great variety of challenges, as well as opportunities to grow and mature. The values that you have received from your Catholic Faith may be challenged by the people and situations you experience.

Complete the activity below using the good pieces of information and advice that you have received over the past several years. Put this paper in a safe place so that you can read it next year during your freshmen year in high school.

Three things that I love about the Catholic Faith are:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

The person who has had the most influence on my faith has been _____.

The best way that I can know that God loves me is _____
_____.

My favorite prayer is _____.

The best piece of advice that I ever received was _____
_____.

Three things that I hope to accomplish in high school are:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

CALLED TO GREATNESS

Guidelines for teens for making choices that protect their safety and well-being

God has made you for greatness! Not an artificial or superficial greatness, like you find in commercials and movies. God has made you for true greatness – a greatness that comes from dignity, freedom and love.

But we live in a fallen world. Much of the media, entertainment, and consumer products presented to you offer a distorted view of what it means to be happy. And the sad reality is that some of the people in your life will seek to manipulate you for their own interests, either in small ways or in ways that can be abusive.

This is NOT God's way! God has created you for love and freedom. The Lord wants you to experience the fullness of life. God wants you to know the deep joy of authentic love, lasting friendships and true self-worth.

The following guidelines are presented as an attempt to make you aware of dangers to your physical, emotional and spiritual well-being, and provide you with clear boundaries that will keep you safe.

Guidelines for Personal Safety

- Strive to make safe and **healthy choices**. Be polite to everyone without allowing others to take advantage of you or those around you. Be a model of respect and integrity.
- Always **talk to your parents** about **where you are going** and **who you are with**. Too many young people turn up missing because they failed to follow this simple rule.
- **Avoid going places by yourself**, such as walking to school, going to the mall, etc. You should be with at least one other person.
- No one should ever **touch** you in a way that feels uncomfortable or wrong. If someone ever does, tell them to **STOP!** Be assertive, and get away.
- **Tell your parents** no matter what if anyone touches you in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable. Even if someone threatens to hurt you or someone else, you need the help, support and guidance of your parents. If your parents don't believe you, talk to some other adult and keep talking until someone takes action!
- Always **listen** if a friend tells you they feel unsafe, depressed or have been victimized in any way. Take them seriously. Encourage them to seek help, and go with them to talk to their parents or another adult.
- Never feel obligated to keep a **secret** when it involves someone's safety or wellbeing.
- Tell your parents, and an adult in authority, if anyone makes indecent, rude or suggestive comments about your body or bodily activities, or if anyone uses obscene gestures. This is called **sexual harassment**. It is illegal, immoral, and should not be tolerated.
- When you are at a party or some other event, never go off to a **secluded area**, especially with someone you just met. This places you in a dangerous situation – spiritually and physically.
- When you are at a party, **never leave your drink unattended**. This gives someone the opportunity to put alcohol or a knock out drug in your drink. Always finish or throw out your drink and get a new one in case someone put something in it when you weren't looking.

- **Never use drugs or alcohol.** Avoid any situation where drugs or alcohol are being abused. Apart from being illegal and immoral, these situations pose many dangers and risks.
- Never **drive** with anyone who is texting, or anyone who is under the influence of drugs or alcohol. If you drive, don't do this yourself.
- If you are in a situation that makes you feel scared or unsafe, **trust your instincts.** Try to remove yourself from that situation as soon as possible.
- **Be cautious** about adults (or teens who are much older than you) who seem to give you an **undue amount of attention**, or give you special gifts, routinely compliment you about your appearance, or single you out in other ways. This may be the beginnings of an unhealthy attachment or attempted abuse.
- **Don't be afraid to ask for help** when you feel unsafe or depressed. Never forget that you are **loved by God** and you can **never lose your dignity as a child of God** – no matter what you do, or what others do to you! There is always hope and healing with Jesus Christ!

Guidelines for Internet and Media Safety

- **Think before you text, email or post anything.** Once something is sent electronically you can't take it back, and you can't always control what problems it may cause or where it may end up. Be aware of the unintended consequences of your media choices.
- Keep in mind that people online are **real people with real feelings.** Don't use the internet to post rude, cruel or obscene things about other people.
- Talk to your **parents** about their expectations for the internet and media use.
- Never take or send **pictures** of yourself or others that are sexy, indecent or immodest.
- Avoid all forms of media and entertainment that **glamorize sex and violence.** The more people are exposed to these messages, the more they accept them. This causes people to lower their standards of conduct, makes it more difficult to enter into genuinely healthy relationships, and causes them to distance themselves from God.
- Don't give your **passwords** to anyone except your parents, not even your best friends. Having your password accessible to others makes you vulnerable to others using your accounts to hurt or embarrass you.
- Set your social network settings to **private.** Only friend people that you actually know.
- Never give out **personal information** that will allow people to identify you.
- Never agree to **meet** anyone in person that you met online.
- Never respond to any **comments** that are rude or obscene.
- **Talk to your parents** about anything you encounter online that makes you feel uncomfortable, scared or dirty.
- **Don't believe** everything you read online, and **don't let yourself see** everything there is to see online. A staggering number of sites on the internet actively seek to expose youth to inappropriate, dangerous and offensive information.

(NOTE: For more information about internet and media safety, visit www.netismartz.org.)

PSALM 139

One of the most beautiful passages in the Bible is Psalm 139. In this psalm the author (traditionally recognized to be King David) reflects on the wonder of God's presence, and His amazing love in creating him.

DIRECTIONS: Read the excerpts below and fill in the missing words. (HINT: The translation below is from the New American Bible. Since every translation is a little different, you may want to use this version, which you can find online at www.usccb.org/bible.)

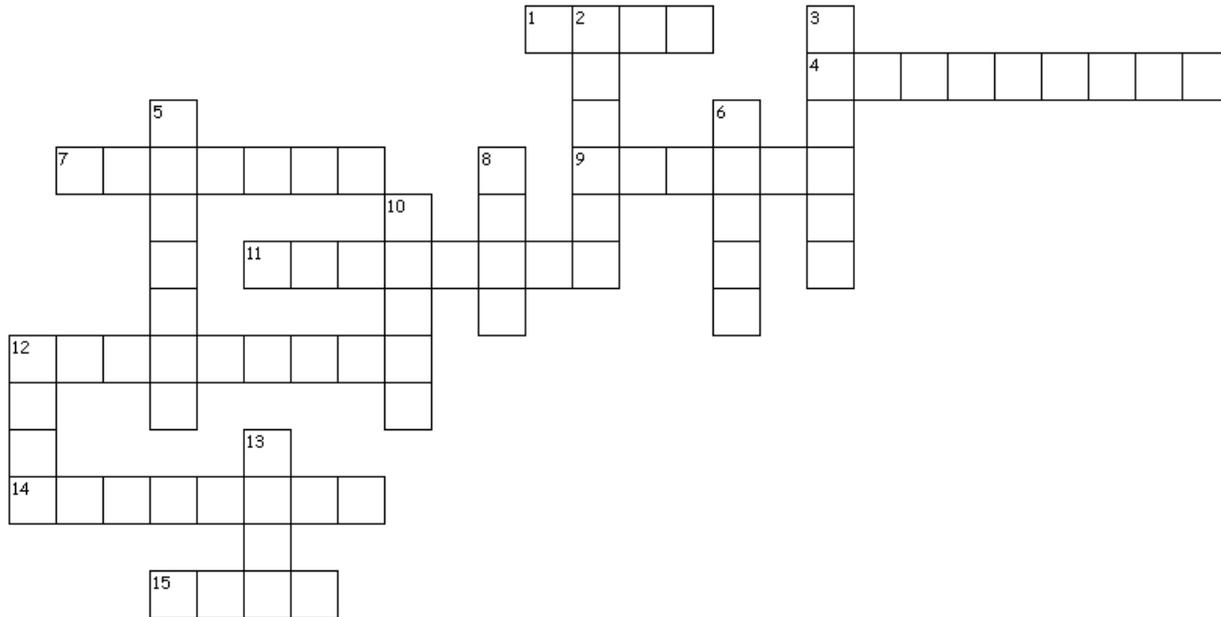
LORD, you have probed me, you know me:
 you know when I sit and stand;
 you understand my thoughts from afar.
 You sift through my travels and my rest;
 with all my ways you are familiar.
 Even before a word is on my tongue,
 LORD, you know it all.
 Behind and before you encircle me
 and rest your hand upon me.

Where can I go from your spirit?
 From your presence, where can I flee?
 If I ascend to the heavens, you are there;
 if I lie down in Sheol, there you are.
 If I take the wings of dawn
 and dwell beyond the sea,
Even there your hand guides me,
 your right hand holds me fast.

You formed my inmost being;
 you knit me in my mother's womb.
 I praise you, because I am wonderfully made;
 wonderful are your works!
 My very self you know.
 My bones are not hidden from you,
 When I was being made in secret,
 fashioned in the depths of the earth.
 Your eyes saw me unformed;
 in your book all are written down;
 my days were shaped, before one came to be.

SAFETY CROSSWORD

DIRECTIONS: Complete the puzzle using the clues and the word bank.



ABUSED
ALONE
ATTENTION
AWAY
BODY
CHOICES

DRINK
HELP
HOPE
INSTINCTS
LISTEN
SECLUDED

SECRET
TALK
TOUCHES
YOURSELF

ACROSS

1. Always talk to your parents or other adult about where you are going and who you are with.
4. If you are in a situation that makes you feel scared or unsafe, trust your instincts. Try to remove yourself from that situation as soon as possible.
7. Strive to make safe and healthy choices. Be polite to everyone without allowing others to take advantage of you or those around you.
9. Never feel obligated to keep a secret when it involves someone's safety or wellbeing.

11. When you are at a party or some other event, never go off to a secluded area, especially with someone you just met. This places you in a dangerous situation – spiritually or physically.
12. Be cautious about adults (or teens who are much older than you) who seem to give you an undue amount of attention, or give you special gifts, routinely compliment you about your appearance, or single you out in other ways. This may be the beginnings of an unhealthy attachment or attempted abuse.
14. Avoid going places by yourself, such as walking to school, going to the mall, etc.
15. Never forget that you are loved by God and you can never lose your dignity as a child of God – no matter what you do, or what others do to you! There is always hope and healing with Jesus Christ!

DOWN

2. Avoid any situation where drugs or alcohol are being abused. Apart from being illegal and immoral, these situations pose many dangers and risks.
3. Always listen if a friend tells you they feel unsafe, depressed or have been victimized in any way. Take them seriously. Encourage them to seek help, and go with them to talk to their parents or another adult.
5. Tell your parents no matter what if anyone touches you in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable.
6. When you are at a party, never leave your drink unattended. This gives someone the opportunity to put alcohol or a knock out drug in your drink. Always finish or throw out your drink and get a new one in case someone put something in it when you weren't looking.
8. Tell your parents, and an adult in authority, if anyone makes indecent, rude or suggestive comments about your body or bodily activities, or if anyone uses obscene gestures. This is called sexual harassment. It is illegal, immoral, and should not be tolerated.
10. If you are home alone and someone calls your house looking for your parents, don't let them know that you are home alone. Tell them your parents can't come to the phone and offer to take a message for them.
12. If an adult you don't know pulls up and asks you for directions, or asks you to come to their car for any reasons, play it safe by walking away and letting an adult help them. Be very careful to never get close to a stranger's car.
13. Don't be afraid to ask for help when you feel unsafe or depressed.

CHOICES

Do you want to ignore all this stuff
and just have fun?

That's your choice. But what
are you **SAYING** **CHOICE?**
that

"I like it when others use
my body and don't care
about me."

"I'm not ashamed that I
lied to my parents and
violated their trust."

"I don't really care
about you; I'm just
trying to have fun."

"I don't like myself,
why should you like
me?"

"They like me when
I do what they want;
but no one knows who
I really am."



**You deserve better !
Don't settle for less
than GOD
wants to give you.**

COMMITMENT

Are you willing to sacrifice for true love?

~ ♥ ~

Believing that sex is sacred, I promise
to God that I will save the gift
of my sexuality from now until marriage.
I choose to glorify God with my body
and pursue a life of purity,
trusting that the Lord
is never outdone in generosity.

Signed _____

Date _____

(Text of pledge from Jason Evert)

Print Resources

Pure Love by Jason Evert

Life on the Edge by Dr. James Dobson

Pure Manhood by Jason Evert

Pure Womanhood by Crystalina Evert

Online Resources

www.PureLoveClub.com

www.LifeTeen.com

*The model of God's love presented here is derived from
Christopher West. See www.christopherwest.com for more!

MADE IN HIS IMAGE

A Safe Environment Curriculum
from the Diocese of Steubenville
www.diosteub.org

Don't settle



**for less
than GOD
wants
to give
you!**

Reflections
and practical guidelines
for relationships
and true happiness

Revised 2014

Do you know the Awesomeness of GOD'S design?



God calls us to share in the beauty and depth of True Love. He gives us a model* of True Love and calls us to imitate Him. Our love must always be a reflection of

God's Love. What is His Love like?

FREE - True love is not about force, coercion, or guilt. True love is a free gift of oneself to another.

TOTAL - True love is a sharing of the whole of one's life with another. Every dimension of your life must be involved: emotional, physical, intellectual, social, and spiritual.

FAITHFUL - True love is not something that is here one day and gone the next. True love lasts a lifetime.

FRUITFUL - True love is always life-giving. True love is always open to the gift of life that God sometimes blesses the sexual act.

“Christian MARRIAGE faithfully lived is the fulfillment and expression of True Love!” - Christopher West

Some guidelines & advice for finding true happiness

Are you willing to sacrifice for True Love?

~ ♥ ~

Talk with Jesus

Jesus is the best friend you will ever have. He cares deeply about you, your relationships and your choices. Talk to Him about your life.

~ ♥ ~

Make your goal clear in your mind.

*If you want to be pure you need to make that decision and commitment **BEFORE** you are faced with temptation. Once you are in a tempting situation it is not always easy to think clearly.*

~ ♥ ~

Make a plan and set boundaries.

*To preserve your purity you need a plan (I won't get into these situations...) and boundaries (I won't do these things...). You need to have this clear in your mind **BEFORE** you face temptation.*

~ ♥ ~

Don't mistake **physical** intimacy for **real** intimacy.

So many people do immoral things because they are looking for love. Real intimacy isn't based on physical pleasure. Real intimacy is about sacrificial love and commitment.

~ ♥ ~

Make good choices & Avoid pitfalls.

Save all sexual acts for marriage. Avoid actions that can create the bonding of sex and/or lead you to sexual intercourse. No passionate kissing, kissing below the chin, or lying down together. Don't touch each other in ways that are arousing. Save all these for marriage.

~ ♥ ~

Focus on friendship.

*Use dating as a time to get to who people really are and to grow in your understanding of yourself. Physical affection needs to be **founded on friendship**.*

~ ♥ ~

Dress modestly.

*(This is especially important for women because immodesty affects men much more than women.) Think about what you wear and what it says. Do you want to be remembered for your body or your personality, your humor, your kindness? Are your choices of clothing tempting others to lust? **The people that are lured by immodest dress are not the ones who will respect and love you** - they have other motives in mind.*

~ ♥ ~

Stay away from alcohol and drugs.

*These substances limit your ability to make good choices. Once you make the bad choice of using drugs or alcohol there is **no limit** to what you might do.*

~ ♥ ~

Seek purity in all you do.

How can you be impure in every other area of your life and expect to be pure in dating? You must strive to be pure in all areas of your life: movies, video games, TV, conversations, recreation, etc.

~ ♥ ~

Know when to quit.

Don't stay in a serious relationship with a person you know you cannot marry. If you carry on you are being dishonest with yourself and that person.