



Avoid being Alone

USE POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT

Don't Give or Accept Expensive Gifts

TREAT EVERYONE WITH RESPECT

KNOW THE RULES

No ALCOHOL, DRUGS, OR TOBACCO

Don't Humiliate Ridicule Threaten or

for Adult/Child Interactions

PRACTICE GOOD COMMUNICATION

Report Suspected Abuse

KEEP CLEAR BOUNDARIES

SHOW COURTESY, DIGNITY. CARE

BE PATIENT

Introduction

Safety is a basic human need. In order for children to develop emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually, their basic needs must be met. For this reason, as well as the genuine love and concern we have for our children as members of our family and Children of God, we must commit ourselves to providing a safe environment in which we can teach our children and foster their spiritual growth.

It is imperative that the environment we provide not only keeps our children free from physical and emotional harm in general, but also decreases the likelihood that they will become victims of abuse. Child abuse, sexual abuse in particular, occurs when an adult with a tendency toward abuse has contact with children in a context where environmental / social inhibitions are compromised and the child's resistance has been lowered.

The following curriculum was designed to be a routine part of our education with children, both to promote and model safe environment principles and to build resistance to abuse by teaching our children about right relationships and what to do when something is not right. It is the goal of this curriculum to provide children with direct education about right relationships and to educate them through teachable moments in our relationships with them.

The materials provided in this manual are designed to offer flexibility through a variety of activities and supplemental resources; cost effectiveness through reproducible materials; and ease of use through clear objectives, background rationale, and lesson plans.

Know the Rules

Objectives

- Introduce students to the classroom setting, catechist, and each other.
- Introduce the concept of rules as protective, pro-social, and consistent with God's teaching
- Establish classroom rules and review adult code of conduct.
- Encourage communication when a child feels pressure to break the rules.

Overview

This module is designed for use during the first regular class session. It introduces the Code of Conduct that guides adult interactions with youth in the context of a discussion of God's rules, Church rules / Tradition, and establishment of classroom rules. If children are clear about the rules adults are expected to follow and how such rules are protective of them, they will be more resistant to efforts of a potential perpetrator to bend the rules.

Student involvement in the identification of clear expectations during the first class period helps increase their compliance with the rules and promote a safe environment by decreasing potentially harmful incidents of child behavior and increasing the likelihood that positive reinforcement versus punitive strategies for maintaining the educational environment can be utilized. Finally, an environment of open communication is established as children are allowed input into the development of classroom rules, and encouraged to communicate their feelings and seek help when feeling pressured to break the rules.

Session Outline

- I. Introductions
- II. Opening Prayer
- III. Why Do We Have Rules?
- IV. What Are God's Rules / the Rules of God's Church?
- V. Establishment of Classroom Rules
- VI. Code of Conduct
- VII. Communication
- VIII. Remembering the Rules
- IX. Closing Prayer

Supplies

Chalkboard and chalk –or- Flip chart and markers

Pens, pencils

Poster-board for "Our Class Rules" activity

Crayons, markers, colored pencils, (magazines, scissors, glue -optional) for "Our Class Rules" activity

Hand Outs K-3 - "Our Class Rules," "Know the Rules" coloring book

Older students - "Our Class Rules," "Rules and Reasons"

Optional Activities / Handouts – "The Ten Commandments," "The Rules According to Jesus"

How to Use This Material with a Text Series

- Review session one of your text. It may be possible to replace session one with “Know the Rules.”
- Use the activities from “Know the Rules” in place of the activities suggested in your text. It is especially important to cover the material in section VI “Code of Conduct.”
- Use both the first session of your text and the “Know the Rules” material to develop your own session.

I. Introductions

Welcome each child as they enter the classroom by introducing yourself. Introduce the regular curriculum theme for the year / semester if applicable. Have each child introduce themselves to the group.

II. Opening Prayer

Dear God,

Thank you for bringing us together as we begin a new year of Religious Education. Please be with us as we get to know each other and plan our year together. Help me to listen and share in our discussion today. In your name we pray.

Amen

III. Why Do We Have Rules?

Pose the question “Why do we have rules?” Write responses on the chalkboard / flipchart. You are likely to get responses such as “so things are fair,” “so no one gets hurt,” “to keep everyone safe,” “to help everyone get along,” “to create a good learning environment,” etc... If no one identifies “safety, positive learning environment, helping people get along, etc” be sure to add them in some form.

IV. What Are God’s Rules / The Rules of God’s Church?

“...Whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.” Matthew 5:19

Invite students to name some of “God’s Rules.” Give students the optional handout “The Ten Commandments” and / or “The Rules According to Jesus.” Introduce some of the “rules” Jesus suggested for how to get along with others, how to treat others.

For older grade levels, an optional activity may be to have a contest to see who can remember the most commandments, etc. and / or identify which common phrases (e.g. “Love your neighbor as yourself, Do unto others as you would have done unto you, etc.”) come from the Gospel.

“Now that you know these things you will be blessed if you do them.”

John 13:17

Optional Activities

“The Ten Commandments”

“The Rules According to Jesus”

V. Establishment of Classroom Rules

Ask students to identify “What rules do you have at school / at home?” Record responses on the board. State, “We need to set some rules for this class, for many of the reasons you identified earlier (e.g. to keep everyone safe, to help use get along / treat each other with respect, to help everyone feel accepted / welcome, to create an environment where we can learn, to help us follow Jesus’ example). Point to rules written on the board and ask, “Which of these rules do you think we should use in our classroom?” “What other rules do you think we need?” Circle from / add to the previous list

Most rules fall under a few categories that can be objectified with specific examples (e.g. keep hands and feet to yourself / respect other’s space, etc are categories that include a variety of physical acting out behaviors; respect others feelings / use respectful language covers use of appropriate / non-offensive language, no name calling or ridicule, etc.; Keep a good learning environment –listen, take turns, raise your hand, be quiet, etc) Often it is possible to re-group and re-phrase the rules identified by your class to resemble the general rules of your Religious Education program, etc. This is a useful activity as it helps the students better understand the general rules and helps them feel connected as they see that the rules identified by the adult authorities are the same rules they identified as a class.

As you summarize the rules for the class, write them on a poster-board that will remain in the classroom throughout the year. You may wish to have each child draw or cut out a picture that illustrates an example of each rule, or have students decorate the poster to increase their ownership.

Activity

“Our Class Rules”

In this activity, students make their own list of the classroom rules and draw or cut out pictures to illustrate an example of each. This is an important activity as it increases retention of the rules as well as providing “take home” information to share with parents.

VI. Code of Conduct

After identifying rules / expectations for students in the class, inform students that the adults who work with them have agreed to follow a set of rules too. Pass out the “Know the Rules” hand out. This handout summarizes the Code of Conduct concepts. Explain each utilizing developmentally appropriate descriptions below:

For Pre-K through 3 grade students -

Give each child a copy of “Know the Rules” coloring book. While the students are coloring, discuss the importance of code of conduct “rules” in terms of keeping them safe from harm and free to seek help from their parents or other trusted adults.

Compare the code of conduct rules to other rules the children may already be familiar with, for example:

Teachers and students don't meet alone –

"When we meet together we will always try to have more than one teacher or more than one student in the room."

- Ask how many children have learned in swimming lessons to "never swim alone" ask "Why do we have that rule?" (reinforce responses such as "so there is someone there to help / get help if you need it")
- Ask children who saw the movie "Toy Story" "Why did the toys have to find a "moving buddy?" ("so no one would get lost, so no toys were left behind") or Ask who had learned from their parents or from pre-school to "stay with the group", etc.

No physical punishment, Don't ridicule, threaten or degrade.

"We want to avoid doing anything that might hurt someone or hurt their feelings / make them feel bad"

- "That means we don't do things like spank or hit children (physical punishment)" and we don't threaten to do so (say we are going to)
- "We try not to say things that might make someone feel bad"
- Ridicule is a big word that means the same as teasing / making fun of others, Degrading is like using put downs, insults or name calling and none of that is ok" Has anyone ever had someone tease them, call them names, etc?" "How did that make you feel?" "We don't want anyone to feel that way in our classroom."

Use positive reinforcement, Be patient, Treat Everyone with Respect, Show Courtesy, Dignity, Care, Keep Clear Boundaries

"These are all things we do to help keep children safe from hurt / hurt feelings."

- "These rules have a lot to do with Jesus' golden rule 'treat others as you want to be treated'"

No Expensive Gifts, No Alcohol, Drugs, or Tobacco

We want to treat everyone fairly and we don't want things in our classroom that may tempt someone to break the rules.

- "Has there ever been a toy that you wanted so bad you thought you would do anything to get it? Have you ever felt bad because someone else got something that you really wanted?"
- "What do you think would be an expensive gift?" (TV, new car, \$\$\$, etc). "Who usually gives you gifts like that?" (Moms and Dads, Grandmas and Grandpas, etc.) "Teachers and other adults don't usually give gifts like that."

- (“Alcohol, drugs, and tobacco” may also be described in terms of tempting people to break the rules, though most children at this age will readily state that such things are against the rules “because they are bad for you,” and are content with this explanation.)

Practice Good Communication.

Communication is a big word for talking to each other.

- Remind children that they may tell their parents about anything / everything they do with other adults.
- Encourage children to communicate their feelings. “It’s important tell someone how you are doing and ask questions when you aren’t sure about something.”

Activity

“Know the Rules” coloring book

For older grades –

Challenge students to identify why each rule on the “Know the Rules” hand out might be a good idea.

Discuss some of the reasoning for each. For example, “safety in numbers;” preserving good judgment / reasoning; respecting everyone’s own comfort level for physical distance; respecting everyone’s feelings; physical safety, etc.

Older children may be able to identify many of the explanations themselves, but may not have the concept that use of alcohol and other drugs influences our thinking and may keep us from using our best judgment. They may be able to recall incidents (from their own lives or media) when others “do things they wouldn’t usually do” when under the influence of alcohol or other drugs.

You may want to differentiate enticements/ bribes from rewards / prizes

- a bribe is something someone gives you to get you to break a rule or to do something you shouldn’t,
- a reward is something you earn when you meet a goal or do a good job following the rules.

Inform students that reporting suspected abuse is the law in our state and that we report abuse to help keep others safe as well.

Stress that open communication is necessary for learning as well as safety and is part of healthy relationships.

Activity

“Rules and Reasons”

VII. Communication / What to do if you feel pressure to break the rules.

Being able to communicate (talk to each other) is important in a classroom. If we don't ask questions, listen to each other, and share with each other we can't learn from each other. Communication is also important for helping us feel accepted and keeping us safe. It is important to let someone know how you feel if you are feeling bad (e.g. hurt, or left out, or put down, or uncomfortable).

We don't always know what might make someone else feel uncomfortable or unwelcome or what feels unfair or hurtful to someone else. Telling someone how you feel helps them follow or enforce the rules that are there to protect you.

If you feel pressure to break the rules, especially if you think an adult is asking you break the rules, it is important to tell someone and it's important to let an adult know if someone is breaking the rules...especially if it's an adult. The rules are there to keep you safe and make the best possible learning environment for you. Distribute "When to Say No to an Adult" handout.

If you tell an adult that someone is breaking the rules are you tattling?

Tattling has to do with trying to get someone else in trouble. It's important to talk about someone breaking the rules - not to get the person in trouble, but to help everyone be safe.

VIII. Remembering the Rules

After establishing classroom rules, it is important to identify how your students will remember the rules and be motivated to follow them. Classroom discussion may help you arrive at a strategy for implementing rules in your classroom.

Ask the students, "What helps you remember rules? What happens if you don't follow the rules at school? At home?" Encourage students to brainstorm ways to remember the rules. Record student responses. If no one identified "consequences" as a motivation / reminder for following rules, add "We sometimes we need to experience consequences to remember to follow the rules. Re-define student responses to match regular consequences of your program if possible. Implement other strategies to help students remember the rules e.g., post them in the room, give a warning, review rules before each class, reinforcement for following rules consistently, etc.

Optional Reinforcement Strategies

"Sticker / Star Chart" – It can be motivating for children when their individual compliance with rules is acknowledged on a chart (similar to an attendance record).

"Marble Jar" – A marble jar is a form of classroom reinforcement – when class members are doing an especially good job of following the rules add a marble to the jar. When the jar is full, celebrate with a special class activity / privilege / reward.

IX. Closing Prayer

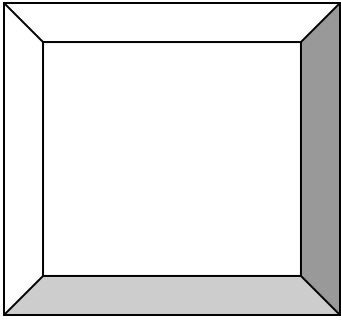
Lord,

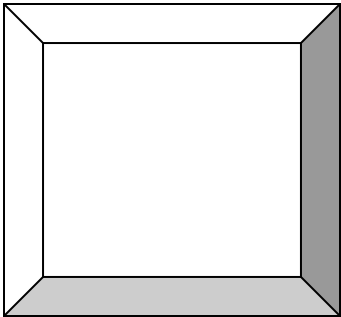
Thank you for the rules you have given to guide us. We are thankful for rules to keep us safe, to help us get along, to make us all feel welcome and accepted. Please help us to follow our classroom rules so we all have the opportunity to learn more about you and our Catholic faith. Give us courage to share our feelings and ask for help if we feel pressure to break the rules.

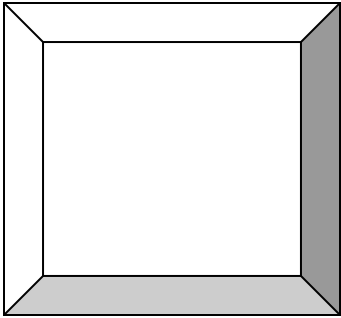
In your name we pray.

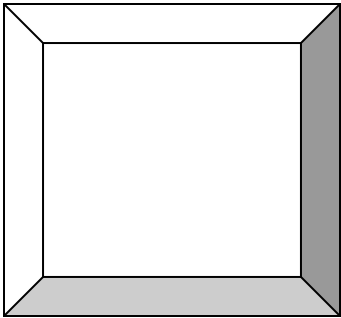
Amen.

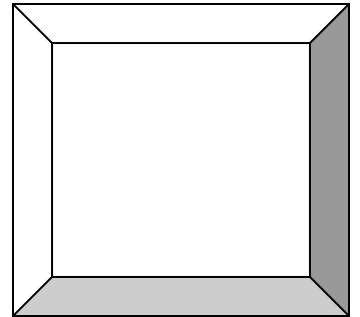
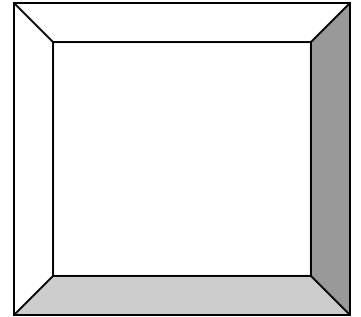
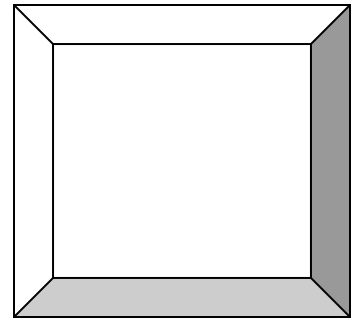
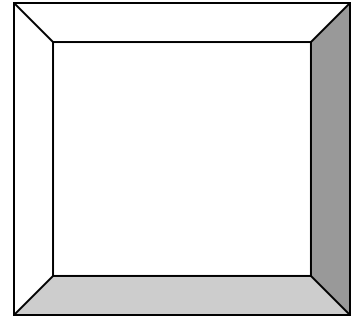
Our Class Rules











The RULES

According to JESUS

Circle each rule that was introduced in the Gospel.

**“Do to others as you
would have them do to you.”**

“Just Do It.”

**The Golden
Rule.**

**“Be true
to yourself.”**

**“Love your
neighbor as
yourself.”**

“Be good.”

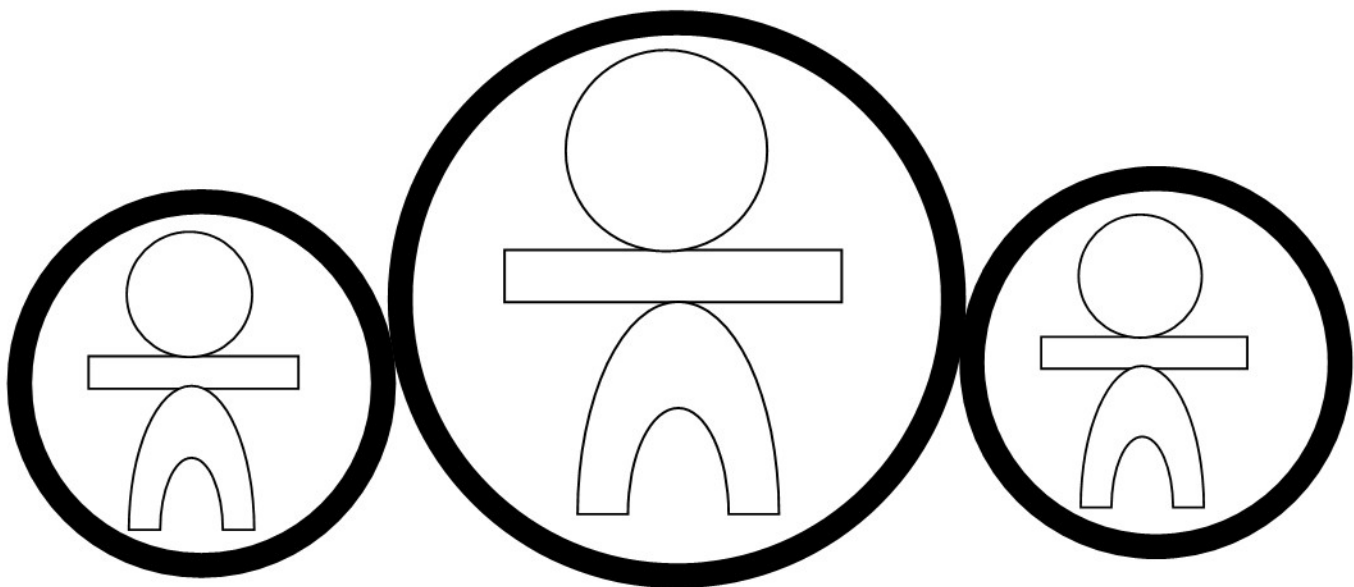
Need help? Check out these scripture references.

Matthew 22:39
Matthew 7:12

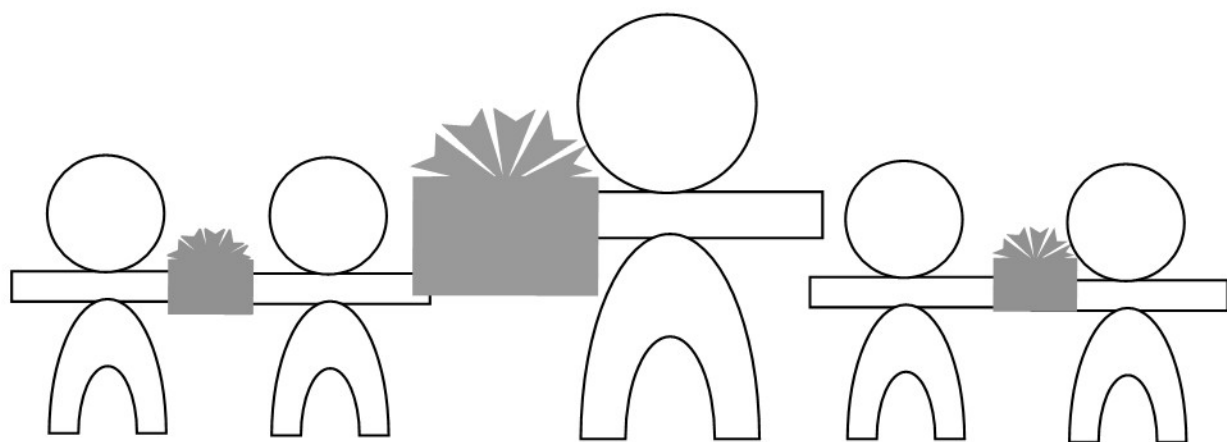
Romans 13:9
Luke 6:31

Rules and Reasons

- | | |
|--|---|
| ___ 1. Use reinforcement,
Not punishment. | A. Focus on positive,
not negative. |
| ___ 2. Treat everyone with
Respect. | B. Everyone has their own
"comfort zone." |
| ___ 3. Don't meet alone. | C. "It's the law." |
| ___ 4. No drugs or alcohol. | D. "Safety in Numbers." |
| ___ 5. Respect boundaries. | E. Impairs judgment. |
| ___ 6. No expensive gifts. | F. "You can't learn if you
don't ask questions." |
| ___ 7. Report suspected abuse. | G. Could be used as
enticements / bribes. |
| ___ 8. Good communication. | H. Treat others as you
want to be treated. |

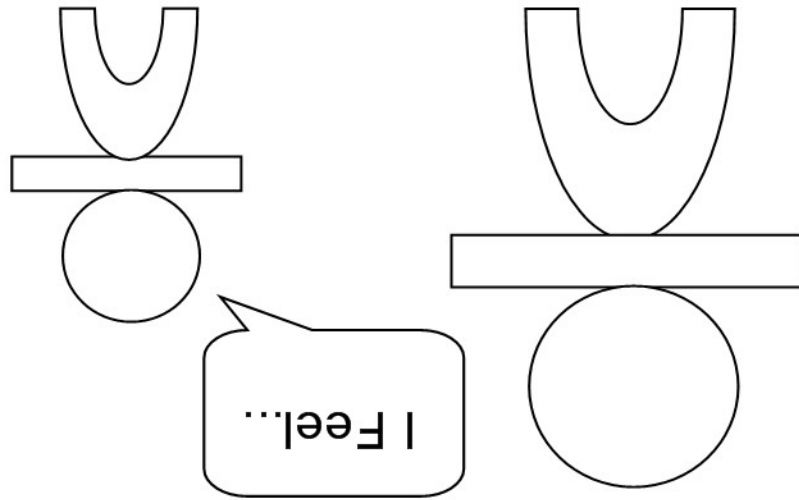


KEEP CLEAR BOUNDARIES



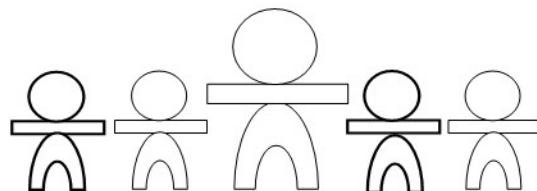
NO EXPENSIVE GIFTS

TELL AN ADULT



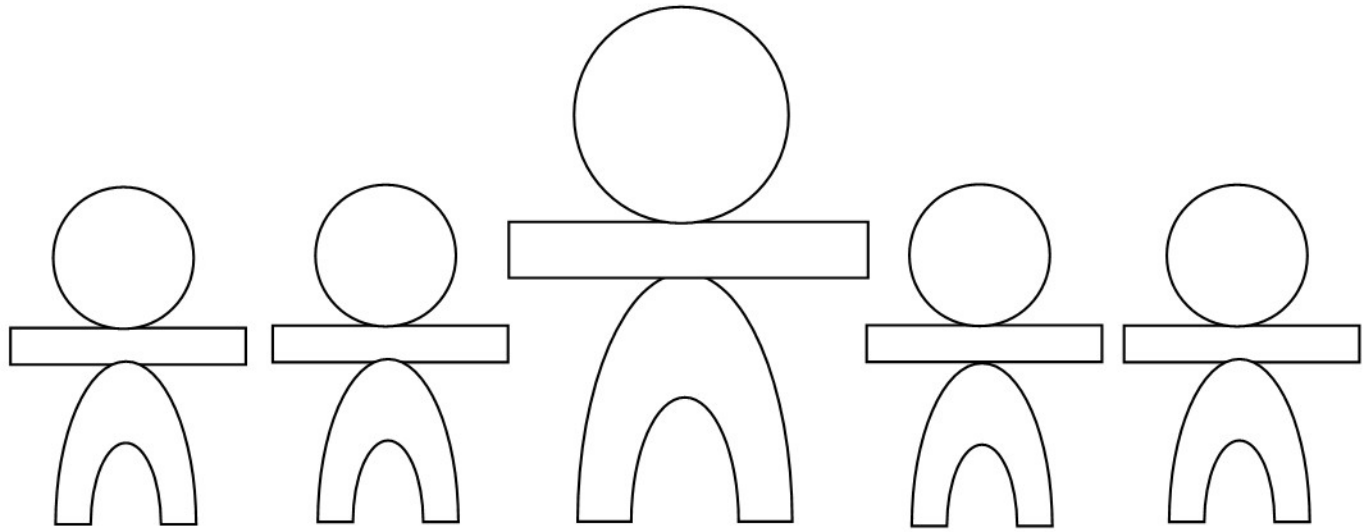
IF YOU FEEL PRESSURE TO BREAK THE RULES

KNOW THE RULES

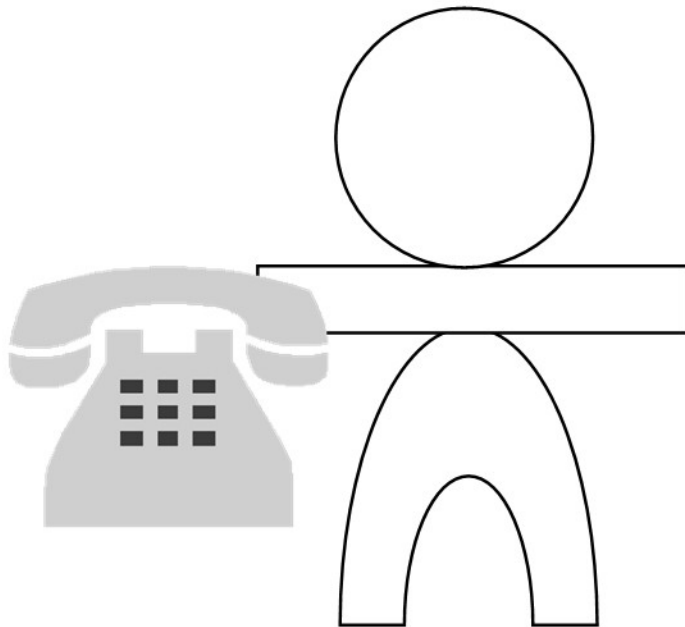


FOR ADULT / CHILD INTERACTIONS

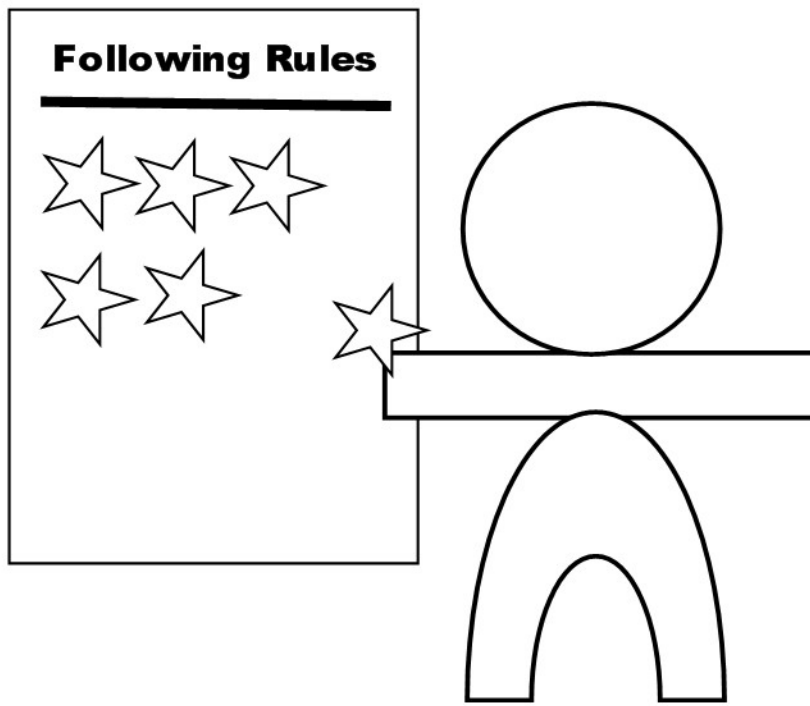
DON'T MEET ALONE



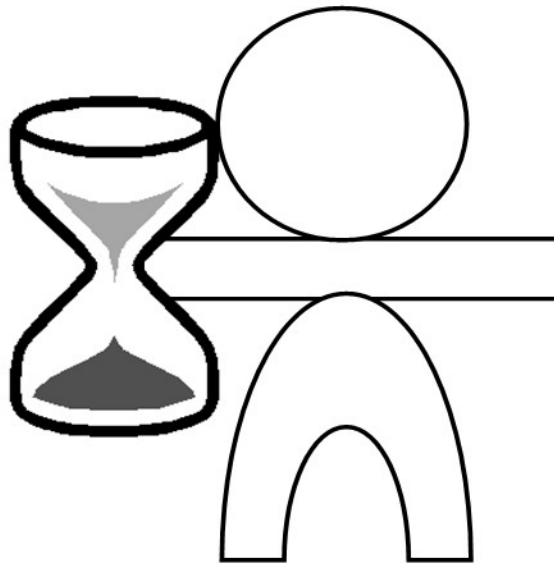
SAFETY IN NUMBERS



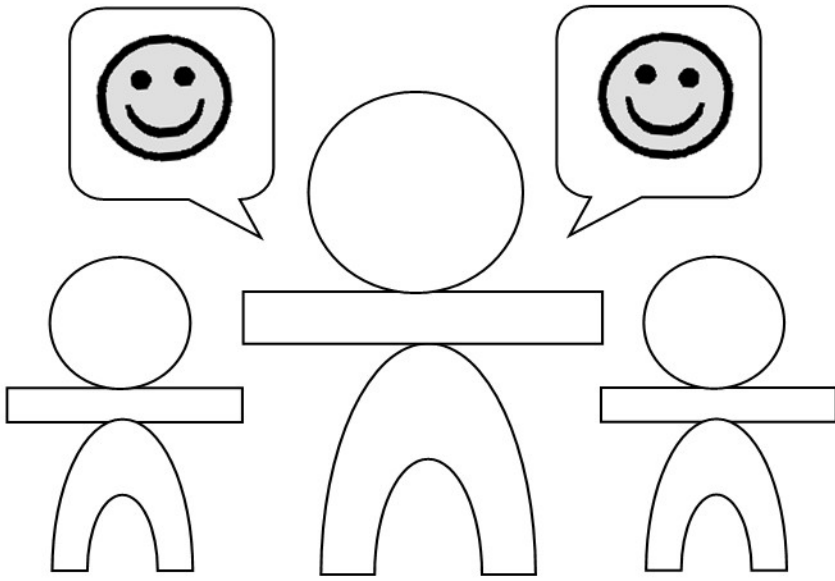
REPORT ABUSE



PRAISE, NOT PUNISHMENT



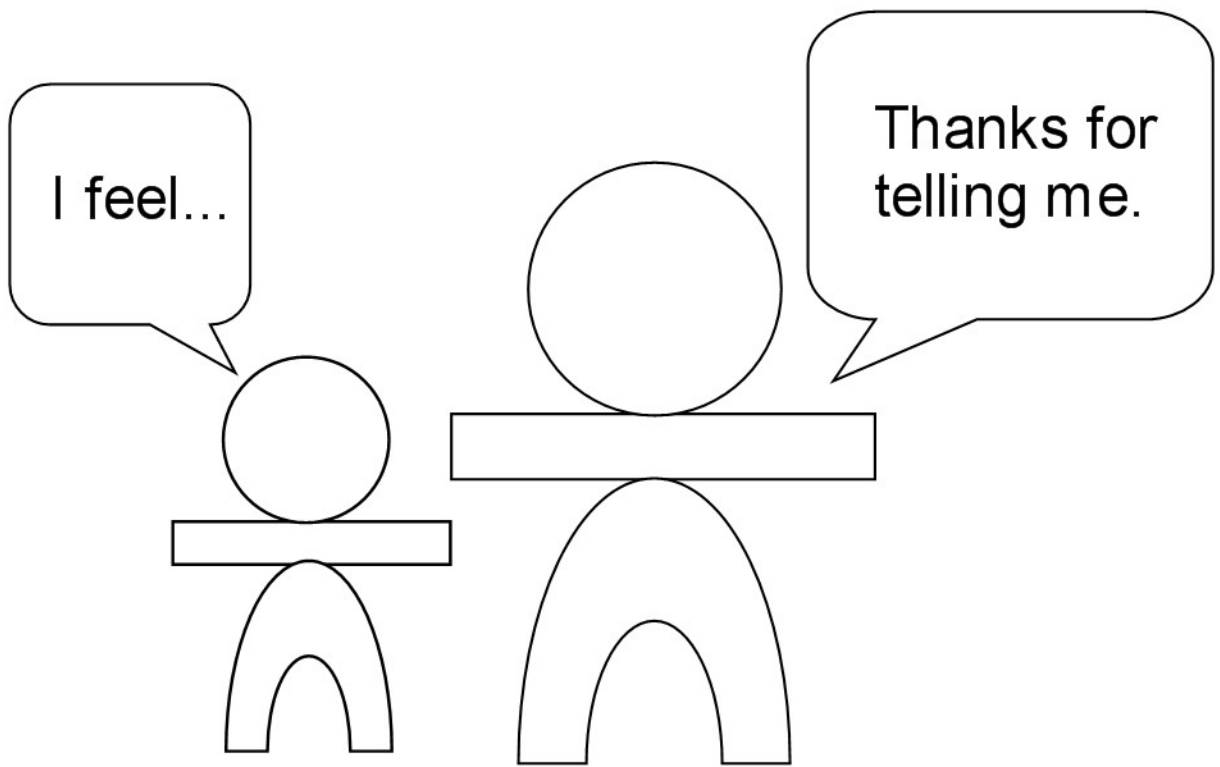
BE PATIENT



TREAT EVERYONE WITH RESPECT



NO DRUGS OR ALCOHOL



PRACTICE GOOD COMMUNICATION



NO THREATS OR PUT DOWNS



The Ten Commandments

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

Grades K-2 Cut and paste on Ten Commandments Worksheet.

1. I am the Lord your God; you shall have no other Gods before me.

2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.

3. Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.

4. Honor your father and your mother.

5. You shall not kill

6. You shall not commit adultery.

7. You shall not steal.

8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

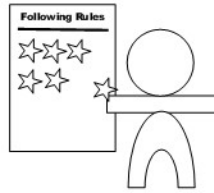
9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.

10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

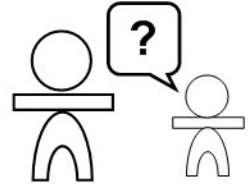
K-3 Optional cut-outs for “Our Class Rules” activity.



No name calling, put downs, etc.
Use appropriate language



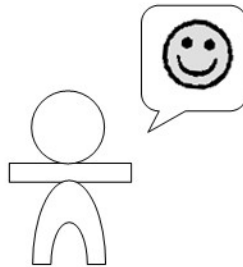
Follow the rules
Attend every class



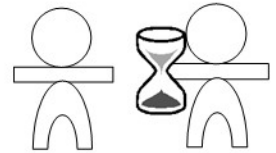
Ask questions
Ask for help
Get help



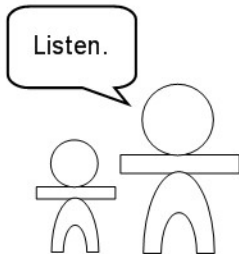
Keep hands and feet to yourself



Use respectful language



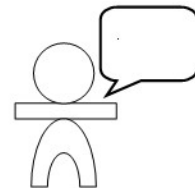
Be Patient
Wait your turn
Take turns



Listen to the
Teacher



Raise your hand.



Be quiet.