

GRADE 2 - CLASSROOM

# COMPASS CHILD PROTECTION CHILDREN'S PROGRAM



SAFETY IN PUBLIC PLACES  
Parent Handout

# Safety in Public Places

## Grade 2 - PARENT FOLLOW-UP SESSION

*with children who attended the session.*

### Instructions for Parents:

Your child attended a lesson today which dealt with personal safety. The classroom session was intended to open discussions with your child and encourage dialogue with you, the parents.

You are encouraged, sometime within the next week, to set aside 30 minutes for a discussion on this material with your child. This packet contains information to guide your conversation, as well as a step-by-step guide with suggestions.

In this session we introduce the concept of safety in public places. Use it as an opportunity to discuss how your child can stay safe outside of your home.

The information in this handout can allow you to reinforce the information taught in the session. Please repeat this dialogue with your child on a regular basis.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

*As you prepare to lead your child through a conversation on staying safe, this background information is for you, not your children, to better understand the issues.*

Child sexual abuse is a form of abuse that includes sexual activity with, or in front of, a minor. When a person engages in this way, they are committing a crime that can have lasting effects on the child. A child cannot consent to any form of sexual activity.

The following are forms of child sexual abuse:

- Sending obscene phone calls, text messages, images or other communication.
- Touching a child's private parts.
- Forcing or tricking a child to touch the private parts of an adult or another child.
- Having sex of any kind.
- Exposing oneself.
- Producing, owning, or sharing pornographic images of children.
- Trafficking children for sex.
- Engaging in any other sexual conduct that is harmful to a child's mental, emotional, or physical development.

Some behavioral signs in children that may indicate sexual abuse include sudden and intense fears, trauma, isolation from others, drastic disruptions in temperament and coping styles, hygiene changes (such as bedwetting, refusing to bathe or washing excessively), being over-protective of siblings, sleep problems or nightmares, inappropriate sexual knowledge, or behaviors beyond their years, or running away from home.

Most sexual abusers have a pre-existing relationship with their victims and/or families. Sexual abusers have gained access,

authority, and often the trust of both the child and parent. They may involve themselves in a family's life as well as appear to do great things in the community – this is a way of being “hidden in plain sight” to gain access to children.

A process—often called “grooming”—is a way that abusers break down a child or young person's physical, emotional, and behavioral boundaries while, at the same time, damaging their relationships with adults, their spiritual life, their values, and their sense of self. Make sure to know who is in your child's life, both children and adults. As part of a grooming process, potential abusers (also called predators) might give presents to or offer favors for children.

Grooming bribes or “guilt gifts” might include unexplained clothing, cash, jewelry, phones or trips. Parents should **know the source of any gifts and treats their child receives**. Children and teens should ask their parents before accepting ANY gifts.

Abusers use grooming tactics with parents and caregivers, too. Predators may be eager to babysit; they may offer “a shoulder to cry on” or financial help. They may pose as the wise counselor with sage advice (what a stressed parent often needs) or the go-to neighbor with exciting “treats” or offer to take a child on a family trip with them (things a lower-income parent may not be able to provide). These intentional behaviors are designed to trick the parent into trusting their child with the predator.

A predator's boundary violations may become so entrenched into daily life that adults fail to recognize it. The people in a child's life become convinced that the predator's inappropriate behavior is safe. **If a child says that they have been abused, believe them—even if you think it's impossible.**

It is common for children who are victims of abuse, including neglect, to blame themselves and believe a situation is their fault. Furthermore, this message may be reinforced by the person who is abusing them. It is our responsibility as their parents to let them know that it's NOT THE CHILD'S FAULT, they did NOT do anything wrong. This should be continuously reinforced—don't just say it one time and think that's enough. For kids to believe it, we have to say it over and over.

One of the most important ways we can keep our children safe is to have open and courageous communication. Encourage them to come to you when they are confused about anything or have questions. Clearly teaching the names of private body parts, enables a child to share with you accurately when they suspect abuse happening to a friend, or even to themselves.

Build strong communication bridges with your children so that when they have to talk about something heavy or hard, they are able to bring it to you with greater ease. For example, your child may step forward and share about a mistake they made, something a friend did, or an unjust situation. Your reaction to these situations determines their level of comfort in continuing to bring such things your way.

When your child does come to you, avoid reacting emotionally, and be supportive. Assure them that you love them and you will help them find a solution.

**PARENTS:** Please read the entire handout before reviewing the information with your child. Be prepared to discuss the material using language that is appropriate to your child's intellectual and social abilities. And be advised that at this age level, you will find your child rapidly advancing in understanding and retention of the information.

## SESSION OVERVIEW

In this session, children are introduced to strategies for staying safe in public spaces.

Examples of public spaces are discussed, and children think about people who can be approached in these places to get help. Children learn about how adults may be friendly in public spaces, and what boundaries adults must never cross.

Children learn about the importance of letting their parents where they are. They learn the “Get Help” wave which can be used to send a signal in situations where they may not be able to speak out and ask for help.

## PARENT-CHILD DISCUSSION

### 1. Touch

(Direct him/her to the page in the Activity Book that is titled “Touch.”)

Let’s discuss the types of touch mentioned here.

Explain different types of touch to your child and help them understand and why that type of touch is safe, or unsafe, and maybe even a context when that changes.

I’m going to read out some types of touch and let’s talk about it.

Read out randomly different types of touch mentioned in this chart below, allowing time for discussion after each. The ones bolded were discussed in class, but the more sensitive ones were left for you to discuss with your child.

- a hug when you want it
- holding hands
- hand placed lightly on your shoulder
- gentle kiss on the cheek from someone in the family
- rocking or holding a younger child
- a tap on the shoulder
- **a pat on the back to indicate someone did a good job**
- holding a person’s body while they learn to ride a bike
- kick or a hair pull
- being tickled after saying “Stop!”
- a squeeze that feels too hard
- an unwanted kiss

- looking at or touching a private part of the body  
(remember that private parts of the body are those that are covered by a bathing suit)

*(If you have not done so before this, or if you would like to review, Use this opportunity to teach your child the names of their private parts. This is important because it helps the child accurately share with an adult if they have experienced any type of abuse)*

## 2. Say NO, Move Away, Tell Someone

Say:

What can you do if you don't like the touch someone is giving you?

(allow your child to respond and show you the motions they learned in class.)

First, wave your palms as if you are saying no, and say "SAY NO" loudly.

Next, jump to your side as if you are moving away and say "MOVE AWAY" loudly.

Finally, cup your hands as if you are going to shout and say "TELL SOMEONE" loudly.

Have fun with this activity and practice a couple of times.

## 3. Public Spaces

Say:

Now we are going to talk about how we can stay safe in public spaces. But first, what are public spaces?

(Give your child a moment to respond based on what they learned in class)

Public spaces are those outside of home where there can be people you may or may not know. Let's look at the pictures to see some examples of public spaces.

(Allow the child to look at the pictures and name some public spaces)

In a public space you will see lots of people who you don't know. When we are in a public space we have to be respectful to everyone and share the space. At the same time, we have to keep ourselves, our friends and family members safe.

What was the rule that your teacher taught you in class today about public places?

The rule was- Tell mom and dad where you are.

*(use this opportunity to discuss and reinforce that you should always know where they are, and they must never leave a place where you have asked them to stay without informing you. You may add examples)*

#### **4. Finding helpful adults**

Let's review what your teacher taught about finding helpful adults if you need help in a public place.

If you need help but your parents are not around, or if you are lost, you need to find an adult who can help you.

Open the activity book to the page "Helpful Adults"

Tell me more about what you drew in class? Who are these people who can help you in each place?

Take time to discuss their answers and suggest additional people they can contact if they need help in that place. The last box has been left blank for you to add any public place relevant to your child that might not be on the list.

#### **5. Friendly Adults**

(This topic was not discussed in class and has been left for a discussion at home as it is sensitive. You may customize and use language that is relevant to your child. )

**Say:**

Sometimes, when you are in a public space you might meet a friendly adult who is new, or even someone you know from before. It's nice that adults are friendly, but there are a few rules that all adults must follow when they are being friendly to kids. We're going to talk about some rules that all adults must follow. If you meet an adult who's breaking these rules, get away and tell someone. Here are a few things that adults must never do:

Go over each of these points with your kids and explain and discuss them. Adjust them or add your own if needed.

Adults must NEVER...

1. Never touch you in a private body area or ask you to show your private body area to them.
2. Never show you a private body part or a picture of a private body part.
3. Never take you away to a place without mom and dad's permission. (Discuss what permission would look like.)
4. Never take you alone to a closed place where no one else can see you, and you can't get help.
5. Never ask you for your address. If an adult needs your address, they should ask your parents.
6. Never ask you for your personal phone number, email-id or information to connect with you or online without your parent's permission. (Discuss what permission would look like.)

**Say:**

If an adult is doing any of these things, get away, even if they are friendly and be sure to tell us about it later.

## 6. End with Prayer

Remind your child that ultimately, it is God who protects us. Pray for their safety and end the session.