

GRADE 8 - CLASSROOM

COMPASS CHILD PROTECTION CHILDREN'S PROGRAM



MODESTY AND REPUTATION
Parent Handout

Modesty and Reputation

Grade 8 - PARENT FOLLOW-UP SESSION

With children who attended the parish/school session

Instruction for the Parents

Your child attended a session on Compass Child Protection Children's program themed "Modesty and Reputation" with a focus on personal safety.

The classroom session was intended to open discussions with you, the parents, on these topics.

You are encouraged, sometime during the coming week, to set aside 30 minutes for a discussion with your child. This packet contains the material you will require to prepare for this discussion as well as step-by-step guide with suggested discussion questions.

Session Overview

The teacher discussed with the students how they are created in the image of God and how this should reflect in their lives and actions.

The concept of modesty was discussed. The importance of modesty both in their dressing, as well as in their online posting was discussed.

The teacher encouraged the students to think about the importance of their reputation. The students thought about what they would like to be described as.

The session ended with a reading of I Corinthians 6: 19-20 and a prayer.

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.

Parent-Child Discussion

Modesty:

Ask your teen their thoughts about modesty. What do you think about the word modesty? Do you think that it is relevant to you? What did you understand from what your teacher said?

Allow time for your teen to share their thoughts about modesty. Allow them to share their concerns, their ideas and their perspectives.

Remind them about what was said in the class:

Modesty is a virtue that safeguards us as the precious gift God made. Immodesty says, "my body is the best thing about me – the best part of who I am. Don't look at me as a person, but see me as an object."

Ask your teen: What is the best thing about you? How can you draw attention to it?

If your child's answer is something physical, talk about some of their strengths and talents. Help them understand that they are far more than what they look like. Also remind them, that physical appearance is only temporary and will change with age, and its best to grow in things that are internal and long lasting.

Say:

What are the kind of clothes that will draw attention to who you are on the outside and distract people from what you really want them to see in you?

Can we go to your wardrobe and decide on any 2 pieces of clothing that fall in this category, that you can give away? It will be a symbol of how you want people to see you for who you are, and not what you look like.

Reputation

Say:

During class, you heard stories about 2 teens. Let's go over those stories again.

Belinda believes that it's important to do the right thing no matter who is looking. She tells her parents about where she is going and what she is doing. Belinda considers others and thinks about her futures reputation before posting online, and does not use the phone or internet when she is upset or angry. People around Belinda know that she stands for what is right.

Matt is a loving person, and enjoys having a good time. He is always trying new things, and he loves sharing with others. Matt makes friends easily.

One day, someone posted a mean rumor about Belinda on the internet.

No one believed the rumor. Everyone knew that Belinda would never do such a thing and it must be false.

The same day, someone posted an untrue rumor about Matt.

When people saw the rumor about Matt, they were shocked, but then they believed it. They had not agreed with some of the choices they've seen Matt make before, and it was understandable that this could be true.

Neither Belinda, nor Matt are perfect. When a storm came in the form of a mean and untrue rumor, it impacted Matt's reputation, but Belinda's reputation was able to stand firm.

Say:

In class you were asked to draw a tree to show what your reputation was like. Let's take a look at your picture.

Say:

Why did you draw your tree like this? What do you think your reputation is like?

Allow time for your teen to explain. Encourage them and let them know that they can build their reputation.

Say:

What were the things that you decided that you would do to build your reputation?

Allow time for your teen to explain whatever they have written in their activity book. Help them to think about what they need to do, and the details of how they will do it. Let them know that they have your support.

Sometimes, teens may feel that their parents spoil their reputation by oversharing about their children to their friends. If your teen is struggling with this, apologize and let them know that you will support them and help them build their reputation.

Let's look at something your teacher said towards the end of the session:

Remember, modesty and reputation are not about putting on a show for others. They are about genuinely living wisely, and making smart choices about what we share, what we say, and what we do so that people don't misunderstand us.

How do you understand this? Do you agree?

Allow your child to share their thoughts about how it's important to be genuine and not put on a show for the sake of looking good on the outside.

How can we talk about things in an honest, but careful way, when we make mistakes, so that it does not spoil our reputation?

Discuss how you as a family can support each other when your teen makes a bad choice, or is going through a hard time.

Let's take a look at your name and what you described yourself as. Why did you choose these words?

Encourage your child, and tell them that each time someone calls their name, they can now remember what they stand for, who they are.

Prayer:

End with a time of prayer, asking God to help make good choices about modesty and reputation.