

September 13, 2023

Dear Parents and Guardians,

In an effort to assist in the monumental mission of protecting children from abuse, the **Church of St. John** is partnering with you to present a safe environment lesson to your youth within their youth program. It is our cherished role as adults to fully protect children. In addition, we must also teach children about their safety rights and boundaries, so that they have tools to protect themselves.

This school year, your child will be presented with a program entitled *Empowering God's Children*, in which Lesson Leaders present a safety lesson to children that houses a grade-appropriate video component along with a hands-on activity. The material is designed to better equip your child to know their rights, recognize their boundaries, and to empower them to protect themselves when safe adults are not immediately available—and ultimately be safer from people who might want to harm them. Youth will participate within one of the following lessons:

Lesson 1: *Physical Boundaries: Safe and Unsafe Touching Rules*
 Lesson 2: *Safe Adults, Safe Touches and Special Safe Adults*
 Lesson 5: *Being a Safe Friend*

Lesson 3: *Boundaries: You Have Rights!*
 Lesson 4: *Secrets, Surprises and Promises*

As the primary educators of your children, parents and guardians are encouraged to review these materials ahead of time and discuss the information at home. If you have ever thought about how to empower children to protect themselves, fortify their boundaries or increase their safety through in-person and online situations, then reviewing the lessons on your own to both begin *and* reiterate the message at home is the best next step to take. Thank you for your partnership with us to protect youth.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

Date(s) of in-program training: October 2023
Makeup training dates: October 2023, as needed

For questions, or to obtain access to the specific lesson and related activities, please communicate with: (Name / Position / Contact information) Fr. Michael or Christina (K-6th grades)

Please note: You also have the ability to “opt” the youth out of the formal in-program safety lesson if you only plan to provide safe environment education at home. Please complete, detach and submit the form below if you do not want your child to receive safe environment information via their youth program about ways to protect themselves. Your coordinator will reach out to you regarding relevant protocol, i.e., child separation from others during lesson, alternative activities, etc.

TO OPT-OUT THE CHILD FROM THE SAFETY LESSON, RETURN THIS PORTION TO:

(Name / Location) _____, **BY Sept. 27, 2023.**

I, *(printed name of parent or guardian)* _____, have reviewed the safety lessons and DO NOT give my permission for this location to present the *Empowering God's Children* Safety Lesson to my child *(printed name of child)* _____ Grade _____

Parent Signature _____ Date _____