

Guidelines

School Administrators, Directors of Religious Education, and Youth Ministry Directors

- **Leader** is defined as clergy, administrator, director of religious education/formation, teacher, catechist, or youth minister who has been trained to teach the Circle of Grace Program. All leaders must be adults and certified in Safe Environment training.
- Every leader should read the philosophy and goals to better understand and prepare to teach the Circle of Grace. Administrator/Director needs to review how to handle sensitive situations with each leader. It is important for leaders to report all concerning situations to their Administrator/Directors and understand child abuse/neglect reporting laws. A Quick Reference Card for Leaders is located in this section.
- This program may bring up past issues with a leader which may make it difficult for them to teach the lessons. Please encourage leaders in this situation to speak with their Administrator/ Director, Pastor, or they can call the Safe Environment Coordinator directly. Supportive resources are available in their community to help them.
- The time frame for lessons may vary depending on size of class, age of children/young people, amount of discussion, etc.
- Vocabularies with definitions are intended for the leader. The explanation of vocabulary should be integrated within the context of the lessons to assist the children and young people in their understanding of the Circle of Grace Program. The depth of the children/young people's understanding will depend upon their age and developmental stage. A master vocabulary list of the Circle of Grace Program is included in the packet for each grade.
- Each lesson is correlated with Catholic teachings.
- The Circle of Grace program needs to be implemented each calendar year in all grades.
- Leader's instructions for each lesson are italicized. Non-italicized text needs to be presented by the leader to the children or young people. All the information and handouts are provided for each grade.
- If possible, it is always "best practice" to have two adults in the room during the lesson due to the sensitive nature of the material.

- There should be no more than two to three weeks between the last two lessons in grades K, 1, 2, 3, 6, and 9. Ongoing reinforcement of the concepts is encouraged throughout the year. Hopefully, the language of Circle of Grace will become a part of a positive culture of respect, care, and faith that will help protect our children and young people and help them to know what to do when they feel unsafe.
- There are pre and post assessments for grades 3, 6, and 9. This tool will assist in evaluating the children/young people's understanding and assimilation of the concepts. The results are to be recorded on the grade evaluation and are not to be shared with the children/young people.
- The School Administrator, Religious Education Director, or Youth Minister Director need to send out the provided letter to all parents regarding Circle of Grace prior to starting the program. All parents should receive the "Common Questions of Parents" handout. Lesson specific parent information should be handed out as directed. The parent information included in this chapter for every parish/school is to assist in providing parent education both to inform parents about the Circle of Grace program and to foster greater communication in families.
- Evaluations for each lesson are to be completed and returned to the School Administrator, the Director of Youth Ministry, or the Director of Religious Education/Formation. The administrator or director will use these evaluations to complete the Summary Evaluation (located in this chapter). The Summary Evaluation needs to be sent to the
for ongoing improvement of the program, for parish and school documentation of the implementation of the program, and for audit records.
- Return the summary evaluation to:

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Non-Participating Children/Young People

The guidelines from the Office of Child and Youth Protection state:

WHEN A PARENT/GUARDIAN REFUSES TO ALLOW THEIR CHILD/YOUNG PERSON TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CIRCLE OF GRACE PROGRAM:

A parent may refuse to allow their child to participate, but it must be done on a case by case basis. Parents must submit the following in writing with a signature:

- Safe Environment training was offered to their child/young person
- They refused to allow their child/young person to participate in the training
- They received Safe Environment training materials for their child/young person.

Administrator/directors will provide parents with the age appropriate lessons and parent packet. A record of parent's written documentation needs to be maintained to ensure full accountability.

Please call

if there are any questions or concerns