

*Beware of false prophets who come to you disguised as sheep but underneath are ravenous wolves - Matthew 7:12, 15*

**INTERNET SAFETY:** Never give out personal information that may lead someone to you (like your SS#, your address, phone number, school or even dance class etc.) It is very important that you never provide this to anyone you meet on the internet. Your parents should always know about anyone that you communicate with online. **NEVER** go to meet in person with someone that you met online. Be sure to talk with your parents about this because it can be extremely dangerous. Unsafe adults may try to use "chat rooms" disguised as a youth to gradually gain your trust.

**FAKE EMERGENCY:** Never go with an adult who claims "your relative or a friend was in an accident" or "your house is on fire" and they were sent to get you. Emergencies have been used by a few adults to confuse and trick people into unsafe situations. Have an established emergency plan in advance and always check with the police by dialing 911. Never get in the car with anyone who stops to help you if your car breaks down and never stop for a hitchhiker. Call 911 to have a police officer wait with you while your friend or family picks you up. Some adults have dressed in fake uniforms to lure youth and even adults into unsafe situations. Remember, if you are concerned in any way, demand that another safe adult is present. By dialing 911, you can be sure that the person who is there to help you is genuine and safe and not someone in disguise.

#### **ADULTS ASK OTHER ADULTS FOR**

**HELP:** Never get close to a car and certainly **NEVER** go or plan to meet alone with an adult who claims they lost their pet, needs directions, offers employment, or a chance to be on TV. It is always a warning if they say "don't tell your parents".

#### **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR YOUTH**

I promise to uphold the moral Catholic values and teachings of the Catholic Church and to treat everyone with dignity and respect. I promise to follow these same rules and guidelines for safety that we ask you to expect from other adults and youth.

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*I UNDERSTAND THAT I HAVE THE RIGHT TO SAY NO TO ANY UNWELCOME PHYSICAL OR SEXUAL ADVANCES BY ANY ADULT, BOYFRIEND, GIRLFRIEND OR YOUTH. I HAVE THE RIGHT TO PRIVACY, RESPECT AND PERSONAL SAFETY.*

*I WILL TELL A TRUSTED ADULT AND MY PARENTS IF SOMEONE MAKES ME FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE OR ASKS ME TO DO THINGS MY PARENTS WOULD NOT ALLOW.*

*I WILL BE OPEN TO DISCUSSING PERSONAL SAFETY WITH MY PARENTS. I WILL TALK WITH MY PARENTS ABOUT CREATING AN EMERGENCY PLAN WHICH WILL INCLUDE A CODE PHRASE I MAY USE OVER THE PHONE TO SIGNAL MY PARENTS THAT I NEED TO BE PICKED UP IMMEDIATELY IF MY RIDE HAS BEEN DRINKING OR IF SOMETHING MAKES ME FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE FOR ANY REASON.*

*I PROMISE TO REPORT UNSAFE BEHAVIOR OR UNSAFE SITUATIONS THAT I HAVE SEEN OR HEARD ABOUT TO MY PARENTS OR ANOTHER TRUSTED ADULT IMMEDIATELY....EVEN IF SOMEONE TOLD ME NOT TO TELL.....*

*Youth's Signature:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Holy Spirit I pray that you will guide me through the many challenges that I am faced with in my life. I pray that you will give me the strength if I should encounter confusing or unsafe situations so that I may do the right thing to keep myself, my school and all God's children safe from harm.*



## *The Diocese of Bridgeport*

*Safe Environments*

### **PERSONAL SAFETY TRAINING FOR YOUTH**

**Grades 9-12**

A PROMISE TO PROTECT....

Remember that Sexual abuse is **never** the victim's fault, no matter what! Help is just a phone call away.

#### **TO REPORT AN INCIDENT OR SUSPICION OF SEXUAL ABUSE OR ANY UNSAFE SITUATION:**

**First immediately notify your parents, your principal, pastor or another safe adult**

You are also encouraged to call **Michael Tintrup** (203) 241-0987 or **Erin Neil** at (203) 650-3265 .

You may always call 911 or the CT Child Abuse Care-line DCF 1-800-842-2288. All calls will be handled as confidentially as possible. All reports of abuse must be reported immediately to D.C.F.

## PERSONAL SAFETY FOR YOUTH

1 . Know the **warning signs** of an unsafe situation or an unsafe adult. Learn what you can do to prevent an adult or even another youth from harming you or someone else. Talk with your parents often about this topic.

2 . Know that **your body is your own** and it is special. Your body is God's gift to you. You have the right to say **no** to anyone who asks or tries to see or touch you on your body or asks you to see or touch their body in any way that makes you uncomfortable. It is also against the law.

3 . **Communicate** questions or concerns about any unsafe situation or warning signs of any unsafe person to your parents, the police or another trusted adult. Talk with your parents often about personal safety.

4 . **Dating Dangers:** if a friend, boyfriend, girlfriend or another youth attempts to touch you in the areas of your body covered by a bathing suit or makes you uncomfortable or asks you to touch them against your will, this is wrong and **no** always **means no!** It is never your fault.

5 . **Drugs and Alcohol Trick:** colorless, odorless drugs can be placed into a drink or someone could give you alcohol or drugs to impair your judgment and hurt you while you are unconscious. Always open your own beverages and never leave them unattended at a party or social situation. Abstain from alcohol and drugs; they will make you less powerful over a perpetrator.

## **BE AWARE.....** **KNOW THE WARNING SIGNS**

Remember that most adults are safe but there are a few adults that could be harmful or unsafe and you may even know and like some of these adults very much which can be confusing. **Adults who harm youth can look like anyone else and even hold positions of trust. You can not tell by looking at someone by their age or gender if they are safe.** It is important to recognize early warning signs so that you can prevent them from harming you or someone else. Knowledge is power.....

-**Be aware** of adults who always want to wrestle or tickle or who always want to meet alone without other adults around.

-**Be aware** of adults who discourage parents from participating in or monitoring the activities, sports, groups and programs that you belong to.

-**Tell** your parents where you are at all times and say no if someone asks you to a secluded area. It may be a trick.

-**Two adults** should always be present at your school and parish activities. This rule applies to all activities that take place in the Diocese of Bridgeport. If no other adults are present, immediately tell your parents or another safe adult so the situation can be corrected. Keep telling someone until you are heard!

-**Be aware** of and immediately report adults or other youth who break rules that are set by your parents. Some adults may even encourage or permit you to break the law to gain your trust and then harm you.

-**Be aware** of adults who give gifts without parent's permission. Gifts have been used by unsafe adults as a trick to gain a person's trust. Expensive gifts or gifts of alcohol, drugs, videos cell phone images and games with adult ratings are warning signs. Tell your parents immediately. This may be very hard for you because you may know and even like the person. It is still the right thing to do and it can help to keep you and others safe from harm. **Remember, you can't tell by looking at someone if they are safe.** Approximately **89%** of adults who commit sexual abuse of minors are known and trusted by the family and trusted by the victim.

-Be aware of any adult who asks to take your picture without clothing on or offers to show you photos, cell phone images or videos of youth or adults without clothing. They may even ask you to keep it a secret. This is **against the law** and this adult is **NOT** safe. Say no, get away and tell a trusted adult immediately.

## **YOUR BODY BELONGS TO YOU**

Your body is special and it is a gift from God. You deserve to be treated with respect and dignity at all times. No one has the right to violate your personal safety. It is against the law for an adult to ask to see or touch a youth in the private areas of their body that are covered by a bathing suit. (An exception is a Dr. with a nurse or parent present). It is also against the law for an adult to ask you to see or touch their body in the private areas covered by a bathing suit or in **anyway** that makes you feel uncomfortable. If anyone ever asks you to do this, you have the power and the authority to say **NO** and **NO always means NO.** It can be confusing and scary if this ever happens but reporting is the right thing to do.