

Common Circle of Grace Questions of Parents

1) How is this connected to the “Safe Environment”?

Circle of Grace is the safe environment curriculum for children/youth. The goal is to help children/youth understand the sacredness of who they are and how to seek help when needed through their relationships with trusted adults.

2) What information can this curriculum give my child that they are not getting already?

The Circle of Grace Curriculum reinforces in a peer setting that their faith community cares about their safety and wants them to understand how to seek help if they feel unsafe for any reason. It will help them identify potentially unsafe situations and know how to handle them by seeking help from trusted adults.

3) You indicate that this curriculum will provide them with “life skills”, what do you mean by this?

It reinforces that they are valued by God and others. It gives them information on boundaries and practical directives of what to do if someone makes them feel uncomfortable when in their Circle of Grace. It is a good foundation for healthy relationships that will help them throughout their lives.

4) Will this curriculum be age appropriate?

Yes! The lessons were written with great attention to the stages of child development.

5) How can parents support what is being taught?

Parents will receive parent letters as well as take home activities for several of the lessons to do with their children. Talking with your children about the Circle of Grace at home will help your children to understand the importance of the lessons and that the lessons apply everywhere. Additionally, you are your child’s most important teacher in the area of relationships. Much of what your child will learn and later imitate about relationships comes from what they learn by your example. Creating an atmosphere where they know that they can talk to you about anything provides a valuable safety net for your child because they know they have you to turn to whenever they have a concern. The Parents First Newsletter has excellent information on parent to child dialogue on healthy sexuality.

6) Is there accountability attached to this curriculum implementation?

Yes! There will be an ongoing evaluation of the curriculum to ensure its effectiveness and to incorporate any suggestions that would improve the quality of the program.

7) Will there be resources (people and material) available if I have questions?

Yes! Your parish/school along with your diocesan safe environment coordinator is there to help you with any questions.

8) Shouldn’t parents be the ones teaching their children about sexuality?

Absolutely! This is NOT a sex education program. Circle of Grace will provide children with a sound understanding of their own value and of God’s care and presence in their lives. It will also help them notice the signals that tell them when they do not feel safe and how to talk to a trusted adult. All of this will be a good foundation for healthy relationships. However, this is not a sexuality education program. Many parents will appreciate that this program will provide a spiritual framework that will allow parent-child communication about the value of all that they are, including their sexuality. Those conversations are most effective between parent and child. There are grade specific Parents First newsletters to assist you in these conversations.

9) Is this a mandatory curriculum for my child?

The United States Catholic Conference of Bishops (USCCB) developed the Charter for Protection of Children and Young People. Article 12 of this document states that each Diocese will have a safe environment program for adults and minors. If you have questions or concerns about your child participating in the Circle of Grace Curriculum, please contact your Director of Religious Education, Principal, etc.