

The Stoplight & Secrets

For Parents...

Most offenders use secrecy as a tactic to control the child from telling about the abuse.

It is important that our children understand the difference between a good secret and a bad secret. This understanding could be key in them seeking help. We want to always remind our children, to never hesitate to seek a trusted adult when they feel something is not right.



“Secrets” Activity with your Child:

Discuss: Can you name some good secrets? Who is involved in the secret? Is there a time that the secret is finally told? Can you name a bad secret? Who is involved in the secret? Can the secret hurt you or someone else?

Share: Sometimes secrets can even give us a funny feeling in our heart or tummy. A safe secret is one that does not hurt others or you. A secret is unsafe when you think you might be hurt or get in trouble if you do not tell.

Share the following secrets and ask if it is: red (unsafe) green (safe) or yellow (not sure)

- Your dad is planning a surprise birthday party for your mom.
- Your friend’s brother takes a picture of you with his cell phone. He asks you not to tell and says that you will get in trouble.

- Someone acts like your friend but then tries to get you to do something you don’t want to do because you know it is wrong or because it makes you feel confused or funny. They say, “If you tell, I will tell everyone that this was your idea”
- Your parents plant to get a puppy but don’t tell you until they bring it home.
- An adult, who you know well, asks you to go with him without asking permission from your parents. He/she tells you that your parents won’t care if you go with him, but he says “Don’t tell your parents about our visit. They won’t understand.”
- Your friend tells you, “I stole a video game from my older brother that we can play downstairs. Don’t tell anyone because it is an adult game.”
- Your friend tells you, “I think Joey is cute,” and tells you to keep it a secret.
- Someone touches you in a way that you don’t think is safe—even if the person says it is safe and says, “This special time is between you and me.”
- Your teenage neighbor tells you that you will get into trouble if you tell your mom and/or dad what he showed you on the computer.

A Trusted Adult

Share: God wants you to be safe and protected, his love surrounds you like a circle of Grace. If someone comes into your circle of grace and does something that makes you feel unsafe, this is not ok; this is not what God wants for you. When this happens, you always need to tell a trusted adult.

Who are adults you can trust and turn to when someone makes them feel unsafe or wants you to keep a bad secret?

Practice Asking for Help: Use the above situations to role-play how they can ask for help.

“I need your help, I don’t feel safe because...”

“I don’t think my mom or dad want me to...”

“Please help me because...”

What is a Circle of Grace?

Circle of Grace – God’s love surrounds us

Person - Child of God

Yellow Circle – We each have a circle of Grace

Dove - Holy Spirit – God sends down his

love to us from Heaven

Blue Background - The World in which We Live



Reach with both arms as high as you can over your head. Circle your arms down on each side and bend down until you reach all the way under your feet.

As you stand back up again, turn all the way around once as you raise your arms back over your head. This is the **Circle of Grace** that you live in, surrounded by God’s love for you.

Thank you, God, for always being with me in my Circle of Grace. Thank you for the gift of the Holy Spirit who helps me know what is good. Thank you for giving me people who care about me and want me to be safe. Amen.

Created & Loved by God

- God has created each of us as unique and special. *(Share with your child the unique personality traits and gifts you see in him or her)*



- In the Bible, God tells us we are created “male and female in his image” and that God see this as “very good.”



(God has a special love for ALL people; all girls and boys, men and women. He wants us to love each other just like he loves all people)

- God is always with each of us, in a special holy way. His love surrounds each of us in a Circle of Grace. Surrounded by God’s love, we should be nice to others and others should be nice to us. *(What are some nice things that people do or say? What might be some hurtful things that people do or say? These hurtful things do not belong in anyone’s Circle of Grace.)*



Signals Keep Us Safe

For Parents...

The purpose of this activity is to help children learn how to identify dangerous and unsafe situations, feelings, and touch, but not to scare or shame them. The analogy of a stoplight is used to connect a green signal with safe situations, a red signal with unsafe situations, and a yellow signal with situations in which a child might feel confused or unsure. Make sure to give clear and concise reasons why a situation falls into the green or yellow/red signal category. Children may be thinking it is “good” to help someone but “bad” to talk to strangers. They may not be able to discern which one takes priority. Help your child become aware of their internal process of conflicting feelings and that when possible they should always talk to a trusted adult before acting in a red or yellow situation.

Stoplight Activity with your Child:

Why do we have stoplights?

Stoplights protect people and keep them safe.



What does each color mean?

RED Signal STOP

YELLOW Signal BE CAREFUL

GREEN Signal GO AHEAD

Most of the time we know what is safe and good to allow in our Circle of Grace. Sometimes we need help from others like our parents or teachers to know what is safe. God has given each of us our own kind of signal to keep us safe and protected. Sometimes these signals are called feelings. Our feelings are one of the main ways God sends his Holy Spirit to help guide us.

Red Light-Green Light Activity:

Let’s look at how the three colors of a stoplight, can remind us of the signals God gives us, to help keep us safe and protected:

GREEN Signal GO AHEAD *Some things are definitely safe and good to do...like telling the truth, being kind and respectful, helping others and caring about others. You are also safe when others respect your body and feelings. What are some things that are always safe and good?*

RED Signal STOP *Some things are unsafe and always mean trouble. Can you help me think of things that are never good to do or to let someone do to you? When things like these things happen, always tell someone you trust like your mom, dad, or teacher.*

YELLOW Signal BE CAREFUL *Some times you can’t tell if a situation is safe. You might feel confused or unsure about it. It may seem like just a funny feeling in your heart or tummy. When this happens, always tell someone that you trust, like your mom, dad or teacher.*

► **Share the following and ask if the situation is— red (unsafe) green (safe) or yellow (not sure)**

- Your mom or dad gives you a hug when you are sad
- Your big brother’s friend wants you to play a video game your mom or dad told you not to play.
- You tell your teacher when you accidentally break something in your classroom.
- Your friend’s big brother or sister wants you to do something you don’t want to do because it makes you uncomfortable.
- You push someone out of line so you can be first.
- You decide not to laugh when a classmate falls down and cries, even though your friends are laughing
- You are at the doctor and your mom is with you. The doctor checks your body to make sure it is healthy.
- You are at a family party. Someone asks you to sit on his/her lap, but you don’t want to.
- At your friend’s house, your friend wants you to go downstairs to play on the computer without the mom or dad around.