

Lesson 4 for Grades 3—5

Secrets, Surprises and Promises

PRINCIPLE

Children must learn how to respect their own health and safety, and that of others, by understanding the safety rules about secrets. They have a right to be safe, and they are allowed to create boundaries to protect themselves in situations that cause discomfort or violate the safety rules.

CATECHISM / SCRIPTURE

"Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you, says the LORD."
—Jeremiah 1:8, New Revised Standard Version of the Bible (NRSV)

OBJECTIVES

Through this lesson, the adult lesson leader reinforces the parent's message about boundaries. After Lesson 4, children should be better able to:

- Identify the boundary differences between secrets, surprises and promises
- Understand the safety rules with regard to secrets and promises:
 - Say "No!" when someone tries to make you keep a secret regarding safety
 - Try to leave the situation if you feel uncomfortable
 - Tell a safe adult as soon as possible (even if it didn't happen to you)
- Technology component: Understand similar boundary rules apply for online activities, too
- Begin to understand that if anybody does make them keep a secret, gives them an unsafe touch or shows them inappropriate material, it isn't the child's fault

Background for Lesson Leaders:

Before beginning this session, the Lesson Leader should read the *Teaching Boundary and Safety Guide*, as it gives a wealth of information regarding boundaries and how to address them.

By this age, children should already know the names of their private parts as communicated by their parents. The Lesson Leader should not teach children the names of their private parts, but can explain that the areas covered by bathing suits are our "private parts" and are kept covered and private for a reason—to keep us safe and healthy. Also, the word "no" is an extremely powerful word in every language. Using our voice, and the word "no" are effective ways to establish a boundary. Sometimes children may not be aware that they're allowed to say "no" to adults.

The best approach to working with this age group is through non-competitive games in which the children can establish individual goals. At this age, more explanation is necessary when rules are given. Children need to begin to learn to trust their own ability to make decisions. Therefore, criticism should be designed to teach. For example, when something goes wrong or does not turn out as planned, rather than tell the child what went wrong, ask, "Next time, how could you do that differently so you would have a better outcome?" Let the child begin to think through the process and develop possible solutions.

This age group: Dealing with the primary age—key concept is "energy"

This age group is learning how to function independently of their parents. They know how to read and their comprehension levels are giving them a better sense of abstract ideas. Their writing skills are better as they learn proper grammar / punctuation, and become more refined with communicating their ideas.

Children of this age are away from home more often than earlier in life and need to start recognizing that safety issues can arise when they are off with friends, under the supervision of a 3rd party, or at other events / locations. They like to be in constant motion and are always on the go. Groups are important. This is the "gang" age with friends of the same sex. Capable of intense loyalty to others, they usually have a best friend in which to confide. Although truthful about big things, they are less so about the smaller things, often making up alibis or shifting the blame to others. They have a strong sense of right / wrong, fair / unfair and are more able to discern the difference between safe / unsafe. They are able to use logic, can argue and hold strong debates. The difficulty in dealing with boundaries with this age group is that these children are moving from dependence toward independence. Ultimately, we all must learn to listen to that guiding voice inside our head and to trust "that uneasy feeling in our gut." That little voice or uneasy feeling is a warning sign that something is wrong. Telling them "the rules" will not be enough. Children of this age need to learn to reason it out for themselves. The adults involved are primarily concerned with safety issues that the children don't seem to be able to see clearly—at least not yet. Caregivers can be more effective when dealing with this age by including them in the discussion while establishing rules or guidelines.

ACTIVITY OPTION #1: Play the (optional) introductory video as an icebreaker

The introductory video for children and youth in this age range is designed to open a simple discussion about personal boundary safety. The video is brief and is not intended to be a substitute for the lesson itself. It's merely an introduction designed to "break the ice" and assist the transition of completing the interactive Lesson Activity options. If the video is shown as an optional activity, please use in conjunction with one of the additional activity options, because discussion and practice are the critical components needed to teach children and youth how to protect themselves. They learn best by "doing"; not just listening.

ACTIVITY OPTION #2: Review and discuss key vocabulary words

- **Private body parts**—those body parts covered by a bathing suit.
- **Rules**—a prescribed guide for conduct or action. We follow the rules to make sure we are safe—just like how we have a seatbelt rule to keep us safe in the car, or the safety rules before we cross the street. [\[For example, teach the child a simple rule for what to do if someone tries to touch him / her in an unsafe way, which is to say "No!", try to get away, and tell an adult as soon as possible.\]](#)
- **Boundaries**—the limits that define one person as separate from another or from others. There are boundaries you can see (like a fence around a yard) and boundaries you can't see with your eyes (like the comfort zone around us that we call our "personal space"). Boundaries vary depending on the relationship with the other person. For example, a boundary between a child and a grandparent is different than the boundary between a child and a teacher or coach.
- **Saying "No"**—to say "no" means to refuse, deny, reject or express disapproval of. This word is used to express a boundary and communicate that you do not want something to happen or continue. [\[Let children know It's OK to say "No" to an adult if they make you feel scared or uncomfortable, or if they touch your private body parts.\]](#)
- **Safe friends and safe adults**—safe people won't hurt you without a good reason and won't intentionally confuse you. They listen to and consistently respect boundaries, and follow the rules. [\[Explain that a child may have many safe friends and adults. Give children examples of adult behavior that could hurt them, but may be necessary for the child's safety, i.e. medical exams, vaccinations, throat swabs, removing splinters, stopping a child from running into the road, etc.\]](#)
- **Unsafe friends and unsafe adults**—unsafe friends and unsafe adults put a child at risk for emotional, spiritual and physical harm. These are people who place a child in danger for their own purposes without concern for the welfare of the child. They also do not consistently listen to the parents' wishes or the child's boundaries. [\[Tell children we can know when someone is unsafe if they do not follow the rules or listen to our boundaries.\]](#)
- **Secret**—something kept hidden, never told or unexplained. Secrets exclude others and have potential to harm, sometimes causing the person involved to feel frightened or uncomfortable, fearful or sad. Secrets also send the message to children that they, or someone else, will get into trouble if the secret is shared [\[For example, let children know that there are no secrets when it comes to personal and physical safety. Tell children it's wrong for an adult or another child to ask to keep a secret about safety—especially unsafe touches—because that's a way for people to get hurt. If an individual tries to make a child keep a secret or makes him / her feel frightened, the child must know to communicate this information right away to a parent or caring adult—and be reassured that the child will be protected regardless of threats or seeming consequences of "telling".\]](#)
- **Surprise**—Surprises are typically happy. They cause feelings of happiness and joy. They are exciting, and temporary—meaning they will be revealed within a specific timeframe. As surprises are usually fun, they include activities like birthday surprises, gifts, trips and special treats. Surprises are inclusive and meant to be shared with others.
- **Problem**—Problems can be big and small; they can be small, little things like puzzles or big things like emergencies—and often need to be solved. They can involve fears and emotions. Sometimes we put boundaries in place to prevent problems, or to be more prepared for them. Whenever we have a problem that we don't know how to solve, we should talk to a safe adult for help. If we have problems about safety issues, boundaries and secrets, we definitely need to talk to a safe adult. [\[For example, a house fire is a big problem for everyone who lives there, and for the people who live near that house. It's a problem because it's unsafe, and it could hurt people. When a house is on fire, help is needed right away. How do we get help with the problem of house fires? As soon as it's safe, we "stop, drop and roll", try to get out and call 911, and the fire department comes to help us fix the problem of the fire that's too big to fix on our own.\]](#)
- **Threat**—When someone threatens you, they are stating that they are going to hurt, injure, damage or do something dangerous if you don't do what they want you to do. You never have to listen to threats, but you should be prepared in case you experience them. [\[For example, someone might threaten you and say if you tell about an unsafe secret, they're going to hurt your someone/something you know, and that you're going to get into trouble. When you hear someone threaten you about an unsafe secret, that is when we definitely need to tell a safe adult.\]](#)
- **Promise**—When you make a promise, you are declaring that something specific will happen—that you will either "do" or "not do" something. Promises can be good! But, we should never make promises about keeping quiet regarding unsafe secrets.

ACTIVITY OPTION #3: Opposites—Surprises vs. Secrets

Background: This activity involves providing boundary information, helping children to brainstorm, and then giving them specific scenarios to work out how they would respond to the situation if they are confronted with it.

Children need to understand that there are significant differences between surprises and secrets, and that if someone is trying to make them keep a secret, then they must tell a safe adult. When a child knows the difference between secrets and surprises and that keeping a secret isn't OK, he/she's more likely to reveal boundary violations and/or abuse.

Directions: Outline the following with the children, checking in periodically to measure their comprehension.

Discussion: **Talk to children about secrets:**

- A secret is something that is intended to never be told. They're unsafe, especially when they have to do with our boundary safety rules. Boundary safety involves rules like when we tell a safe adult when we're uncomfortable or scared, and how we tell a safe adult right away if someone tries to touch or see our private parts. Knowing about secrets are an important part of our boundary safety plan, because they impact our safety.
- When it comes to your safety and the boundary rules, it's not OK to keep secrets.
- When someone asks you to keep a secret, it can make you feel sad and scared, uncomfortable or yucky. Sometimes they might even make you feel special, because you might like the person who is asking you to keep a secret.
- But, it's wrong for an adult or another child to ask you to keep a secret about your safety—especially unsafe touches—because that's a way for people to get hurt.
- If someone asks you to keep a secret about something unsafe, you have to tell a safe adult, even if the person told you not to.
- Sometimes people will try to scare you into making a promise about keeping secrets. The person might say that you'll get into trouble if you tell, or they might threaten you and say that they'll hurt your animal, or a friend or family member. If this happens, it's really important that you talk to your safe adult.
- Sometimes this is scary, but telling a safe adult is the right thing to do.
- It's OK to talk about the secret with one of your safe adults, even if you promised not to tell. You can always talk to your safe adults!
- If you've already kept a secret with someone, it is important to go to your safe adult and talk to them.

Note: The worksheet template for this activity is included in the downloaded set of materials at the end of this packet.

SUPPLIES

Dry erase board or Chalk board
Dry erase marker or Chalk
Eraser capabilities
Writing utensils
Pre-printed worksheets

Talk to children about their safe adults:

- Let's talk about the safe adults in your life. What are safe adults?
 - Safe people won't hurt you without a good reason and won't intentionally confuse you. They listen to and consistently respect boundaries, and follow the rules. [Explain that a child may have many safe friends and adults. Give children examples of adult behavior that could hurt them, but may be necessary for the child's safety, i.e. medical exams, vaccinations, throat swabs, removing splinters, stopping a child from running into the road, etc.]
- Who are some of your safe adults?
 - (Examples include: teachers, someone at church, principal, aunt, uncle, mom or dad, police officer, firefighter, etc.)

Note: In this activity, it's important for the Lesson Leader to acknowledge that there are adults and children who do have good intentions, who attempt to make children keep secrets without realizing that they might be dangerous. All types of secrets are dangerous because they might condition children to keep secrets from unsafe people. With this in mind, be sure not to vilify anyone who does ask to keep a secret, and instead stress the importance of always taking that information to a safe adult. Remember that there will be children who have already promised others to keep secrets, and they should not be made to feel guilty or ashamed about this.

Ask children to brainstorm about what the differences are between Secrets and Surprises, to then be discussed with everyone.

The Lesson Leader will create two columns visible to everyone in the room, and will invite children to give examples. A helpful table is listed below which shows the opposites between the secret and the surprise. If children do not come

up with examples on their own, feel free to help guide them. Children may take notes if they'd like, but are not required.

Unsafe Secrets:	Safe Surprises:
Are hidden	Are revealed
Have potential to be kept forever	Are temporary
Are never told	Are meant to be shared with others (eventually, at the right time)
Exclude others	Are inclusive
Have potential to harm, or hurt someone's feelings	Have potential to bring joy
Might sound like they are fun	Are fun
May cause feelings of fear (scary)	Often cause feelings of confidence
May cause feelings of sadness	Often cause feelings of happiness, excitement
Might involve threats to loved ones, including animals	Never involve threats

The Lesson Leader will pass out the worksheets, and ask children to complete the questions. Answers will be discussed together as a group once the children finish the worksheets.

WORKSHEET ANSWER KEY:

Is it an unsafe secret or safe surprise? And, why?

1. If someone tells you about a gift they purchased for a friend's birthday party and asks you not to tell... Is it an unsafe secret or safe surprise?
 - o Answer: Safe surprise—one that you can still share with your safe adults at any time.
2. If someone tells you about a prank that is going to hurt someone's feelings, but told you not to tell anyone... Is it an unsafe secret or a safe surprise?
 - o Answer: Unsafe secret—one that you have to tell a safe adult about right away because someone could get hurt.
3. When someone touches your private parts, and tells you not to tell... Is it an unsafe secret or a safe surprise?
 - o Answer: Unsafe secret—one that you have to tell a safe adult about right away because it violates the safety rules.
4. When someone tells you something that makes you feel afraid and uncomfortable... Is it an unsafe secret or a safe surprise?
 - o Answer: Unsafe secret—one that you have to tell a safe adult about right away because it violates the safety rules.
5. If someone tells you about a special dinner or treat to celebrate a friend's game win, and tells you not to tell... Is it an unsafe secret or a safe surprise?
 - o Answer: Safe surprise—one that you can still share with your safe adults at any time.

Concluding statements to tell the children: If you're in a situation where you don't feel right, or you feel scared or uncomfortable, or nervous, anxious, humiliated or embarrassed, listen to your intuition! If someone is asking you to keep a secret, it's ALWAYS OK to say "no" and it's very important to tell a safe adult.

ACTIVITY OPTION #4: Boundary Rules and Safety Badge

Background: The Lesson Leader should review the Key Vocabulary words as part of the preparation for this lesson.

It's important that we teach children that it's not OK to keep secrets—not even seemingly little ones like eating sweets when we're not supposed to or watching a movie we know we aren't supposed to see. The reason for this is because we are letting them know beyond a shadow of a doubt that it's not their responsibility to keep larger, graver secrets either—such as someone who is violating the safety rules with unsafe actions or unsafe touches.

The Lesson Leader should allow for enough time to include the discussion and the completion of the certificate during the class period.

Note: The worksheet template for this activity is included in the downloaded set of materials at the end of this packet.

SUPPLIES

Writing utensils
Pre-printed worksheets
Scissors

Activity: This activity addresses appropriate boundaries, secrets, surprises and safety plans via interactive discussion, and then gives children an opportunity to share what they've learned by completing a safety certificate badge in class that will be shared with parents at home.

Discussion: **Ask children the following questions, listen to their responses, gently correct if necessary, and explain the answers:**

- Have you ever thought about your safety boundaries? What are they?
 - Say "No!" if someone shares unsafe or inappropriate material/images
 - Try to leave the situation if possible
 - Tell a safe adult as soon as possible if you're scared, uncomfortable, or if someone tries to touch your private parts
- Why are safety boundaries important?
 - They're important because they keep us safe, and they let us know that we have a right to be safe. They also give us tools to communicate with a safe adult if we have a problem, if we're scared, or if we're uncomfortable.
- What are secrets?
 - Secrets are pieces of information or actions that people don't want us to share, or that we are scared of sharing.
- How do we know how to identify secrets?
 - They're kept hidden and are meant to never be told. They keep other people in the dark, and can make us feel scared or uncomfortable, or sad. They also sometimes involve situations where someone might get into trouble if the secret is shared.
- How do secrets relate to safety boundaries?
 - Boundary safety involves rules like when we tell a safe adult when we're uncomfortable or scared, and how we tell a safe adult right away if someone tries to touch or see our private parts. Secrets are an important part of our boundary safety plan, because they impact our safety. When it comes to your safety and the boundary rules, it's not OK to keep secrets.
- Can we keep little secrets?
 - If someone tells us that it's just a little secret and that it's OK to keep it, it's still not ok! We can keep surprises for a very short amount of time because we know we will eventually share the surprise, but must always tell secrets to our safe adults.
- What if our best friend asks us to?
 - Sometimes our best friends might ask us to keep secrets, but even in those situations it isn't OK to keep them.
- What if no one told us a secret, but we feel like we have a problem? Can we keep that a secret?
 - Problems can be big and small; they can be small, little things like puzzles or big things like emergencies—and often need to be solved. They can involve fears and emotions. Sometimes we put boundaries in place to prevent problems, or to be more prepared for them.
 - We must also talk to our safe adults when we feel like we have a big or little problem. Problems are never meant to be kept silent or kept secret, because that is unsafe. Problems should always be shared with people who can help us, because we shouldn't carry heavy burdens on our own. (Give age-appropriate examples of sharing the load).
- Are secrets and surprises the same thing?
 - No, sometimes they might look similar but they aren't the same. Surprises are happy and joyful. They're temporary, and meant to be shared with others, like when we have a surprise party, or when we buy a special present for someone's birthday, or if we've made a special desert for someone because they did a good job. These can always be shared with safe adults.
- What do we know about safe friends and safe adults?
 - Safe people won't hurt you without a good reason and won't intentionally confuse you. They listen to and consistently respect boundaries, and follow the rules. [\[Explain that a child may have many safe friends and adults. Give children examples of adult behavior that could hurt them, but may be necessary for the child's safety, i.e. medical exams, vaccinations, throat swabs, removing splinters, stopping a child from running into the road, etc.\]](#)
 - If you have a problem or encounter a situation that violates the safety rules—or even just makes you feel uncomfortable, it is right to tell a safe adult about it. No one should ever ask you to keep

unsafe touches a secret—even if they tickled or felt good. It's never OK for anyone to make you feel uncomfortable, or unsafe. You have a right to be safe!

Ask the following question, and take note of the children's answers: What are examples that we must always share with safe adults?

Supply them with additional examples that would automatically prompt them to speak to a safe adult.

- If someone tries to touch our private parts, or our friends' private parts.
- If someone gives you a present and tells you not to tell.
- If someone says, "it's our little secret" when they tell you something important.
- If someone gives you a special treat or game, and says that you should keep it just between the two of you.
- If someone says mean things about a friend, but tells you not to repeat to anyone else.
- If someone tells you how a friend was hurt, but asks you not to tell anyone else about it.

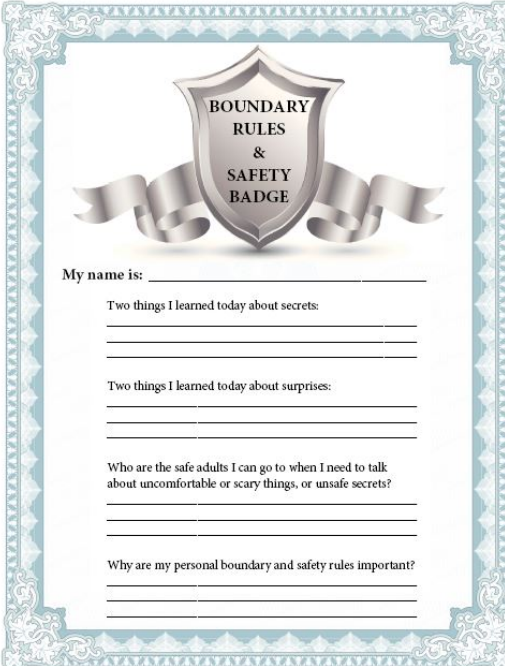
Say the following to children as you pass out the template sheets:

Now that we have a better idea of our boundary rules, and unsafe secrets and safe surprises, we're going to fill out this certificate that is our *Boundary Rules & Safety Badge*!

Children will write their names in the space provided. Then provide responses for the four sections, which are:

- Two things I learned today about secrets...
- Two things I learned today about surprises...
- Who are the safe adults I can go to when I need to talk about uncomfortable or scary things, or unsafe secrets?
- Why are my personal boundary and safety rules important?

Concluding remarks: We're going to take our *Boundary Rules & Safety Badges* home and show our parents about the important things we learned today. We will share our badge of honor because we did a good job learning about how to keep ourselves safer.



The image shows a decorative certificate template titled "BOUNDARY RULES & SAFETY BADGE". It features a shield emblem at the top. Below the title, there are four sections for writing: "My name is:", "Two things I learned today about secrets:", "Two things I learned today about surprises:", and "Who are the safe adults I can go to when I need to talk about uncomfortable or scary things, or unsafe secrets?". At the bottom, there is a section for "Why are my personal boundary and safety rules important?". The certificate is framed by a decorative border.

ACTIVITY OPTION #5: Maze of Confusion—Identifying Secrets and Safe Adults, and Carrying Problems to Them

Background: This activity presents scenarios involving problematic secrets children might encounter and asks them to work through how they would respond. Ultimately, children will learn that there are no secrets when it comes to personal safety, and that they must always communicate with a safe adult.

Activity: The purpose of this 2-part activity is to utilize a safety discussion to help children apply their safety knowledge to successfully complete the worksheet and be better prepared in the event that they are in a tough situation involving secrets.

Note: The worksheet template for this activity is included in the downloaded set of materials at the end of this packet.

SUPPLIES

Writing utensils
Pre-printed worksheets

After the discussion, children will be presented with worksheet scenarios involving unsafe secrets and asked how they should respond. Proper response—the safe response—always involves communicating with a safe adult. This activity gives children an opportunity to review the problem of unsafe secrets, identify a safe adult to carry them to, and bring the problem to the safe adult through a maze—which mimics how carrying unsafe secrets can feel for youth.

Some children may need additional assistance with identifying their safe adults.

Children will complete questions A and B in the class for each scenario and will need assistance at home for question C. A guardian at home will be involved in the activity after the lesson because of the contact information that needs to be supplied for the safe adults that are listed in the worksheet. Children should be given the worksheet to take home, complete the contact information (phone number, email, address) and post in a safe place for easy referencing in the future.

Discussion: **Part I: The Lesson Leader will discuss the following items before providing and explaining the worksheet:**

All of us have safe people in our lives who are there to protect us. They won't hurt us without a good reason, such as having to take us to the doctor to get a shot, get medicine or remove a splinter, etc.,—which aren't fun, but they do protect us and we need them to be healthy. Safe adults and friends won't try to confuse or scare us. They listen to our boundaries and the rules that our parents have given us, and they follow the rules. You might have lots of safe friends and safe adults.

Sometimes there are also people in our life who are unsafe. They do risky things, and sometimes scare us. They don't always listen to our boundaries, and sometimes they do things that we know are wrong, and make us feel uncomfortable. We know when someone is unsafe because they don't follow the rules or listen to our boundaries—like when we say “NO” or tell them that we don't like something. You're allowed to say “no” when it comes to your boundaries and the safety rules. That's what it means to place a boundary, and you have a right to be safe and have boundaries.

Unsafe people sometimes also ask us to keep a secret. They might make us promise not to tell, and we might be fearful that we are going to get into trouble if we do tell about the secret. They might even threaten to do something bad to us or someone else we know. Sometimes it makes us feel uncomfortable, and sad.

It's important to know that there can't be any secrets when it comes to your safety. It's wrong for an adult or another child to ask you to keep a secret about your safety—especially unsafe touches—because that's a way for people to get hurt.

It's also possible that our *safe* friends and *safe* adults might tell us to keep a secret. They might not realize that asking you to keep secrets is unsafe for everyone. It's also OK if someone has made you promise to keep a secret in the past, because maybe they didn't know the safety rules. However, it's really important, regardless of whether it's a safe or unsafe person, that we always tell another safe adult when someone makes us feel uncomfortable or makes us promise to keep a secret.

Part II: The Lesson Leader will pass out the worksheet and narrate instructions. Invite children to complete Part 1 of the worksheet. When children have completed Part 1, lead them in a discussion to explain the following:

- The worksheet's Part 1 has examples of what people might say, or do to us, to try to get us to keep a secret. Remember, the most important aspect to know is that you have a right to be safe, and that it's OK to tell a safe adult about what happened.

So, which one do we circle and why?

- *The correct answer is “tell a safe adult right away”, because that's the right thing to do.*

How come we wouldn't pick the option to “tell no one”?

- *Because that isn't safe.*

How come we wouldn't tell the option of just “tell a friend instead”?

- *Because friends might not know how to help us the way a safe adult would be able to help us.*

- **Let children know they'll partially complete Part 2 of the worksheet next—only with inserting the names** (they will complete the contact information at home).
- **After names are inserted in Part 2 of the worksheet, instruct them to complete Part 3 of the worksheet during class. Explain:**

Note: Some children may want to tell a friend. Children should be aware that if a friend tells them about a problem they're experiencing, they must always still communicate that information to a safe adult. Friends can help one another go to the safe adult, and can even talk to the safe adult for their friend. That's the right thing to do, and what real friends do for one another.

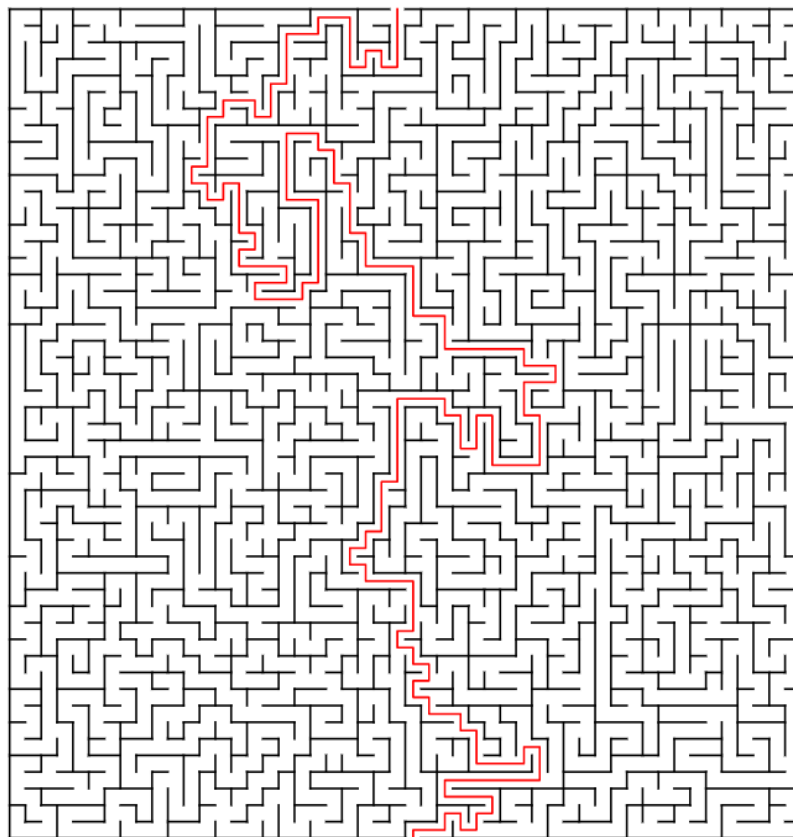
Note: Ensure that children understand at least 3 different adults will be listed in the worksheet's Part 2 for each of the “problems.” If the children cannot think of an adult to include for each scenario, they can leave it blank—but they should know of the various options they have besides their parents, including teachers, aunts, uncles, etc.

When people ask us to keep unsafe secrets, it's a problem. And problems should never be kept secret. So, the maze is what it feels like when you have a problem. It can feel all "tangled" up, confusing with lots of different possible directions—that can make you feel stuck when you hit a dead end. Sometimes it might even feel hopeless. But that's not true! There's always someone who can help. Our job in this part of the activity is to take the problem we read about in **the first part of the worksheet**, and bring it through the maze to our safe adult! Go ahead and complete the maze part now.

Concluding statements: Even if it feels like you have a really big problem, there's nothing that is so big that you can't get help. You always need to communicate scary problems or unsafe secrets to a safe adult.

MAZE ANSWER KEY:

1. If an adult or another youth tries to touch your private parts and then tries to make you keep it a secret, what do you do?
 - *Correct answer: Tell a safe adult right away.*
2. If an adult or another youth gives you a gift and makes you promise to keep it a secret, what do you do?
 - *Correct answer: Tell a safe adult right away.*
3. If an adult or another youth shows you something on the Internet and tries to make you keep it a secret, what do you do?
 - *Correct answer: Tell a safe adult right away.*



ACTIVITY OPTION #6: Boundary Rules and Safety—Word scramble

Background: The Lesson Leader should review the key vocabulary words as part of the preparation for this lesson.

It's important that we teach children that it's not OK to keep secrets—not even seemingly little ones like eating sweets when we're not supposed to or watching a movie we know we aren't supposed to see. The reason for this is because we are letting children know beyond a shadow of a doubt that it's not their responsibility to keep larger, graver secrets either—such as someone who is violating the safety rules with unsafe actions or unsafe touches.

The Lesson Leader should allow for enough time to include the discussion and the completion of the certificate during the class period.

Activity: This activity addresses appropriate boundaries, secrets, surprises and safety plans via interactive discussion, and then gives children an opportunity to share what they've learned by completing a safety certificate badge in class that will be shared with parents at home.

Note: The worksheet template for this activity is included in the downloaded set of materials at the end of this packet.

SUPPLIES

Writing utensils
Pre-printed worksheets

Note: Some socially immature children may be confused about the difference between reporting unsafe actions or safety / boundary rule violations vs. being a "tattle tale." This may be further exacerbated by caring adults and how they correct the behavior. Unsafe actions and violations of safety rules must always be reported; the Lesson Leader may need to provide additional clarification.

Discussion: Ask children the following questions, listen to their responses, gently correct if necessary, and explain the answers:

- Have you ever thought about your safety boundaries? What are they?
 - Say “No!” if someone shares unsafe or inappropriate material/images
 - Try to leave the situation if possible
 - Tell a safe adult as soon as possible if you’re scared, uncomfortable, or if someone tries to touch your private parts
- Why are safety boundaries important?
 - They’re important because they keep us safe, and they let us know that we have a right to be safe. They also give us tools to communicate with a safe adult if we have a problem, if we’re scared, or if we’re uncomfortable.
- What are secrets?
 - Secrets are pieces of information or actions that people don’t want us to share, or that we are scared of sharing.
- How do we know what secrets are?
 - They’re kept hidden and are meant to never be told. They keep other people in the dark, and can make us feel scared or uncomfortable, or sad. They also sometimes involve situations where someone will get into trouble if the secret is shared.
- How do secrets relate to safety boundaries?
 - Boundary safety involves rules like when we tell a safe adult when we’re uncomfortable or scared, and how we tell a safe adult right away if someone tries to touch or see our private parts. Secrets are an important part of our boundary safety plan, because they impact our safety. When it comes to your safety and the boundary rules, it’s not OK to keep secrets.
- Can we keep little secrets?
 - If someone tells us that it’s just a little secret and that it’s OK to keep it, it’s not ok! We can keep surprises for a very short amount of time because we know we will eventually share the surprise, but must always tell secrets to our safe adults.
- What if our best friend asks us to?
 - Sometimes our best friends might ask us to keep secrets, but even in those situations it isn’t OK to keep them.
- What if no one told us a secret, but we feel like we have a problem. Can we keep that a secret?
 - We must also talk to our safe adults when we feel like we have a big or little problem. Problems are never meant to be kept silent or kept secret, because that is unsafe. Problems should always be shared with people who can help us, because we shouldn’t carry heavy burdens on our own. (Give age-appropriate examples of sharing the load).
- Are secrets and surprises the same thing?
 - No, sometimes they might look similar, but they aren’t the same. Surprises are happy and joyful. They’re temporary, and meant to be shared with others, like when we have a surprise party, or when we buy a special present for someone’s birthday, or if we’ve made a special dessert for someone because they did a good job. These can always be shared with safe adults.
- What do we know about safe friends and safe adults?
 - Safe people won’t hurt you without a good reason and won’t intentionally confuse you. They listen to and consistently respect boundaries, and follow the rules. [Explain that a child may have many safe friends and adults. Give children examples of adult behavior that could hurt them, but may be necessary for the child’s safety, i.e. medical exams, vaccinations, throat swabs, removing splinters, stopping a child from running into the road, etc.]
 - If you have a problem or encounter a situation that violates the safety rules—or even just makes you feel uncomfortable, it is right to tell a safe adult about it. No one should ever ask you to keep unsafe touches a secret—even if they tickled or felt good. It’s never OK for anyone to make you feel uncomfortable, or unsafe. You have a right to be safe!

WORKSHEET ANSWER KEY:

Word Scramble:	Word Key:
ftesy a	safety
sleur	rules
scetre	secret
prerssui	surprise
uafens	unsafe
bseairdnou	boundaries
ttaerh	threat
faalsed ut	safe adult
meipsor	promise
osy na	say no
hesra	share

ACTIVITY OPTION #7: Secrets online

Background: This activity helps children to understand that the same safety rules that we follow in-person, are to be observed online as well.

The Lesson Leader should review the Key Vocabulary words as part of the preparation for this lesson. The Lesson Leader should allow for enough time to include the discussion and the completion of the worksheet during the class period.

Note: The worksheet template for this activity is included in the downloaded set of materials at the end of this packet.

Activity: This fill-in-the-blank activity addresses appropriate online activities, boundaries, secrets, surprises and safety plans via interactive discussion, and then gives children an opportunity to share what they've learned by completing a safety worksheet.

Directions: Begin by discussing the elements in Part I. Then, hand out the fill-in-the-blank worksheet and instruct the children to insert the correct word(s) in each sentence.

Discussion: **Part I: The Lesson Leader will discuss the following items before providing and explaining the worksheet:**

There are lots of good qualities about the Internet! What are some of the things that you do on the Internet (or ways you utilize the Internet)?

- Play games
- Social media
- Watch videos
- Video chat with family and friends
- Homework, projects & research
- Post videos and images
- Learning something new
- Connecting with friends

Even though we know there are many positive elements of the Internet, there are also areas that can be confusing, and even dangerous.

Sometimes there are images, stories, mean comments, threats and videos online that make us feel uncomfortable. Sometimes even inside of safe videos that we like, and are allowed to watch, there might be a scary image that will pop up. In different polls—even in other countries—researchers have found that there are many kids who have had something happen online that upset them. Have you ever encountered a situation on the Internet that has made you feel scared or uncomfortable?

Sometimes we feel like we have to keep what we see on the Internet a secret. Or, someone we talk to online might threaten us and tell us that if we tell, we will get in trouble. But these are the times that we need to make sure we bring our safe adult in! Telling a safe adult doesn't mean that we won't be allowed to use the Internet anymore. Do you know how to "block" someone online, or "report" them if they do unsafe things?

Part 2: The Lesson Leader will pass out the worksheet to the youth. Give them time to complete it, and then go over the correct answers with them at the end.

Concluding statement: Remember that if you ever need help reporting anything scary or upsetting, you can always go to a safe adult and talk to them.

Note: For added elements of difficulty in Part 2, consider having the activity be a race to see who can finish first with inserting all of the correct words. You can also invite the youth to cover up the word bank to try and solve the puzzle without it.

WORKSHEET ANSWER KEY:**Situations we might encounter online:**

1. It's important that we don't give out our **personal information** online, like our name, address, date of birth, school names, parent names or phone numbers.
2. When we're home, we don't open our front doors to people we don't know. We have to be just as careful on the Internet if someone sends us an invitation to **chat** or talk online, because we don't know who that person really is—even if we think we do.
3. The Internet creates an **anonymous** environment, where anyone can pretend to be anyone else.
4. Never meet someone face-to-face if you only know them through the **Internet**, especially if your parents don't know.
5. It's important to be **kind** to people online, and communicate with **safe adults** if we find people being mean to us, or to others. Sometimes this means that we might need our safe adults to help us **report** the information.
6. It's not OK to talk or message with someone **secretly** online.
7. If someone online does something mean to you, like says bad things, makes **threats**, sends you inappropriate images or **emails**, tell a safe adult right away.
8. Always tell a safe adult if something makes you feel **uncomfortable** while you're using the Internet.
9. We must always guard our **passwords**, and never give them out to others; we also shouldn't use other peoples'.
10. When online, never post or email **pictures** of yourself that show where you live or go to school.
11. Remember that you're the one in charge when you're using the Internet. If you begin to feel uncomfortable for any reason, anytime, leave and find a **safe** adult.
12. Also, if you ever encounter images of someone's **private parts**, you must always tell a safe adult immediately—and never keep it a **secret**, even if someone makes you **promise** not to tell!
13. We know that people are **unsafe** online if they violate our safety rules, or if they don't care about our **boundaries**.

End the lesson with a prayer

The Lesson Leader may invite the children to create their own prayer, he/she may lead a prayer, or may use the suggested prayer below.

Dear God,

Even though we are each special and different, there are ways that we are alike because you made each of us in your image and therefore worthy of respect. I want to live as you have commanded me to live, with peace even in times of confusion or uncertainty. Please help me to remember to respect myself, just as I want others to respect me. Help me to keep strong boundaries, and to be kind and respectful toward others. Please also give me the courage and confidence to speak up for myself, and for my friends if I see them being harmed or threatened.

Amen

Lesson 4 for Grades 3—5

Secrets, Surprises and Promises

ACTIVITY OPTION #3: Opposites—Surprises vs. Secrets

Instructions: Read each question and circle / highlight the correct response from the columns on the right, then answer “why”. You’ll be evaluating why each statement is safe or unsafe, and discussing the answers at the end with your whole group.

Is it an unsafe secret or safe surprise? And, why?

1. If someone tells you about a gift they purchased for a friend's birthday party and asks you not to tell...

**Unsafe
Secret**

**Safe
Surprise**

1b. Why?

2. If someone tells you about a prank that is going to hurt someone's feelings, but told you not to tell anyone...

**Unsafe
Secret**

**Safe
Surprise**

2b. Why?

3. When someone touches your private parts, and tells you not to tell...

**Unsafe
Secret**

**Safe
Surprise**

3b. Why?

4. When someone tells you something that makes you feel afraid and uncomfortable...

**Unsafe
Secret**

**Safe
Surprise**

4b. Why?

5. If someone tells you about a special dinner or treat to celebrate a friend's game win, and tells you not to tell... Is it an unsafe secret or a safe surprise?

**Unsafe
Secret**


**Safe
Surprise**

5b. Why?

ACTIVITY OPTION #4: Boundary Rules and Safety Badge

Instructions: Fill out the certificate, and cut the page across the dotted lines if necessary.





**BOUNDARY
RULES
&
SAFETY
BADGE**

My name is: _____

Two things I learned today about secrets:

Two things I learned today about surprises:

Who are the safe adults I can go to when I need to talk about uncomfortable or scary things, or unsafe secrets?

Why are my personal boundary and safety rules important?



Lesson 4 for Grades 3—5

Secrets, Surprises and Promises

ACTIVITY OPTION #5: Maze of Confusion—Identifying Secrets and Safe Adults, and Carrying Problems to Them

Instructions: This activity has 3 parts. In Part 1, there are three different problem scenarios that could be scary or uncomfortable. Answer each one, and participate in a discussion with the Lesson Leader. After, complete Part 2, which gives you an opportunity to identify a safe person to communicate with for any potential safety or boundary problems—you'll need to have at least three different adults listed. If you don't know the phone # or email addresses, simply complete that part at home with a guardian. In Part 3, you'll take your "problem" through the maze to finally arrive at the finish line—which is similar to what it's like when you have a problem and need to make the decision to get the information to a safe adult.

Part 1: Identify the next step when experiencing a problem about secrets

1. **If an adult or another youth tries to touch your private parts and then tries to make you keep it a secret, what do you do? (circle one)**
 - i. *Tell no one* ii. *Tell a friend instead* iii. *Tell a safe adult right away*
2. **If an adult or another youth gives you a gift and makes you promise to keep it a secret, what do you do? (circle one)**
 - i. *Tell no one* ii. *Tell a friend instead* iii. *Tell a safe adult right away*
3. **If an adult or another youth shows you something on the Internet and tries to make you keep it a secret, what do you do? (circle one)**
 - i. *Tell no one* ii. *Tell a friend instead* iii. *Tell a safe adult right away*

Part 2: Identify a potential safe adult for safety or boundary problems

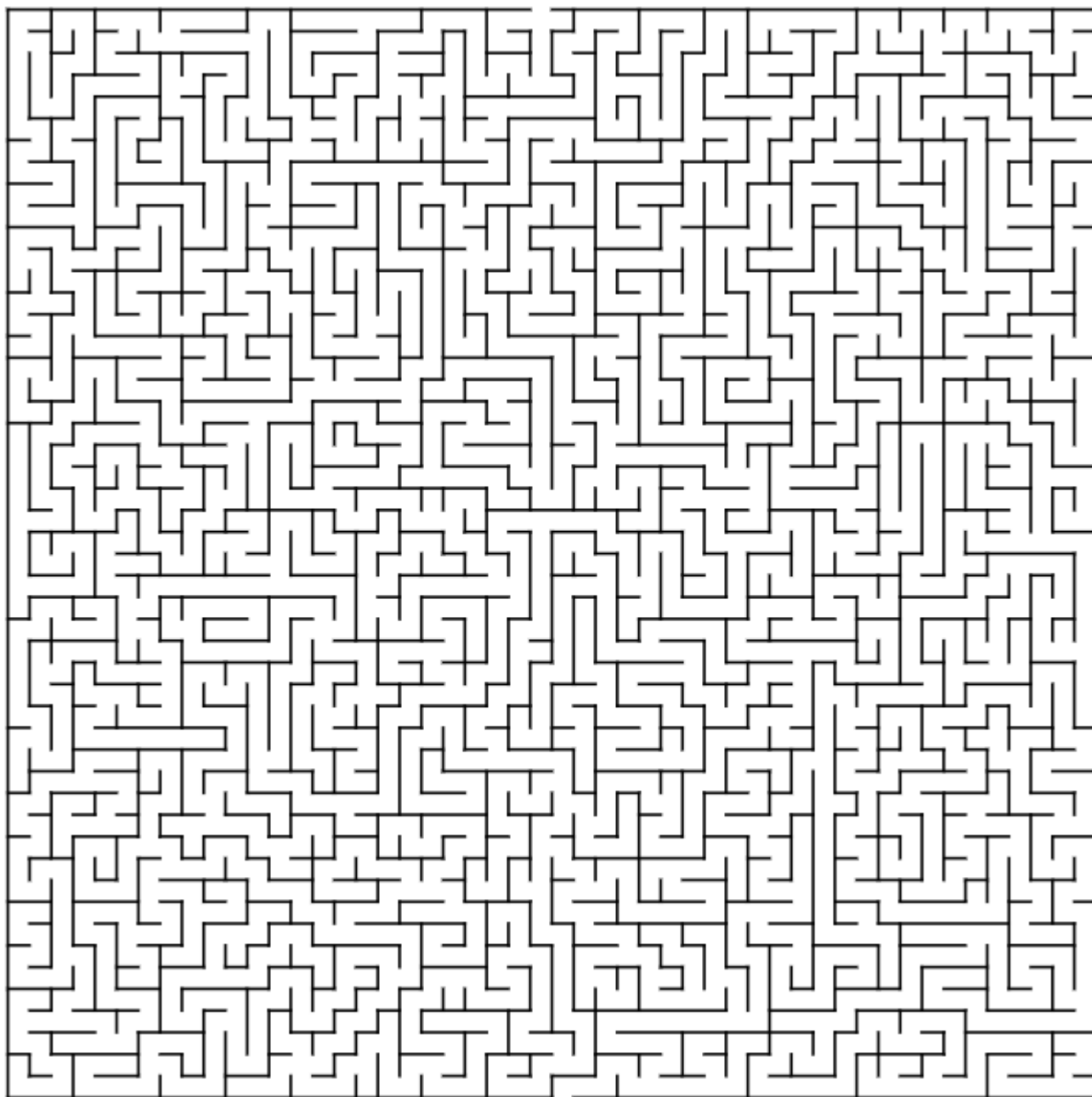
1. This safe adult is someone I could talk to if I'm scared or uncomfortable.
 Name: _____ Phone # and email address: _____
2. This safe adult is someone I could talk to if I have a secret that I don't know how to handle.
 Name: _____ Phone # and email address: _____
3. This safe adult is someone I could talk to if I did something I knew wasn't right, and I needed help.
 Name: _____ Phone # and email address: _____
4. This safe adult is someone I could go to if someone touched my private parts or showed me inappropriate pictures or videos.
 Name: _____ Phone # and email address: _____

ACTIVITY OPTION #5: Identifying Secrets and Safe Adults, & Carrying Problems to Them (cont.)

Part 3: Take the “problem” through the maze to the safe adult



START



FINISH

Lesson 4 for Grades 3—5

Secrets, Surprises and Promises

ACTIVITY OPTION #6: Boundary Rules and Safety—Word Scramble

Instructions: Look at the jumbled words and try to unscramble as many of the word scrambles that you can. The answers are based on the key words discussed in your lesson. Hint: two of the scrambles have two words.

ftesy

sleur

scetre

prerssui

uafens

bseairdnou

ttærh

faalsed ut

meipsor

osy na

hesra

Lesson 4 for Grades 3, 4 & 5

Secrets, Surprises and Promises

ACTIVITY OPTION #7: Secrets online

Instructions: Read each statement and insert the appropriate word from the Word Bank below. For an added element of difficulty, cover up the word bank and try to fill in the blanks.

Situations we might encounter online:

1. It's important that we don't give out our _____ online, like our name, address, date of birth, school names, parent names or phone numbers.
2. When we're home, we don't open our front doors to people we don't know. We have to be just as careful on the Internet if someone sends us an invitation to _____ or talk online, because we don't know who that person really is—even if we think we do.
3. The Internet creates an _____ environment, where anyone can pretend to be anyone else.
4. Never meet someone face-to-face if you only know them through the _____, especially if your parents don't know.
5. It's important to be _____ to people online, and communicate with _____ if we find people being mean to us, or to others. Sometimes this means that we might need our safe adults to help us _____ the information.
6. It's not OK to talk or message with someone _____ online.
7. If someone online does something mean to you, like says bad things, makes _____, sends you inappropriate images or _____, tell a safe adult right away.
8. Always tell a safe adult if something makes you feel _____ while you're using the Internet.
9. We must always guard our _____, and never give them out to others; we also shouldn't use other peoples'.
10. When online, never post or email _____ of yourself that show where you live or go to school.
11. Remember that you're the one in charge when you're using the Internet. If you begin to feel uncomfortable for any reason, anytime, leave and find a _____ adult.
12. Also, if you ever encounter images of someone's _____, you must always tell a safe adult immediately—and never keep it a _____ even if someone makes you _____ not to tell!
13. We know people are _____ online if they violate our safety rules, or if they don't care about our _____.

WORD BANK

boundaries
unsafe
kind
emails
pictures

anonymous
threats
internet
passwords
private parts

personal information
secretly
secret
safe adults
safe

uncomfortable
promise
chat
report