

Goals of the session:

- To increase community understanding about childhood sexual abuse
- To foster cooperation to create a safe environment for children
- To educate participants about what sexual abuse is and to alert them to suspicious behaviors

Planning the session:

- Invite parish members to participate: children **Lesson Plan: Intergenerational Session** and parents/guardians, ministerial staff, parish leadership, interested adults.
- Communicate the goals of the session as part of the invitation.
- Gather all materials necessary for the session.
- Establish the role of the leader/facilitator.
- Copy all necessary materials.
- Prepare a prayer environment.

Session outline**1. Welcome** the participants**2. Prayer** (5 minutes)**3. Introduction** (the Diocesan commitment to Creating a Safe Environment) (5 minutes)**4. Opening activity** (15 minutes)

- Ask each person to form a group of three other people of different ages and together to develop a list of ways to help create a safe environment to protect children from sexual abuse.
- Join two groups together to share their lists
- From the lists, choose the top four ideas. Post on newsprint.
- Ask person to serve as a spokesperson to share ideas in large group.

5. Process: (10 minutes)

What did we learn from this activity?

- Many good ideas
- It takes everyone to create safe environments
- Everyone's knowledge and input can help create safer environments
- We can rely on each other when we don't know all the answers

What do those insights mean for our own community? What role can you play?

How does it make you feel to talk about the problem of sexual abuse? Why do you feel that way?

6. Presentation: What makes a safe environment: (15 minutes)

- What we believe about people created in the image and likeness of God.
- Define sexual abuse (Activity by an adult or older child for the sexual gratification of the adult/older child)
- What behaviors should make a child or an adult suspicious? (Characteristics of sexual abusers)

7. Discussion (Use groups of 6-8) (20 minutes)

- What can a child do to protect himself/herself? Create lists and so all can see the ideas.
- How can parents help protect children?
- How can the rest of the community help protect children?

8. Activity (20 minutes)

As a group, create a poster, an advertising slogan, a bookmark, etc. to help children remember how to stay safe.

9. Closing: Thank people for coming and ask them to remember to pray for each other and for the whole community.

(Add in and use points from the age level lesson plans. These are available at www.officeoflifelongfaithformation.org.)

N.B. The original sexual abuse awareness lesson plans were developed by the staff of the Diocese of Albany. We thank them for sharing their curriculum with us.