

LESSON 4 Safety Awareness



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What the Church Says About

The Family's Mission

To the family is entrusted the task of striving, first and foremost, *to unleash the forces of good*, the source of which is found in Christ the Redeemer of man.

Pope John Paul II,
Gratissimam Sane, 23 (1994)

Guided Towards Independence



The need for safety awareness grows as your eighth-grader spends more time away from you and engages in social and academic activities. While you may feel apprehensive about your child's growing

independence, these experiences are necessary for his or her development. Your guidance is needed now more than ever to help your child recognize potential safety concerns and learn responsible ways to behave.

Adolescents are often resistant to being given lists of rules or lectures on safety. You can avoid this roadblock by instead making note of situations you and your child observe when you are out together.

Bringing attention to possible distractions in your child's surroundings is a useful way to engage in discussions about safe and unsafe behaviors.

While running errands, or traveling to and from school, point out to your child people who are exhibiting awareness of their surroundings. Mention specific behaviors, noting that your child could use similar strategies when he or she is walking home from practice or hanging out with friends. Similarly, you may find examples of behaviors that seem unsafe or unaware and explain why your child would want to avoid those.

It's natural to feel some anxiety about giving your child more independence, especially when that involves increased time and distance away from you. Take comfort in knowing that God is with your child and has given him or her reason to make sense of the world. This inner strength along with your guidance and support will help your child successfully navigate this time of life.



3minute
RETREAT

I do not ask that you take them out of the world but that you keep them from the evil one.

John 17:15

Reflection

Parenting a child can sometimes feel like being pulled in opposite directions at the same time. While you know that you are meant to equip your child with what is necessary for an independent life, there remains a deep longing to hold on tightly and shield your precious one from the world. As hard as letting go can be, there is comfort in knowing your child never walks alone for God's love surrounds him or her always.

Questions

What can I do to strengthen my trust in God, especially when I need to let go of control? In what ways do I model for my child that I place my trust in God?



Prayer

Speak to Jesus, using this prayer or one of your own.

Jesus, help me to be confident of your grace in my life to help me make responsible decisions for myself and others.

Lead Your Child to Grow with God: Spiritually, Socially, and Physically

Spiritual Designate a sacred space in your home free from noise or other distractions for family members to recharge. Encourage family members to spend time in this place each day praying, reading, relaxing, or just daydreaming. This place may also serve as a spot for quiet and serious conversation in which you and your child can talk about concerns or problems from daily life.

Social Encourage your child to invite friends over to your home. Collect board games, puzzles, and old movies for entertainment. Make your house a safe spot to hang out and have fun.



Physical Accompany your child on practice walks through routes he or she may need to travel alone. Point out any safety concerns and develop strategies to deal with unsafe situations. Demonstrate how to move with confidence by keeping your head up, shoulders back, and stride strong.

Safe and Sacred at Home



The Joy of Discipleship (Loyola Press)
by Pope Francis

Let us remember the three key phrases for living in peace and joy in the family: "May I?", "Thank you," and "Sorry." In our family, when we are not intrusive and ask, "May I?"; in our family, when we are not selfish and learn to say, "Thank you"; and when in a family one realizes he has done something wrong and knows how to say, "I'm sorry"—in such a family there are peace and joy.

Big Ideas

In Lesson 4, your child will:

- identify unsafe behaviors and discuss ways to stay safe in various situations.
- explain why it is important to have situational awareness.
- demonstrate an understanding that God gives us the gift of reason to help us make safe and responsible choices.
- define *situational awareness* and *vigilant*.

Words to Know

situational awareness ·

The ability to observe, process, and comprehend information or events in order to react to a perceived threat

vigilant · *Being present and aware of one's actions and surroundings and using that awareness to keep oneself safe*

Bringing the Lesson Home

Determine ahead of time when and where you and your child will engage with the lesson content. Read or complete Side A of the worksheet with your child.

The worksheet is titled "LESSON 4 Safety Awareness" and includes a "Safe or Unsafe" section. It features a scenario about Mariah's walk home and a section for parents to write their own scenarios.

Safe or Unsafe

As we grow older and gain more freedom, we need to learn new ways of protecting our personal safety, like being in tune with our surroundings. This is called situational awareness. We practice situational awareness when we use our senses to notice where we are, what we are doing, and what is going on around us.

Read Mariah's Walk Home. Underline any behaviors that could put Mariah in an unsafe situation. Then, rewrite the scenario so that Mariah's actions are safe.

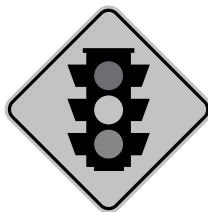
Mariah's Walk Home

1 Mariah is walking home from school. 2 She is slouching and walks with her head down. 3 She has earbuds in both ears. 4 She is listening to music at a loud volume. 5 She stops to search for something in her backpack. 6 Several people pass by, but Mariah does not look up. 7 Occasionally, Mariah stops to check her phone and send a text. 8 When she reaches an intersection, she does not look up to cross the street.

Mariah's Safe Walk Home

GRADE 8 / LESSON 4 Safety Awareness Worksheet 2 / Side A

STEP 1 ENGAGE & EXPLORE



As a parent, you want to keep your child safe and protected. You may find yourself wondering if you have done enough to prepare him or her for the many situations that may arise as he or she gains more independence. Keep in mind that you will never be able to anticipate every potential problem your child will encounter, but you can remain a constant source of support and encouragement for him or her.

SAY: As you get older, there are more opportunities for you to do things on your own. I am excited to watch you grow and become more independent. Because I love you so much, I want to protect you and keep you safe, even when we are apart. Practice and use the safety strategies you are learning, as they could save your life. Remember that being aware of your surroundings and staying alert in public places is the best way to protect yourself.

Use Side A of the worksheet as a springboard for discussion. Talk about ways your child could use situational awareness in the course of his or her day.



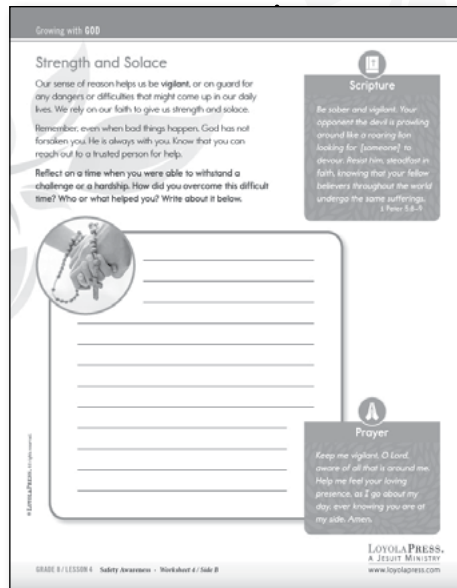
Bringing the Lesson Home *(continued)*

STEP 2 REFLECT & RESPOND

Read or complete Side B of the worksheet with your child.

SAY: There are different ways of being strong. Think about all the ways you move your body to become physically strong. When we practice our faith, we become spiritually strong. Spiritual strength helps us develop our conscience so we can make good choices. Share with your child a time when you faced a challenge and how you overcame it. Listen as your child shares his or her own experience from Side B of the worksheet. Validate his or her responses.

SAY: Let's pray together. Pray the prayer from the Pray Together feature or one of your own. Begin and end the prayer with the Sign of the Cross.



Pray Together

Dear Lord Jesus, be with us this day, keeping us aware of our surroundings so that we might grow in strength and remain safe.

LOYOLAPRESS.

Growing with GOD™
Safe and Sacred

Scan this code and guide your child through a simple review of the lesson.

