

BOUNDARIES with CHILDREN/YOUTH

When interacting with children/youth, adults must:

- Observe boundaries regarding safety issues
- Not treat children/youth as peers
- Never participate in the use of inappropriate names, belittling comments, or sexual innuendo
- Use appropriate language
- Respect the privacy of children/youth
- Never engage in illegal activities – no sharing cigarettes, alcohol or pornography
- Not tolerate sexually explicit remarks
- Avoid identifying a child/youth as “favorite”
- Avoid giving gifts to “special” children/youth
- Avoid situations where adult is alone with child/youth in a closed space
- Have appropriate supervision at all times
- Not take a child/youth in car alone
- Be visible when speaking one-on-one with a child/youth
- Give parents/guardians access to all forms of communication used with their children/youth
- Not send inappropriate emails, text messages, instant messages, etc.
Electronic communications with children/youth should only be parish/school related and should always be done with the knowledge of the child/youth’s parent/guardian. Conversations should be brief and “business” related.
- Communicate with children/youth on social networking sites only for “business” matters. Information displayed or shared with children/youth must be consistent with the values and teachings of the Church.
- Avoid taking and/or posting photos of children/youth
- Not be afraid to use appropriate, affirming affection including verbal praise, handshakes or “high fives”, shoulder to shoulder hugs (side hugs)
- Not participate in wrestling or tickling