

## **Standards and Benchmarks Safe Environment Education**

Early Childhood: Ages 3-5

Strand 1: Cognitive Development

Standard 1: The child understands concepts that develop at an age appropriate level.

The child understands...

- Benchmark a. the difference between “good” and “bad” touch.
- Benchmark b. the difference between safe relationships and harmful relationships and develops a sense that individuals are loved by important people in their lives.
- Benchmark c. basic elements of emotional grooming.
- Benchmark d. that there are good and bad choices.
- Benchmark e. that it is alright to say “No.”
- Benchmark f. how to say, “I’m sorry.”
- Benchmark g. how to experience forgiveness.
- Benchmark h. that parts of their bodies are private and should be respected.
- Benchmark i. the importance of letting trusted adults know about uncomfortable situations or relationships with others until believed.
- Benchmark j. in cases of sexual abuse, the child is never at fault.

Early Childhood: Ages 3-5

Strand 2: Spiritual Development

Standard 1: The child grows in the spiritual dimension.

The child develops...

- Benchmark a. an appreciation of God's goodness and personal love for them.
- Benchmark b. the need to respect all people and all forms of life.
- Benchmark c. a sense of self worth.
- Benchmark d. a spirit of prayer and sense of God's presence.
- Benchmark e. a sense that God loves all individuals and gives us families composed of members who help each other.
- Benchmark f. proper respect for the body and develops an appreciation of the human body as part of God's creation.
- Benchmark g. an understanding that God calls us to forgive those who hurt us.

Early Childhood: Ages 3-5

Strand 3: Behavioral Development

Standard 1: The child develops age appropriate behaviors.

The child...

- Benchmark a. identifies proper terminology for male and female body parts.
- Benchmark b. demonstrates an understanding that parts of their bodies should be respected.
- Benchmark c. develops an understanding that feelings can be managed.
- Benchmark d. demonstrates how friends treat each other with respect.
- Benchmark e. demonstrates ways to report to trusted adults uncomfortable situations or relationships with others until believed.



Middle Childhood: Ages 6-8

Strand 2: Spiritual Development

Standard 1: The child grows in the spiritual dimension.

The child develops...

- Benchmark a. morally through stories drawn from their experiences, the Gospels, and the lives of the saints.
- Benchmark b. an understanding of how personal choices affect their relationships with God.
- Benchmark c. an appreciation of God's constant, unconditional love.
- Benchmark d. a respect for one's body, keeping it healthy and safe because it is a gift from God.
- Benchmark e. an understanding that every person's life is important.
- Benchmark f. an appreciation of differences in others.
- Benchmark g. proper respect for the body as part of God's creation.
- Benchmark h. an understanding that God calls us to forgive those who hurt us.

Middle Childhood: Ages 6-8

Strand 3: Behavioral Development

Standard 1: The child develops appropriate behaviors.

The child...

- Benchmark a. demonstrates the ability to regulate their own attitudes and actions.
- Benchmark b. demonstrates an understanding that their personal choices have consequences.
- Benchmark c. recognizes signs of sexual, emotional, and physical abuse.
- Benchmark d. demonstrates ways to express feelings appropriately.
- Benchmark e. demonstrates ways to report to trusted adults uncomfortable situations or relationships with others until believed.



Later Childhood: Ages 9-11

Strand 2: Spiritual Development

Standard 1: The child grows in the spiritual dimension.

The child develops...

- Benchmark a. an understanding of how personal choices affect relationships with God and others.
- Benchmark b. an understanding that sexuality is a treasured gift for which they are responsible and is part of God's plan for new life.
- Benchmark c. an understanding that life at any stage is sacred and should be cared for.
- Benchmark d. an appreciation that good health habits show respect for the gift of life.
- Benchmark e. an understanding that feelings are gifts from God and are used to communicate with one another.
- Benchmark f. an understanding that human life begins and is nurtured in a family.
- Benchmark g. an understanding that God calls us to forgive those who hurt us.





## Early Adolescence: Ages 11-14

### Strand 1: Cognitive Development

Standard1: The youth understands concepts that develop at an age appropriate level.

The youth understands...

Benchmark a. the importance of protecting the human body, both physically and sexually, through maintaining healthy boundaries.

Benchmark b. the difference between safe relationships and harmful relationships.

Benchmark c. basic elements of emotional grooming and develops skills that will help to examine motives.

Benchmark d. that media images can give false ideas and distorted views of relationships.

Benchmark e. the need to have accurate information regarding human sexuality.

Benchmark f. that feelings about sexuality are normal and essential for appropriate development.

Benchmark g. that practicing chastity leads to an appropriate expression of sexual feelings.

Benchmark h. that good health choices demonstrate respect for God's gift of life.

Benchmark i. that our bodies, mind, and feelings change.

Benchmark j. the importance of letting trusted adults know about uncomfortable situations or relationships with others until believed.

Benchmark k. in cases of sexual abuse, the youth is never at fault.

Diocese of St. Petersburg  
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Formation and Youth Ministry

Safe Environment Education

Early Adolescence: Ages 11-14

Strand 2: Spiritual Development

Standard 1: The youth grows in the spiritual dimension.

The youth develops...

- Benchmark a. responsible sexual attitudes and beliefs that follow the Church's teachings.
- Benchmark b. an appreciation of the spiritual and moral dimensions of human sexuality.
- Benchmark c. an awareness that human sexuality is a gift from God.
- Benchmark d. an attitude of respect that acknowledges the worth of every human being.
- Benchmark e. an understanding that our bodies are sacred and temples of the Holy Spirit.
- Benchmark f. an understanding that God calls us to forgive those who hurt us.
- Benchmark g. an appreciation and practice of the virtue of chastity.

Early Adolescence: Ages 11-14

Strand 3: Behavioral Development

Standard 1: The youth develops appropriate behaviors.

The youth...

- Benchmark a. demonstrates proper respect for the body and practice of maintaining healthy boundaries.
- Benchmark b. discusses questions and issues regarding sexuality in an open and trusting atmosphere with sensitivity and respect.
- Benchmark c. recognizes the signs of misuse or abuse of the body by self or others.
- Benchmark d. develops the skills to maintain healthy relationships.
- Benchmark e. describes strategies to get out of unhealthy, abusive, or potentially abusive situations.
- Benchmark f. demonstrates ways to report to trusted adults about uncomfortable situations until believed.

## Later Adolescence: Ages 14-18

### Strand 1: Cognitive Development

Standard1: The youth understands concepts that develop at an age appropriate level.

The youth understands...

- Benchmark a. the importance of protecting the human body, both physically and sexually, through maintaining healthy boundaries.
- Benchmark b. the difference between healthy relationships and abusive relationships.
- Benchmark c. basic elements of emotional grooming and develops skills that help to examine motives.
- Benchmark d. the importance of recognizing warning signs of abuse in a relationship.
- Benchmark e. that media images can give false ideas and distorted views of relationships.
- Benchmark f. that a constant media supply of sexual images can lead to desensitization.
- Benchmark g. the importance of acquiring information from knowledgeable individuals regarding human sexuality.
- Benchmark h. that feelings about sexuality are normal and essential for appropriate development.
- Benchmark i. that practicing chastity leads to an appropriate expression of sexual feelings.
- Benchmark j. the importance of letting trusted adults know about uncomfortable situations or relationships with others until believed.
- Benchmark k. in cases of sexual abuse, the youth is never at fault.

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Later Adolescence: Ages 14-18

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- Benchmark c. an awareness that human sexuality is a gift from God.
- Benchmark d. an attitude of respect that acknowledges the worth of every human being.
- Benchmark e. an understanding that our bodies are sacred and temples of the Holy Spirit.
- Benchmark f. an understanding that God calls us to forgive those who hurt us.
- Benchmark g. an appreciation and practice of the virtue of chastity.

Later Adolescence: Ages 14-18

Strand 3: Behavioral Development

Standard 1: The youth develops appropriate behaviors.

The youth...

- Benchmark a. demonstrates proper respect for the body and practice of maintaining healthy boundaries.
- Benchmark b. demonstrates positive interaction with family and significant adults by seeking support and direction.
- Benchmark c. discusses questions and issues regarding sexuality in an open and trusting atmosphere with sensitivity and respect.
- Benchmark d. recognizes the signs of misuse or abuse of the body by self or others.
- Benchmark e. demonstrates assertive techniques in dealing with abuse in a relationship.
- Benchmark f. the importance of letting trusted adults know about uncomfortable situations or relationships with others until believed.

## **Acknowledgements: Safe Environment Standards and Benchmarks**

Safe Environment Training materials

Human Sexuality and the Prevention of Child Abuse – Diocesan Guidelines for Catechists, Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee

Family Life Scope and Sequence, Benziger, 2001

Faith, Family, and Friends, NCEA, 1993