VIRTUS *"Protecting God's Children Teaching Safety* – Grades 9 - 12
<u>LESSON PLAN III:</u> SECRETS, SURPRISES AND PROMISES

VIRTUS *"Protecting God's Children Teaching Safety*
(Adapted from Lesson 4 for Grades 9 – 12: Secrets, Surprises and Promises)

Catechists and youth ministers are to review the *Overview of the Teaching Safety Empowering God's Children Program* guidelines from VIRTUS and the lesson plan guidelines before the class session. Click here for [English](#). Click here for [Spanish](#). Parish catechetical leaders are to make sure that parents have been advised of their right to have their youth opt out of this class session.

Due date: March 31 of every calendar year

Length of session: 45-90 minutes

This lesson plan will have more activities than can be included in your 45-90 minute session. It is broken up into sections that correspond to the different lesson in Virtus. Please feel free to choose which activities your teens will connect with the best and drop any activities that you think would they not connect with.

Do note that you will need to include scripture passages and prayer to meet youth ministry/religious education standards. There are three different lesson plans/sessions for high school students: *I Safe and Unsafe Touching Rules; II Boundaries – You Have Rights!; and III Secrets, Surprises and Promises.* We recommend that you rotate among these sessions, as your teens will have different topics and activities to follow each year.

BACKGOUND INFORMATION FOR THE CATECHIST/YOUTH MINISTER

This age group: Dealing with teenagers—key concept is "searching"

This is the age where all the experiences that began with puberty—the physical changes and the developing emotions—accelerate rapidly as the teenager matures into a young adult. The self-consciousness deepens and matures. The world of "children" is now renounced. Teens believe in their immortality and may tend to be reckless in their behavior—in person and online. Although it would appear that they reject authority while defining their own independence, in reality they rely on the strength and support they find in parents or guardians and other influential adults. Feeling supported and understood is important for this age group, as is upholding boundaries while the reasoning portions of their brains continue to develop. Teens have a great deal of personal freedom. This freedom also puts them at risk in various ways. Parents and guardians expect teens to take care of themselves and to ask for the help that they need. Caring adults must know that teen's online and offline behavior and boundaries may need to be fortified.

Young people of this age primarily identify with their interpersonal relationships. They are beginning to have a stronger concern for others and have many questions about social relationships and decision making. Safe friends, safe adults and special safe adults are critical at this age because young people have a strong need for role models and mentors in whom they can confide. It is also crucial that they can identify unsafe adults and have the skills to deal with them. Within this age group, healthy questioning may arise regarding personal safety issues, including bullying, self-defense, rape, date rape, assault, dating relationships, abusive relationships, pornography, drugs / alcohol, HIV, other sexually transmitted infections and other topics about sex. Teens who know they can ask their parents or guardians and safe adults questions are more likely to speak up if someone

exhibits inappropriate behavior toward them or their friends, and are less attractive and vulnerable to potential predators. During this lesson, it's extremely important that the Lesson Leader recognizes the enormous peer pressure teens deal with while trying to understand and implement boundaries. It will be important for the adult to stress "healthy" behavior and boundaries, and the "right thing to do" when discussing boundaries to this age group.

Many of the boundary and safety rules for younger children also apply to older youth, though they may be communicated differently. Caring adults should still provide teenagers and "tweens" with expectations and boundaries. Remind them that they can always say "no" and are allowed to remove themselves from any situation if they're uncomfortable. If abuse or boundary violations occur, they need to know that you'll help to protect them regardless of the circumstances—and that abuse isn't their fault. The older youth become, the more you can outline other types of boundaries.

The **introductory video** for grades 9 through 12 is designed to open a simple discussion with teens about rules for safe touch and personal boundaries. The video is eleven minutes long and is neither created nor intended as a substitute for the lesson itself.

It is merely an introduction designed to "break the ice" among those in this age group and to get everyone talking about the relevant personal boundary and personal safety issues. Importantly, the video will get the youth focused on the topic matter, which will help the catechist to facilitate an easy transition into the interactive activities within the lesson. These interactive activities are the critical components where teens have a real opportunity to learn how to protect themselves and to know that they have the right to say what happens to their bodies.

We recommend that you watch the video in advance at least a couple of times prior to showing it to your students, so you'll be able to more easily anticipate when the video will end. The video really needs no introduction. Just put it into the machine and hit "play." If you're using a DVD version of the video, you'll select the English or Spanish version and the appropriate age group from a menu screen. If you're using a VHS version of the video, you'll need to "cue" the tape to the correct version prior to your class time.

In preparing for this activity, review *Teaching Boundaries Safety and Safety Guide for Parents, Guardians, and Other Caring Adults*. Click here for English. Click here for Spanish.

PRINCIPLES:
- Youth 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.
- Young people must comprehend that their God-given human dignity and respect, provide them with the right to protect themselves from others, who might seek to harm them. They are "Temples of the Holy Spirit."

CATECHISM / SCRIPTURE REFERENCES:
- Freedom is exercised in relationships between human beings. Every human person, created in the image of God, has the natural right to be recognized as a free and responsible being. All owe to each other this duty of respect. The right to exercise freedom, especially in moral and religious matters, is an inalienable requirement of the dignity of the human person. This right must be recognized and protected by civil authority within the limits of the common good and public order. — *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #1738 (1997)

- G**enesis 1:26-28a**
  Then God said: Let us make human beings in our image, after our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, the tame animals, all the wild animals, and all the creatures that crawl on the earth.
  God created mankind in his image; in the image of God he created them;
  male and female he created them. God blessed them and God said to them: Be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and all the living things that crawl on the earth.
- **Psalm 139:1-18**
- **Jeremiah 1:8**
  "Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you, says the LORD."
- **Mark 4:22**
  For there is nothing hidden except to be made visible; nothing is secret except to come to light.
- **John 10:10b**
  I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.
- **Romans 12:21**
  Do not be conquered by evil but conquer evil with good.
- **1 Corinthians 3:16**
  Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?
- **Ephesians 4:15**
  Rather, living the truth in love, we should grow in every way into him who is the head, Christ.

CORRELATION WITH THE "ADAPTATION OF THE DOCTRINAL ELEMENTS OF A CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF CATECHETICAL MATERIALS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE OF HIGH SCHOOL AGE FOR PARISH AND YOUTH MINISTRY PROGRAMS "– USCCB 2010

COURSE II. WHO IS JESUS CHRIST?
    D. Jesus Christ teaches us about ourselves.
        1. The human person is created in the image and likeness of God (CCC 381, 1700-1709).
        2. Jesus Christ redeems us and gives us his grace (CCC 1705, 1708-1709).

COURSE III. The Mission of Jesus Christ (The Paschal Mystery)
    A.   3. Human beings are the summit of creation, made in the image and likeness of God (CCC 356-359, 381-384, 1700-1706, 2331).
        a.   Human persons are a union of body and soul and possess inviolable dignity (CCC 356-368, 2334).
    C.   3. Call to holiness and living as a disciple of Jesus (CCC 826, 2012-2014, 2028, 2045, 2813).
        b. Holy Spirit and grace enable us to live a holy life (CCC 1704).

COURSE VI. Life in Jesus Christ
    A.   Life in Christ
        1.   God created us for happiness, to share eternal life with him in Heaven; we are made in his image and likeness (CCC 45, 1700-1706, 1711).
        2.   He calls us to beatitude or joy, true happiness (CCC 1725-1726).
        3.   Our response is living as his disciple (CCC 1693-1695, 1698).
    B.   God teaches us how to live this new life

1. Natural Moral Law (CCC 1713).
   a. Reason participating in eternal law (CCC1954-1955).
   b. Basis for human rights and duties (CCC 1956, 1978).
   c. Found in all cultures, basis for moral rules and civil law (CCC 1958-1960, 1979).
2. Revelation
   e. Universal call to holiness as disciples of Jesus Christ (CCC 520-521, 901-913).
      1) Grace (CCC 1996-2005, 2017-2023).
      2) Virtue: Theological and Cardinal (CCC 1803-1829), 1833-1841).
      3) Sustaining the moral life of the Christian
         a) Seven gifts of the Holy Spirit (CCC1830-1831, 1845).
         b) Twelve fruits of the Holy Spirit (CCC 1832).
      4) Conscience (CCC 1746, 1777-1802).
      5) Sacraments and prayer offer us the grace and strength to live a moral life (CCC 2047).
      6) Living life as a Disciple of Christ (CCC 1694, 1194-1195).

Vocabulary words and definitions: *(NOTE - This list is designed to help catechist explain relevant terms. Not all of them are directly included in the lesson plan.)*

Assault - an act that creates an apprehension in another of an imminent, harmful, or offensive contact. The act consists of a threat of harm accompanied by an apparent, present ability to carry out the threat.
Battery - an intentional unpermitted act causing harmful or offensive contact with the "person" of another.
Boundaries – the limits that define one person as separate from another or from others.
Chastity – a virtue that allows us to do what is right and good in the areas of relationship and sexuality.
Conscience – our inner voice from God telling us right from wrong (CCC #1777-1778)
Consequences – the results of our actions; what happens from the things we say and do
Evil – the opposite or absence of good (CCC #309-311, 385, 1707)
Free Will – the freedom and ability to choose (CCC #1730-1739)
Intellect – our mind, our ability to think
Harassment - the act of systematic and/or continued unwanted and annoying actions of one party or a group, including threats and demands.
Holy – close to God; filled with God's grace
Holy Spirit - the third Person of the Trinity; the Spirit of God. (CCC #685; 152; 243)
Human Dignity – The belief that all people are created in God's image and worthy of honor or respect
Moral life – choosing to act with goodness
"No!" or other words and phrases that mean, "No!"—youth need to know that any time someone tries to touch his or her private body parts or tries to get youth to touch the private body parts of the other person, youth should say words that mean "No," run away, and then should tell the youth's mother or father or another safe adult as soon as possible.
Peer Pressure—the strong influence of a group—especially of young people—on members of that group to behave as everyone else does.
Private Body Parts – those body parts covered by a bathing suit
Right – what we are allowed to do
Respect – want only the best for other people and do good things for us
Rules – tell us what we can and cannot do
Sacred – holy and special to God

Safe friend/ safe adult/ safe touch – people who respect our wishes and the rules of our parents or guardians; they won't hurt or scare us without a good reason

Secret – something kept hidden or unexplained

Sin - choosing to disobey God. It is doing what you know is wrong. (CCC #1849; 1853)

Special safe adult – our parents or guardians, doctor or nurse – are those very special adults who can see or touch our private body parts, but <u>only</u> to keep us clean and healthy and <u>only</u> when we are sick or need help

Soul – where God lives within us

Spontaneous Prayer – writing or saying a prayer to God using the "You, Who, Do, Through" formula

Stewardship – taking care of God's creation, such as our bodies that God has created

Temple of the Holy Spirit – At baptism, God's spirit comes to live in our bodies and to be with us always in our souls

Ten Commandments – rules from God that help keep us safe and respect others

Touching Rules: "If someone tries to touch a child's body parts or wants the child to touch their **private body parts**, the child should…"
- o   Say, "No!"
- o   Run away.
- o   Tell a parents or guardian or other safe adult what happened.

Touching safety – knowing how to protect our bodies from those who might want to hurt us

Unsafe friend/ unsafe adult/ unsafe touch – people who do not respect our wishes and the rules of our parents or guardians; they could hurt us

Virtuous – making a habit of choosing to do the good and right thing

LESSON PLAN III: SECRETS, SURPRISES AND PROMISES

Resources:
Catholic Youth Bibles (Bible open to Psalm 139)
Teaching Safety introduction DVD for Grades 9-12 or provided YouTube link.
      English: https://www.youtube.com/embed/eY_oua646oc
      Spanish: https://www.youtube.com/embed/ScP07b62IR0
Worksheets printed for Activity Option #3 (#6 from VIRTUS): "Secrets, Grooming and Online Case Studies"
Paper and pencils/pens
Catechism of the Catholic Church

SESSION OBJECTIVES:

Through this session, the adult Lesson Leader reinforces the message about boundaries. By the end of this session, youth 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 teen's fault.
- Know that God, who loves them and knows them, sends the Holy Spirit to help us when we pray for guidance on how to protect ourselves from harm.

INTRODUCTION AND OPENING PRAYER

- Welcome the students. Tell them that this session is all about empowering them to keep themselves safe from people who might want to harm them or take the joy out of life. In particular, this session will provide them with tools to protect themselves from situations where people might want us to keep secrets that can hurt ourselves or others.

- As we know, God made each of us in his image and likeness. Sacred Scripture and our Catholic faith call our bodies **"Temples of the Holy Spirit"**. That means that God made us good and **holy** and we always have the **right** to say "No" to people who make us feel uncomfortable.

- Opening prayer that includes scripture and begins and ends with the Sign of the Cross. Provide students with a copy of Psalm 139:1-18 or have them open their Bibles to this passage.

  - All: **+ In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.**
  - All pray together:

LORD, you have probed me, you know me: you know when I sit and stand;
you understand my thoughts from afar.
You sift through my travels and my rest; with all my ways you are familiar.
Even before a word is on my tongue, LORD, you know it all.
Behind and before you encircle me and rest your hand upon me.
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, far too lofty for me to reach.
Where can I go from your spirit?

From your presence, where can I flee?
If I ascend to the heavens, you are there; if I lie down in Sheol, there you are.
If I take the wings of dawn and dwell beyond the sea,
Even there your hand guides me, your right hand holds me fast.
If I say, "Surely darkness shall hide me, and night shall be my light"*—
Darkness is not dark for you, and night shines as the day.
Darkness and light are but one.
You formed my inmost being; you knit me in my mother's womb.
I praise you, because I am wonderfully made; wonderful are your works!
My very self you know.
My bones are not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret,
fashioned in the depths of the earth.
Your eyes saw me unformed; in your book all are written down;
my days were shaped, before one came to be.
How precious to me are your designs, O God; how vast the sum of them!
Were I to count them, they would outnumber the sands;
when I complete them, still you are with me.

- o Catechist: Either explain or ask the teens to find connections between this psalm and how God loves and knows us to the depths of our being. God wants us to always know that he is near and that the Holy Spirit can guide us when we pray for God's help to protect ourselves and others. This tells us that we are worthy and have every right to establish and maintain our boundaries. It also means that we need to respect the boundaries of others. God has a plan for each of us, is always present in our lives, and gives us hope. God wants good for us: in our relationships with God and with one another. God also wants to protect us and that means we always have the right to say "No!" to people who might want to hurt us.
  - o Highlight the VIRTUS lesson objectives and catechetical curriculum to be covered in this session:
    - ▪ Identify the boundary differences between secrets, surprises and promises
    - ▪ 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 teen's fault.
    - ▪ Know that God, who loves them and knows them, sends the Holy Spirit to help us when we pray for guidance on how to protect ourselves from harm.
  - o Catechist then prays with students: Please bow your heads, as we pray… *Dear God, you made each of us in your image, good and wonderful. As "Temples of the Holy Spirit", we are worthy to be respected and to respect others. Help us to learn how to understand the importance of knowing when we need to speak honestly to protect ourselves and others. Thank you for your presence in our lives, and all those, who help us to learn and follow your rules through Christ our Lord. Amen.*
  - o All: **+ In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

ACTIVITY #1: SHOW THE INTRODUCTORY VIDEO "THE POWER TO PROTECT"

Allow 11 minutes for the video and another 5 – 10 minutes to debrief the video.

Introduce the video by telling youth that this video will discuss how to protect our personal boundaries and includes the definitions of a several types of abuse.

After the video, ask the teens if they have any questions about the information presented or would like any of the terms. It might be helpful to have a worksheet with the definitions of all the terms, why we have the right to protect our boundaries and how we can avoid risky behavior. <mark>Please tell the students that if something has happened to them in the past, it is absolutely not their fault. Let them know that you are open to speaking with them regarding anything that they are going through or have gone through.</mark>

ACTIVITY #2: REVIEW AND DISCUSS KEY VOCABULARY WORDS

- **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.
- **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 catechist or coach.
- **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 youth that they, or someone else, will get into trouble if the secret is shared [For example, let youth know that there are no secrets when it comes to personal and physical safety. Tell youth 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 guardian 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.
- **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.
- **Privacy**—Privacy is primarily about being respectful of a person's personal boundaries or information. The things we appropriately can keep private include beliefs, opinions, ideas, traits, etc. Maintaining and honoring someone's privacy does not result in hurting them or

others, or compromising someone's safety. And, complete privacy is not always applicable when it deals with our safety boundaries. When it comes to a situation where boundaries have been violated, someone is hurt or has the potential to be hurt, we should keep the information private insofar as we only tell the people who need to know to help us (and them) stay safe—such as our safe adults or other people who can help us. We also keep other things private, such as our private parts, which we keep private underneath our clothing when we're in public. Privacy and secrecy are often confused—and the main difference is that unsafe secrecy involves situations where we deliberately keep something from someone else usually out of fear, where keeping the secret can negatively impact or harm ourselves or someone else.

ACTIVITY #3: SECRETS, GROOMING AND ONLINE CASE STUDIES

Background: Privacy is a tricky subject when applying the concept to Internet based activities. Youth online are constantly experiencing situations that encourage them to lower personal boundaries and share personal information. The idea of online privacy is a hard subject for youth to employ when they have grown up using the Internet for practically everything. There are also positive and negative aspects to the Internet, and lots of fun ways to utilize it safely. However, not every situation is safe, and there are people who try to harm others online. This activity looks to address online privacy as youth become older, while also helping to address diverse situations involving secrets.

Preparation: The Lesson Leader should review the Key Vocabulary words as part of the preparation for this lesson. Allow for enough time to include the discussion and the completion of the worksheet during the class period. This can be an individual activity or a group activity.

Activity: This 2-part activity addresses appropriate online boundaries, secrets, surprises and safety plans via interactive discussion, and then gives youth an opportunity to share what they've learned by completing a worksheet.

It might be helpful to provide youth with an abbreviated outline or fill-in-the blank worksheet for the information shared during Part I of this activity. This might help with staying focused on the large amount of information being shared.

The Lesson Leader will need to decide if the youth will work in small groups or individually for the worksheet portion of the lesson in Part II. If in groups, each group may tackle one case study scenario to present to the class.

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

The worksheet and answer key are located at the end of the lesson plan.

What are some elements that are safe and unsafe to share online?

- Typically safe:
  - Interests, hobbies, some expressions of art, etc.
  - Photos are something that are a judgement call depending on the account's security settings, and only with permission. Photos of private parts of our bodies or someone else's body are never safe to share online.
  - Conversations online with people you don't know in real life can be permissible, but depend on several factors.

- Typically unsafe:
  - Sharing personal information such as home addresses, frequently-visited places, names of schools, physical locations, phone numbers, passwords (and images that show any of the above)
  - Login names / user names that are too revealing
  - Conversations about sex

Why are some of these unsafe? Risks include, but are not limited to:

- Cyberbullying
- Exposure to unsafe material
- People themselves who are unsafe (such as people with bad intentions)
- Risk of sexual exploitation; conversations are often a tool used by people to groom youth.
- Identity theft/scams/hacking due to revealing too much personal information or being careless with information (such as user IDs or passwords)

Are online predators a legit issue?

- Yes, surprisingly so. Apart from people who are foolish and unkind on the Internet, or just make poor decisions, there are actually people who intend to exploit youth, sometimes in a sexual way. The person sees how "far" they can get in the conversation and how willing the youth is to converse back, which is one step in what could be a very manipulative grooming process. They look for ways that teens and youth show vulnerability, and then see how they can insert themselves into the situation to provide "support" or make it seem as if they're interested in helping.

How would cyberbullies and online predators be different?

- Cyberbullies, through their actions, might start out nice, but they can also be very unpleasant relatively quickly. Cyberbullies intimidate others through the internet using websites, email, chats or social media. Even though their goals are for exploitation, online predators who are grooming youth for sexual reasons typically seem to be trustworthy and nice—they can act like a friend or even romantic throughout the grooming and coercion process. Online predators want sexual gratification, or seek to exploit for money or immigration.

What do you know about the grooming process?

- There are different elements to the grooming process, which has been determined by studying and interviewing people who have been convicted of grooming youth either in person, or online with transition to in-person grooming.
- Grooming can be done by someone you know, while in person, or online. It can also be done by a stranger online. Usually, when we are victimized by sexual abuse relating to contact, 90% of the time it's someone we know and trust, like a coach, catechist, friend of the family, minister, etc., or even a family member. However, online, it's very difficult to know if the person is someone we know or not, and the relationship usually begins via a stranger, and not someone you already know. An online predator is not necessarily a "creepy old man." Online predators can be anyone.
- The main point of grooming is to sexually abuse a youth or teen. This can be done over the Internet by tricking the teen to behave sexually and take/share photos or videos, or, by attempting to create opportunities for face-to-face live interaction in real life.

- Grooming is when someone attempts to gain your trust through manipulation to get you to do things. In live settings, this involves physical grooming to desensitize you to touch; community grooming where the person also works on manipulating the people around you to gain their trust; and emotional grooming to make you trust them more via gift-giving, fulfilling needs for you or even your family and friends, isolating you from others, listening to you, paying you compliments, giving you attention and doing things to make you feel more dependent and emotionally attached—all while asking you to keep any intimate or inappropriate behavior a secret.
- Grooming doesn't always happen quickly—usually it starts slow and "normal." Every situation is different, and part of grooming means that the person is always trying to test your boundaries to see how far things can be taken each time, and how willing you are to share yourself, or information about yourself with them.
- Someone who is being groomed may not realize what is happening, and may not be using caution because of the emotional connection.

How is online grooming different than regular grooming? Which one is easier for the potential abuser?

- Grooming, online, on the other hand, is different and easier for predators for a variety of reasons. Online grooming is easier for someone with bad intentions because they can learn a lot about the youth by reviewing everything posted via social media, which helps them to target vulnerabilities faster without even having to make contact. In addition, the adult might send out a lot of "friend requests" via social media, gaming platforms or streaming/chat platforms, which gives them faster access to a wider group of youth.
- Many youth don't realize that they are actually targeted online based on what they post and share about themselves. The person who grooms them is looking for a vulnerability to exploit to more easily gain the youth's trust and access to what is typically sexual types of behavior or activities.
- The anonymity of the internet creates a false sense of security and intimacy. Online predators take advantage of this to manipulate others.

Is anyone immune from grooming or exploitation?

- The honest answer here is, "no".
- Statistically, youth and teens from every demographic, gender, family situation, socioeconomic level, etc., have been groomed and sexually exploited. No one is truly immune, which is why it is so important to be aware of some of these classic grooming situations, and be prepared now about how to navigate them.
- Most importantly, you want to ensure that you know how to get help if you realize that you, OR a friend, is experiencing something similar.

Knowing that grooming can be challenging to identify, when thinking about yourself, or even for a friend, when should you be more concerned?

- When thinking about online predators or people with unsafe intentions: If an older man or woman is messaging a teen or child, even if it makes the youth feel special, it's a problem— and could also lead to illegal activity. Teens and youth should be suspicious of an older person messaging them or communicating with them over social media, and should never agree to meet someone in person whom they've only interacted with online—unless a parent or guardian comes along, too.

- If people online seem to try to gauge the level of involvement your parents or guardians and friends have with you—they might be trying to ascertain whether or not you'd be believed if the story did come out.
- If the person online tries to create scenarios to isolate you from others, gets upset with you for spending time with your friends, or not answering your messages quickly enough.
- If the person online talks about sex. This is done to desensitize the youth, and to see how far the conversation can go. They might tell you that they want to "teach you something" or show you images or videos to try and normalize what they're saying.
- If the person ever seems to try to control you, by using secrecy or blackmail. They might try to make you feel embarrassed or ashamed, or tell you that "you're too far in now" or that "you chose this" or that "it's your fault." They use these tools to try and keep you from telling anyone about what is happening.

If you ever feel threatened or unsafe, bullied or victimized (or if one of your friends has had this happen) online, it needs to be reported both to the police and to www.cybertipline.com

- If you do feel that someone is bullying you online, or sending you threatening messages, report them to the app administration or website administration! Block the person/account, save the offending material, and tell a safe adult. You'll also need to contact the police and potentially the cell phone provider, depending on the situation and how serious it is.
- If you're aware that someone you know is being bullied online, you could be responsible for the repercussions that occur if you didn't address it. Conversely, if you know that a specific person is bullying someone else, you could be held responsible and legally considered guilty as the person who is doing the bullying.

What does it mean to be a real friend?

- Real friends protect their friends and stop inappropriate behavior by communication and reporting.
- Don't share damaging images or gossip about other people. Think twice before posting rumors or gossip.
- Definitely do not share naked images of other people or of yourself.
- Think twice when you consider what you post and how it could affect or hurt someone else, and particularly their reputation.

What are some other things we do to protect ourselves online?

- Avoid "friending" people online who we don't know, or accepting requests from people we don't know. The problem is that it is extremely difficult and sometimes impossible to know who the person on the other side of the screen is. Ask the person how they know you, verify that the person is who they say they are. What might their intentions be? Take a look at their images and what they post—would you really want to be friends with that person and have them associated with your account?
- Go through your social media accounts one by one and clean them up.
  - First and foremost, update the security settings so people who are not your immediate friends may not see the content. Any content could be used against you, or used to identify you, and potentially used to groom you for someone else's interest. Take control of your life and online digital footprint!
  - Go through your social media account and remove everything that seems to be "oversharing" or "too personal", illegal, violent, inappropriate or sexual. This

includes anything that someone else could see years later and hold against you, such as a college admissions team, or someone who wants to hire you for a job, or even someone with bad intentions. Scrub your profiles and pages of party pics, of embarrassing situations, of revealing photos, etc.

- o Think about your online persona. Are you proud of who you portray yourself to be? Would your loved ones be proud to see what you're posting?
- In the future, think twice about what you post, view and respond to while online.

Part II: The Lesson Leader will pass out the worksheet and narrate instructions. Invite youth to complete the worksheet. A discussion with everyone will follow to go over the answers and address the concluding statements; please see below for the Answer Key. Depending on the size of the class, consider "think, pair, share" or five small groups, each taking a different scenario and then reporting to the whole class.

Concluding statements: Remember, there are really great things about the Internet. It connects you to people you otherwise would never have been able to learn from in "real life" and has a wealth of knowledge and information. However, everything that you say and do online adds to your online identity and digital footprint and can be with you forever. Others can also take advantage of you based on what you share about yourself or others. Be extremely careful about what you do, how it could reflect about your character, and how it could affect others.

CLOSING PRAYER:

- Read the following scripture verse from Ephesians 4:15 *Rather, living the truth in love, we should grow in every way into him who is the head, Christ.*
- Paul's letter to the Ephesians reminds us that God wants us to always be true, to find truth and to speak truth. Doing so places us in the light of Christ and helps us build up others, protect them from harm and strengthen all of us, as members of the Body of Christ.
- Together we pray:
  +Dear God, we know you have loved us for all eternity and we ask that your Holy Spirit guide us to speak truthfully, especially when we are called to protect others from harm. We thank you for the light of Christ that helps us find hope, even in the darkness. Amen. +

Secrets, Grooming and Online Case Studies

Instructions: Please read the following scenarios and answer the questions. You will have time near the end to discuss the answers with the entire group. Use extra paper as necessary.

Online Case Study / Scenario 1:

Emily is friends with a lot of people online. She's constantly posting to try and get more friends added to her social media accounts and loves it when people "like" her posts or comment on them—even if she doesn't know them. She's assured her family that she never posts any super personal information, but as her friend, you've noticed that her posts are becoming less guarded, and she's sharing a lot about her life and feelings regarding specific big life changes that have been occurring at home. She's also posting images that identify who she is, where she lives and where she hangs out. For example, she's posting pictures and videos that she has taken in front of your school, with the school mascot and in front of her home and tagged people who don't have any privacy settings on their accounts. When you talked to her about it and warned her to stop "oversharing," she became very defensive and told you that it's none of your business, and to keep your thoughts to yourself and no one else. It's ironic because you were recently together at the mall and had someone approach you and ask personal questions and Emily quickly shut down the conversation and moved on, yet she seems to be unable to limit giving the same type of information when online. You don't like the fact that she's constantly posting images of you on her account with so many people following whom you don't know. You also know that she has had some people troll her accounts and post bullying messages to her, but she doesn't want to block them or report them because she's fearful of losing her online friends.

What's problematic about this scenario?

What is causing or increasing vulnerability? What's the issue (or, what are the issues) with what Emily is doing?
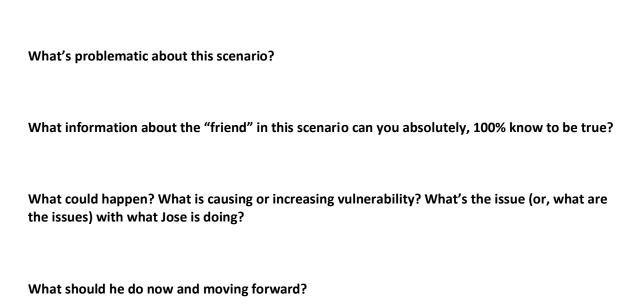
Is this a safe situation? What *could* go wrong?

Should you keep this information a secret? Why / why not? Can you do anything to help?
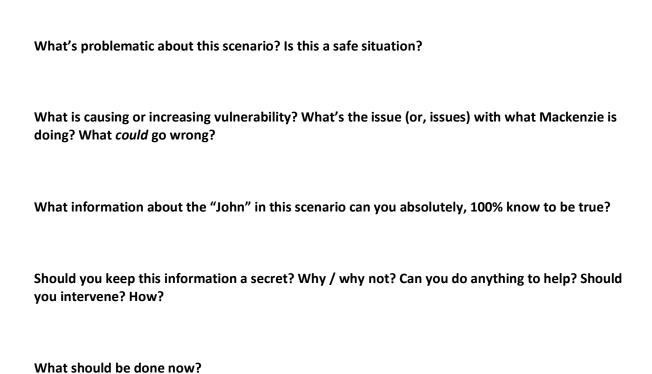
What should be done now?

Online Case Study / Scenario 2:

Jose is into gaming. He's really good at it and has lots of different accounts online with alias names. Gaming is a way for him to relax with a tough school load. His alias names are usually very similar, and typically involve some variation of his name and interests. He also uses the same password for everything to make it easier to quickly access his accounts. He has an online friend whom he games with often, and they talk frequently through the gaming apps. The friend says that he's the same age as Jose and has shown Jose pictures of himself and a girlfriend. The online friend has started to share personal information, like issues that are happening with his parents, and girlfriend, etc. Jose is beginning to feel safe with telling him personal and private information, too. They ended up sharing phone numbers so they could message even when they weren't gaming. In a new game, Jose's friend offered to help him win a level, but Jose would need to give him the password for the account. Jose knows his friend is the better gamer and really wants to win. He doesn't know if he should share his password or not.

What's problematic about this scenario?

What information about the "friend" in this scenario can you absolutely, 100% know to be true?

What could happen? What is causing or increasing vulnerability? What's the issue (or, what are the issues) with what Jose is doing?

What should he do now and moving forward?

Online Case Study / Scenario 3:

Mackenzie began to spend more time online after a family member died. Through her social media accounts and pages that she visited to learn more about grief, she started talking with a new friend, John, who said he was "just a couple of years older." John said he also was also going through a death in the family when Mackenzie opened up, and had lots of good advice about how to cope. Mackenzie felt like she didn't know what she would have done without John's help and support, and truly felt like she had found someone who understood her and supported her better than her own family. Mackenzie and John started to call each other boyfriend and girlfriend and have said they love each other, even though they have never met. Mackenzie told you that the only thing that bothered her is that John would become very upset when Mackenzie didn't answer his texts right away. And, he also got jealous when she hung out with friends—but then she said, "oh that's normal, all guys do that!" Mackenzie quickly deletes the messages from John in case her mom looks on her phone, because she told you her mom "wouldn't understand her feelings." And, she hides her phone from you, too, when John texts. John now wants Mackenzie to sneak out and meet him at his house for some "fun". Mackenzie wants him to know how she really feels and has agreed to meet up with him at his house for the first time by herself.

What's problematic about this scenario? Is this a safe situation?

What is causing or increasing vulnerability? What's the issue (or, issues) with what Mackenzie is doing? What *could* go wrong?

What information about the "John" in this scenario can you absolutely, 100% know to be true?

Should you keep this information a secret? Why / why not? Can you do anything to help? Should you intervene? How?
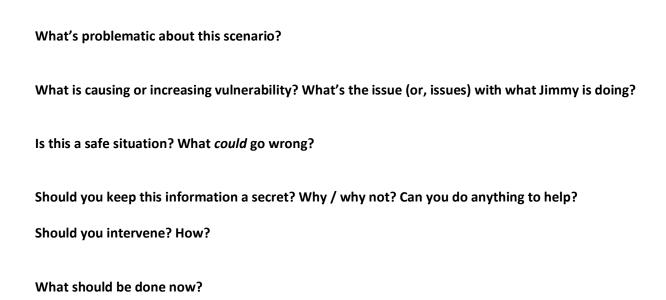
What should be done now?

Online Case Study / Scenario 4:

Olivia sent Casey a naked picture of herself. She asked Casey to keep it a secret, but his friends convinced him to text the image to them. His friends then ended up sending the image to others, too. One of the guys who received the photo was from a different school in another city. He searched for Olivia on the Internet, found her on social media and told her that if she didn't send him more naked photos, he would distribute the one he has all over the Internet and to everyone at the school. The girl didn't know what to do, so she eventually sent him more, and found out that he put them on his blog. He then told her she had to send him videos, too, or he would send her photo to a pornography site for millions of people to see and ruin her reputation completely. Olivia thought briefly about calling the police but didn't feel like it would make a difference—especially because she was the one who sent the first naked photo. Plus, it seems easier to deal with the shame and embarrassment rather than getting into trouble with her parents and the police. She asked herself, "what could the cops really do to help anyway?" Even so, she doesn't know what to do and is becoming depressed and feeling completely alone. She's considering sending the videos and "being done with it."

What's problematic about this scenario?

What is causing or increasing vulnerability? What's the issue (or, issues) with what either Olivia or Casey are doing?

Is this a safe situation? What *could* go wrong?

If you had received the image, what should have happened?

Should you keep this information a secret? Why / why not? Can you do anything to help?

Should you intervene? How?

What should be done now?

Online Case Study / Scenario 5:

Your friend, Jimmy, recently told you that he's been talking to an older woman online who reached out to one of his social media accounts. He said they flirt and talk about sex a lot. According to Jimmy, she's out of college, a teacher, really nice and fun, and "understands" him, so the fact that she's an adult and at least 10 years older than Jimmy isn't a big deal. Jimmy feels proud of himself to be in a relationship with an older woman and has asked you to cover for him with his parents before, so they think that he's going to be at your house when he's actually spending time with her. She told him that he could only tell you, as long as you kept the information secret and confidential. You don't really know how far they've gone together, but you suspect that they are pretty serious and that sexual behavior has occurred. Regardless of whether it's a male or female, you know that it's weird for an older person to be dating a teen, but she seems to be treating Jimmy really well, and gives him gifts, too.

What's problematic about this scenario?

What is causing or increasing vulnerability? What's the issue (or, issues) with what Jimmy is doing?

Is this a safe situation? What *could* go wrong?

Should you keep this information a secret? Why / why not? Can you do anything to help?

Should you intervene? How?

What should be done now?

ONLINE CASE STUDY WORKSHEET ANSWER KEY:

Online Case Study / Scenario 1: Emily is friends with a lot of people online. She's constantly posting to try and get more friends added to her social media accounts and loves it when people "like" her posts or comment on them—even if she doesn't know them. She's assured her family that she never posts any super personal information, but as her friend, you've noticed that her posts are becoming less guarded, and she's sharing a lot about her life and feelings regarding specific big life changes that have been occurring at home. She's also posting images that identify who she is, where she lives and where she hangs out. For example, she's posting pictures and videos that she has taken in front of your school, with the school mascot and in front of her home and tagged people who don't have any privacy settings on their accounts. When you talked to her about it and warned her to stop "oversharing," she became very defensive and told you that it's none of your business, and to keep your thoughts to yourself and no one else. It's ironic because you were recently together at the mall and had someone approach you and ask personal questions and Emily quickly shut down the conversation and moved on, yet she seems to be unable to limit giving the same type of information when online. You don't like the fact that she's constantly posting images of you on her account with so many people following whom you don't know. You also know that she has had some people troll her accounts and post bullying messages to her, but she doesn't want to block them or report them because she's fearful of losing her online friends.

Answers to the worksheet questions (italicized, in the bullets below)
1. What's problematic about this scenario?
- *Emily is oversharing about her life and creating vulnerable situations for herself and others.*
- *Emily is ignoring other people's requests regarding information security that affects their own accounts.*
- *Emily is experiencing cyberbullying.*
- *Emily is refusing to address any corrective action with the cyberbullying*

2. What is causing or increasing vulnerability? What's the issue (or, issues) with what Emily is doing?
- *Sharing posts with a lot of personal information, including emotions, life changes, photos, etc., could be dangerous, because someone with bad intentions could use the information to find you—even with information as brief as knowing your school name or your sports team.*
- *Tagging people who don't have privacy settings on their own accounts can leave other accounts vulnerable.*
- *There is no way to completely safeguard material online unless you don't post it, because it can be screenshot, saved or shared by people you know—and by people you don't.*
- *Posts with personal feelings and life changes could be problematic if read by the wrong people who are looking to target people who might be vulnerable.*
- *Posts can often have identifying information in the background, through clothing, signage, etc. All photos should be carefully screened to ensure that you're not giving away sensitive or private information that will leave you and people around you vulnerable.*
- Another problem is that she doesn't really know who is trolling her online—it could literally be anyone, and they could know practically everything about her because of what she is sharing.
    - *Emily shouldn't be afraid of shutting down her account just because she fears a "dip" in her popularity. Teens who "live" online can experience serious emotional problems. She should be encouraged to get involved in activities in school or the community that don't require the Internet.*

        o   *What Emily shares about herself online, even if she attempts to "delete" it, will stay on the Internet forever. Nothing can completely disappear from the Internet, and anything posted can be saved by other individuals as well. This doesn't just affect Emily, it affects everyone that she posts about.*

3. Is this a safe situation? What could go wrong?
- *Lots of things could go wrong here—primarily because Emily has posted a lot of personal and identifying information, from cyberbullying, exploitation.*

4. Should you keep this information a secret? Why / why not? Can you do anything to help?
- *No, we don't keep unsafe secrets. The material that is being posted doesn't just affect Emily, it affects everyone who is affiliated with her account and the specific posts. This makes it unsafe for her and others.*
- *You can offer to go with her to talk to a safe adult or talk to the safe adult on her behalf.*

5. What should be done now?
- *She needs to report the troll(s) to the appropriate administration within the app or site, communicate with safe adults, and consider shutting down or removing her account depending on what has been said and/or threatened.*
- *Contacting the police or the FBI is important when suspecting online victimization, because it could lead to the identification of someone with bad intentions, and will stop the contact between that victim and the abuser, and countless other people who might have been victimized in the future.*

Online Case Study / Scenario 2: Answers to the worksheet questions (italicized, in the bullets below) Jose is into gaming. He's really good at it and has lots of different accounts online with alias names. Gaming is a way for him to relax with a tough school load. His alias names are usually very similar, and typically involve some variation of his name and interests. He also uses the same password for everything to make it easier to quickly access his accounts. He has an online friend whom he games with often, and they talk frequently through the gaming apps. The friend says that he's the same age as Jose and has shown Jose pictures of himself and a girlfriend. The online friend has started to share personal information, like issues that are happening with his parents or guardians, and girlfriend, etc. Jose is beginning to feel safe with telling him personal and private information, too. They ended up sharing phone numbers so they could message even when they weren't gaming. In a new game, Jose's friend offered to help him win a level, but Jose would need to give him the password for the account. Jose knows his friend is the better gamer and really wants to win. He doesn't know if he should share his password or not.

1. What's problematic about this scenario?
- *Jose has user names that give away identifying information.*
- *Jose also uses the same password for all of his accounts.*
- *Jose is sharing personal information with someone he doesn't actually know over the Internet.*

2. What information about the "friend" in this scenario can you absolutely, 100% know to be true?
- *Nothing, except the person's chosen username and their skillset at playing the game.*

3. What could happen? What is causing or increasing vulnerability? What's the issue (or, issues) with what Jose is doing?
- *When someone has your username and password, they can do all sorts of inappropriate online behavior that would be attached to you, even if you weren't the one who actually performed the behavior.*

- *The person could post information from your account that could get you into serious trouble with your parents or guardians, with school, other people and potentially even the law.*
- *Providing passwords could also cause potential hacking issues, a big issue from an information security perspective.*
- *In addition, if you have passwords that are the same across different applications and sites, this could endanger you from a financial perspective.*

4. What should he do now and moving forward?
- *He should be able to go in and update his usernames; contacting the app/gaming administrators for assistance should be useful, too. It's important that we never create user names that can link to your real name and interests, because it can give identifying information about you (such as your name, age, location, school, interests) to others.*
- *Moving forward for any new accounts: the usernames should also be carefully constructed from an information security perspective. A combination of numbers and letters tends to work better to reduce vulnerability.*
- *He should go through and systematically update all of his passwords, so they are different and unique from each other. Even if it makes things easier, there's too much risk—we should also never use the same password for multiple accounts.*
- *He should make it clear to his online friend that he won't be sharing his password, but thanks anyway.*
- *Jose should examine his strategy for unwinding each day. Is his gaming becoming addictive? What are other healthy ways to relax after a hard day?*

Online Case Study / Scenario 3: Answers to the worksheet questions (italicized, in the bullets below) Mackenzie began to spend more time online after a family member died. Through her social media accounts and pages that she visited to learn more about grief, she started talking with a new friend, John, who said he was "just a couple of years older." John said he also was also going through a death in the family when Mackenzie opened up, and had lots of good advice about how to cope. Mackenzie felt like she didn't know what she would have done without John's help and support, and truly felt like she had found someone who understood her and supported her better than her own family. Mackenzie and John started to call each other boyfriend and girlfriend and have said they love each other, even though they have never met. Mackenzie told you that the only thing that bothered her is that John would become very upset when Mackenzie didn't answer his texts right away. And, he also got jealous when she hung out with friends—but then she said, "oh that's normal, all guys do that!" Mackenzie quickly deletes the messages from John in case her mom looks on her phone, because she told you her mom "wouldn't understand her feelings." And, she hides her phone from you, too, when John texts. John now wants Mackenzie to sneak out and meet him at his house for some "fun". Mackenzie wants him to know how she really feels and has agreed to meet up with him at his house for the first time by herself.

1. What's problematic about this scenario? Is this a safe situation?
- *Mackenzie is grieving and needs support.*
- *Mackenzie assumes her online friend, John, is who she thinks he is.*
- *Mackenzie is alienating herself from her family and friends.*
- *Mackenzie is putting herself at great risk by meeting John in person and alone, without anyone else knowing what she is doing or where she is going.*

2. What is causing or increasing vulnerability? What's the issue (or, issues) with what Mackenzie is doing? What could go wrong?

- *Mackenzie is at a vulnerable time in her life because of her grief. Learning more about grief through the Internet can be healthy, but revealing too much information online to a stranger is dangerous.*
- *John may not be who he says he is. His emotional support and advice could be part of a grooming process.*
- *John's jealousy and controlling behavior is unhealthy and indicates grooming.*
- *Mackenzie's desire to hide from her mother and friends is unhealthy and further puts her into a dangerous situation. Becoming secretive about online behavior and withdrawing from family and friends is a sign that a teen may be in contact with an online predator.*
- *If Mackenzie meets with John by herself, she can become a victim of sexual assault, kidnapping or further exploitation.*

3. What information about the "John" in this scenario can you absolutely, 100% know to be true?
- *John is the name that someone is using to identify themselves over the Internet.*

4. Should you keep this information a secret? Why / why not? Can you do anything to help? Should you intervene? How?
- *It is never ok to keep a secret when someone is at risk of being harmed or harming themselves. A true friend would step in and get Mackenzie the help she needs.*

5. What should be done now?
- *You should go with Mackenzie and talk to a safe adult.*
- *If Mackenzie will not go with you to talk to a safe adult, then you should tell a safe adult about what Mackenzie is experiencing.*
- *The police or FBI may need to be informed if additional details come out that show Mackenzie is at even greater risk for exploitation, or if she has been exploited or sexually abused.*

Online Case Study / Scenario 4: Answers to the worksheet questions (italicized, in the bullets below) Olivia sent Casey a naked picture of herself. She asked Casey to keep it a secret, but his friends convinced him to text the image to them. His friends then ended up sending the image to others, too. One of the guys who received the photo was from a different school in another city. He searched for Olivia on the Internet, found her on social media and told her that if she didn't send him more naked photos, he would distribute the one he has all over the Internet and to everyone at the school. The girl didn't know what to do, so she eventually sent him more, and found out that he put them on his blog. He then told her she had to send him videos, too, or he would send her photo to a pornography site for millions of people to see and ruin her reputation completely. Olivia thought briefly about calling the police but didn't feel like it would make a difference—especially because she was the one who sent the first naked photo. Plus, it seems easier to deal with the shame and embarrassment rather than getting into trouble with her parents or guardians and the police. She asked herself, "what could the cops really do to help anyway?" Even so, she doesn't know what to do and is becoming depressed and feeling completely alone. She's considering sending the videos and "being done with it."

1. What's problematic about this scenario?
- *Olivia sent a naked image of herself over the Internet.*
- *Every time that the image is shared with someone else, it is sexually exploiting Olivia.*
- *Pictures that are posted online or sent via message could be redistributed very quickly. Even photos that are deleted or supposedly "disappear" can easily be saved and then distributed.*
- *Olivia is being sexually exploited and blackmailed over the Internet (i.e. messaging).*

2. What is causing or increasing vulnerability? What's the issue (or, issues) with what either Olivia or Casey are doing?

- *Photos of naked bodies or private body parts should never be shared online.*
- *Olivia is not looking for or obtaining help from safe adults, and is letting fear dictate her decisions.*
- *Olivia's withdrawal from family and friends is unhealthy, and making the situation more isolating and dangerous for her.*
- *Once something is shared online, we cannot always control it. Think of how quickly a YouTube video or meme can get a million views around the world.*
- *Olivia continues to produce material that could be considered child pornography, since she is underage and distributing it over the Internet. However, and more importantly, she is naively believing that if she continues to supply the cyberbully with material, he will eventually stop—and this is not true. Even if he *were* to stop, her materials are still out on the Internet being viewed by others.*

3. Is this a safe situation? What could go wrong?

- *Once something is shared online, we cannot always control it. Think of how quickly a YouTube video or meme can get a million views around the world.*
- *Olivia is the victim of a Cyberbully. The situation could escalate with more exploitative demands being made of her.*
- *Olivia is already showing signs withdrawal and depression. The repercussions of this exploitation could lead to suicide.*
- *The Cyberbully may have other victims and he should be stopped.4. If you had received the image, what should have happened?*
- *You should immediately tell a safe adult and the police or CyberTipline. Under no circumstances, should it have been shared or shown to other peers. And, if it had been shown, you should have done the right thing and stopped the distribution from continuing, before then speaking to a safe adult. Olivia placed herself in a very vulnerable situation, and an adult needs to be aware of this so that they can help her.*

5. Should you keep this information a secret? Why / why not? Can you do anything to help? Should you intervene? How?

- *It is never ok to keep a secret when someone is at risk of being harmed or harming themselves. A true friend would step in and get Olivia the help she needs.*
- *Help her to know that she isn't dealing with this by herself.*
- *Encourage her to get help and let her know you're willing to go with her to someone safe. If she isn't willing to get help on her own or with you, get help for her on your own by talking to a safe adult or reporting it directly to the police or the CyberTipline.*

6. What should be done now?

- Olivia needs to speak out to a safe adult and tell them what has happened.
- Along with the safe adult, she should communicate with the CyberTipline and explain what has happened with the online image(s); the info is https://report.cybertip.org
- The National Center for Missing and Exploited Youth will review the material and help make additional information available for the appropriate law enforcement agency.

Online Case Study / Scenario 5: Answers to the worksheet questions (italicized, in the bullets below) Your friend, Jimmy, recently told you that he's been talking to an older woman online who reached out to one of his social media accounts. He said they flirt and talk about sex a lot. According to Jimmy, she's out of college, a catechist, really nice and fun, and "understands" him, so the fact that she's an adult and at least 10 years older than Jimmy isn't a big deal. Jimmy feels proud of himself to

be in a relationship with an older woman and has asked you to cover for him with his parents or guardians before, so they think that he's going to be at your house when he's actually spending time with her. She told him that he could only tell you, as long as you kept the information secret and confidential. You don't really know how far they've gone together, but you suspect that they are pretty serious and that sexual behavior has occurred. Regardless of whether it's a male or female, you know that it's weird for an older person to be dating a teen, but she seems to be treating Jimmy really well, and gives him gifts, too.

1.What's problematic about this scenario?
- *Jimmy cannot be sure that he is really talking to an older woman, even if she shared photos of herself.*
- *It is not ok for adults to flirt and talk about sex with a teen.*
- *Covering for Jimmy is putting yourself at risk for trouble.*

2. What is causing or increasing vulnerability? What's the issue (or, issues) with what Jimmy is doing?
- *The person Jimmy is talking to is exhibiting grooming behaviors: talking about sex, giving gifts, demanding secrecy, meeting alone, etc.*
- *Jimmy is further putting himself at risk by withdrawing from his family and friends.*

3. What information about the "woman" in this scenario can you absolutely, 100% know to be true?
- *Regardless of how fun and kind she seems, she is performing illegal activity by dating and potentially having sex with a teen. Her behavior amounts to sexual abuse, regardless of how "cool" Jimmy feels she is.*

4. Is this a safe situation? What could go wrong?
- *By meeting with this person alone, Jimmy is at risk for exploitation, sexual assault or kidnapping—if he has not already been sexually abused by the female.*
- *The woman could be sexually abusing or exploiting other people, as well.*

5. Should you keep this information a secret? Why or why not? Can you do anything to help? Should you intervene? How?
- *When a friend is at risk of being harmed or harming himself, you must talk to a safe adult about the situation.*

6. What should be done now?
- *Do not cover for Jimmy by lying about his whereabouts.*
- *Encourage Jimmy to talk to a safe adult about this relationship, and report to the police or CyberTipline.*
- *If Jimmy will not talk to anyone about the relationship, you should talk to a safe adult and report to the police or CyberTipline.*