Circle of Grace Partners

Fall 2025



From our Circle of Grace to yours!

We are grateful for you and your dedication!
May God bless each of us in our shared ministry
to provide a safe environment for
our children, youth, and vulnerable adults.



Sharing *Circle of Grace* with others

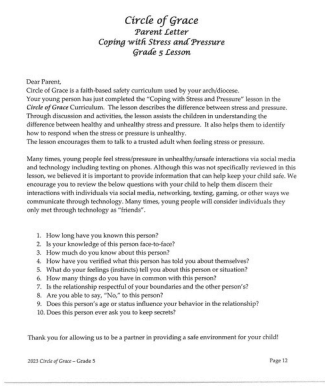
How can we help our parents and others understand Circle of Grace?

- Share the *Circle of Grace* video on social media and communications: https://vimeo.com/207836764. It is okay to embed this on websites. etc.
- Visit the 'Implementation- Strategies' page of our website at https://cogpartners.org . It has ideas and links to resources to help with promotion. (All in Spanish, too!)
- We have a 'Parents First- Special Edition' about 'Your Family and Circle of Grace' that is a good introduction for parents.

Looking ahead...



We listen carefully to what you have to say about Circle of Grace from calls, emails, evaluations, surveys, etc.
In response, we are creating new resources, updating lessons and are working on new ways we can support those teaching the lessons.
We are also trying to make the *Circle of Grace* Zoom initial training more easily available.



Circle of Grace
Parent Letter
Coping with Stress and Pressure
Grade 5 Lesson

Dear Parent,
Circle of Grace is a faith-based safety curriculum used by your archdiocese.
Your young person has just completed the "Coping with Stress and Pressure" lesson in the *Circle of Grace* Curriculum. The lesson describes the difference between stress and pressure. Through discussion and activities, the lesson assists the children in understanding the difference between healthy and unhealthy stress and pressure. It also helps them to identify how to respond when the stress or pressure is unhealthy.
The lesson encourages them to talk to a trusted adult when feeling stress or pressure.

Many times, young people feel stress/pressure in unhealthy/unsafe interactions via social media and technology including texting on phones. Although this was not specifically reviewed in this lesson, we believed it is important to provide information that can help keep your child safe. We encourage you to review the below questions with your child to help them discern their interactions with individuals via social media, networking, texting, gaming, or other ways we communicate through technology. Many times, young people will consider individuals they only met through technology as "friends".

1. How long have you known this person?
2. Is your knowledge of this person face-to-face?
3. How much do you know about this person?
4. How have you verified what this person has told you about themselves?
5. What do your feelings (instincts) tell you about this person or situation?
6. How many things do you have in common with this person?
7. Is the relationship respectful of your boundaries and the other person's?
8. Are you able to say, "No," to this person?
9. Does this person's age or status influence your behavior in the relationship?
10. Does this person ever ask you to keep secrets?

Thank you for allowing us to be a partner in providing a safe environment for your child!

2023 *Circle of Grace* – Grade 5 Page 13

Supporting Parents

Circle of Grace helps you partner with parents/guardians to keep our kids safe. We provide a parent letter with an overview of each lesson for all Kind.- Gr. 8 lessons. *This should be sent home to parents the same day as the lessons are taught*. This lets them discuss the topic with their children and reinforce the lessons in their family life. An electronic version of each parent letter is available on the curriculum page of the website so it can be emailed directly to parents.



Bullying and our *Circle of Grace*

We are aware and deeply worried by how much bullying impacts even our very young children. It is critical that all children understand that they are beloved children of God and respect others, young and old. We are currently working on a PowerPoint to give those who work with children and teens new tools, using Circle of Grace language and philosophy, to help make our children's world a safer place for them to navigate.

https://cogpartners.org

Circle of Grace© Key Implementation Strategies

Tasks:

- Set a time frame for implementation.
- Send the general letter to parents at least two weeks before the lessons are taught.
- Make the *Circle of Grace* brochure available for parents and others in the community at kiosks and other written communication locations.
- Put *Circle of Grace* information in parish and school communications- bulletins, newsletters, and social media to inform parents and the community what *Circle of Grace* is and what it means to be a 'Trusted Adult.'
- Share the link for the *Circle of Grace* video with parents and the community via bulletins, newsletters, and social media. *Circle of Grace* Meditation Video: https://vimeo.com/207836764.
- Share *Parents First- Special Edition- Your Family and Circle of Grace* by email or send home with students to introduce *Circle of Grace* concepts to parents.
- Meet with catechists and teachers to introduce or review the importance of the program.
- After lessons are taught, the lesson evaluations should be collected by the administration to help keep track of program implementation.

Lessons:

- Lessons are easy to follow and complement our Catholic teachings.
- Remember: if the leader is not passionate and enthusiastic about what they are teaching, the kids will not embrace the information.
- You do not have to be an expert in this area to teach the lessons. The most important aspect of the teaching is your passion for God's most precious gifts, our children.
- Each grade has everything needed to meet USCCB requirements.
- Students who only attend sacramental preparation classes should be taught the lesson for the current grade they are in when receiving the sacrament.
- Extra time should be spent reviewing the *Circle of Grace* Summary at the beginning of each lesson.
- There are parent letters/activities for K-Gr. 8. These need to go home the day the lesson is taught. They are also available as electronic files to email to parents. Parent letters are also available in Spanish and Vietnamese.
- Be aware that the content may trigger past issues for some adults teaching the lessons.
- Leaders/teachers need to be aware of how to respond to a child's disclosure.
- Be aware of child abuse and neglect laws, and reporting laws, in your state.
- We have a separate curriculum specifically designed to meet the needs of Family Faith programs, called *Family, Faith and Circle of Grace*©.

Resources:

- There are additional resources in the Administrator/Director section and on the COG partners website at https://cogpartners.org. These include the general letter to parents, and information on parenting and sexuality, suicide prevention, talking with children about trauma, common parent questions, bullying, adaptations for special needs students, and the Circle of Grace logo.
- ***Parents First* is a grade-specific newsletter for parents that discusses human sexuality in the context of our Catholic faith and Circle of Grace concepts.** *Parents First* is a resource designed as a guide to help parents talk to their children about human sexuality. *Circle of Grace* is a safety curriculum. Sexuality is not taught in the lessons. *Parents First* should be given directly to parents (in-person or by email) so that parents can decide when it is appropriate to discuss it with their child. This resource can be given out at any time during the year. *Parents First- Special Edition* newsletters are being developed on topics like Bullying, Sexual Abuse, Science and Religion, Gender and the Church, and more.