



Diocese of Rockford

Pre-Kindergarten Safe Environment Program

Background: Why Pre-Kindergarten? In the Spring of 2013, Governor Pat Quinn signed Erin's Law, requiring that schools provide "age-appropriate sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention education" beginning with Pre-Kindergarten children. Therefore, we have a very simplified age appropriate lesson plan for Pre-Kindergarteners that complement our K-8 Children Safe Environment program provided by VIRTUS titled "Empowering God's Children".

Theme: The basic theme of the Pre-Kindergarten Safe Environment program is "Personal Safety". It starts with this simple concept that is often avoided because of lack of comfort and knowledge of how to introduce this topic to Pre-Kindergarten students. Given the helpful tools, teachers and parents can begin the discussion to protect the sanctity of life by understanding the sacredness of one's body.



Supplies: We are using the story book, [The Birthday Suit](#), by Kristina and Ashlin Muldoon, and illustrated by Claire Shatzen, to introduce children to personal safety. Additional copies of the book are available from the Catholic Education Office or click [here](#) to order from Amazon.

Activity: The Pre-K classroom teacher will read [The Birthday Suit](#) story to the class. The book explains that God made everyone a birthday suit with a few parts for only the child, parents and a select few people (i.e. doctor) to see. It teaches modesty and how to stop anyone who tries to mishandle the child's birthday suit. The book is 19 pages and offers optional discussion questions to use as appropriate. The book is the entire program for Pre-K children. Although the lesson will be short, as appropriate for this age group, it will be presented to reinforce to the children that they can say no at an early age. These concepts of saying "no" to anyone who touches him or her in a way that is not appropriate can be reinforced at home, and we encourage parents to obtain a copy of the book to read to their child and discuss at home.

Parents Role: We recognize that parents are the first teachers of faith, prayers, and a life of love with Jesus, as well as God's gift of human sexuality. Parents can teach their child that God gave each child a gift of a birthday suit (the child's body) that was made just for the child. The gift of a child's body should always be protected and cherished. With instruction and reinforcement, and support and affirmation from their parents and teachers, children can learn to take responsibility for their safety. [The Birthday Suit](#) is an excellent starting point to introduce our children to the skills they need to be safe.