

FOURTH GRADE: Building Boundaries™ for Young Children: Healthy Friendships

Child Development:

Fourth graders are entering pre-adolescence. Now, they are influenced by their friends' opinions and values more than in earlier grades. They may join clubs, organized sports or activities as their social lives become more active. If they can maintain healthy self-esteem, fourth graders will be better equipped to withstand negative peer pressure that sometimes arises at this time.

Lesson Overview:

The focus of this program for fourth graders is behavioral boundary skills. The corresponding lessons are designed to teach the concept that some peer to peer interactions are healthy and some are not. The accompanying activities help the students learn how to build good boundaries with friends and adults.

Objectives for Fourth Grade Students:

Students will:

1. Learn what makes a healthy friendship with peers.
2. Learn to identify a safe adult.
3. Learn how to respond to situations that make them feel uncomfortable.

FOURTH GRADE: Lesson Plan A

Learning Objective 1:

Learn what makes a healthy friendship with peers.

Estimated Lesson Time: 30 minutes

Materials needed:

Friend Activity Page

Crayon or markers Pencil

Drawing Paper

Activity:

Teacher:

“We all like to have friends, don’t we? Why is that, do you think? Let’s think about how our good friends make us feel.” [Teacher hands out Friend Activity Page.]

Name: _____

Friend Activity Page My Friend

My friend: (check Yes or No).

Yes	No	
		Makes me feel good
		Calls me bad names
		Makes me feel bad
		Makes me laugh
		Listens to me
		Tells me bad secrets
		Makes me do things I don't like to do
		Makes me do things I'm not supposed to do
		Likes to do the same things I do
		Makes fun of me
		Is someone I respect
		Writes bad things about me on the Internet

On a separate sheet of paper, draw a picture of you and your friend doing something you like to do together.

Teacher:

“Let’s go through the list of ways that your friend makes you feel.” [Teacher reads the list on the activity page and asks students to raise their hands when he/she reads something they have marked with “yes.”]

“Now who wants to show us their picture and tell us what you and your friend like to do together?”

“Sounds as if you have some great friends. Having good friends makes us feel good. Do you know some people who claim to be your friends but are not nice to you? You know, you don’t have to do as these people say. Everybody needs good friends, but nobody needs bad friends. Those who claim to be our friends, but don’t treat us right, are not good friends.

Student Assessment/Reflection:

Teacher:

“Friends are important to us. We have fun with them. They are like gifts in our lives.”

“People who say they are our friends but make us feel sad or bad are not true friends. We don’t have to do what they say or do what they want us to do.”

FOURTH GRADE: Lesson Plan B

Learning Objective 2:

Learn to identify a safe adult.

Estimated Lesson Time: 30–45 minutes

Materials needed:

Safe Adult Activity Page

Safe Adult Identification Page Pen or pencil

Activity:

Teacher:

“Today, we’re going to talk about safe adults.” [Teacher hands out Safe Adult Activity Page.]

Option One

Teacher puts kids into groups of three to five. “I want you to think about what a safe adult is. The best way to know an adult is safe is to listen to what they say, watch how they behave, and listen to your feelings and intuition. Who can tell me what intuition is?” (In Grade 2, they learned that intuition is an extra sense that tells you when something is wrong.)

Option Two

An alternative is to split the class into three groups and ask each group to work on only one section of the Safe Adult Activity Page and then present what they’ve written.



Safe Adult Activity Page [Teacher’s Copy]

A safe adult says:

- _____ (“Look both ways!”)
- _____ (“No one has the right to hurt you.”)
- _____ (“You can tell me bad secrets.”)
- _____

A safe adult does

- _____ (Enforce rules about keeping safe)
- _____ (Listen when you need to talk)
- _____ (Not give you a bad secret)
- _____

A safe adult makes you feel

- _____ (Happy)
- _____ (Comfortable)
- _____ (Loved)
- _____

After students fill in the blanks, each group can tell the class what they have written, or individuals can volunteer to read what they have written.

Name: _____

Safe Adult Activity Page

A safe adult says:



A safe adult does

A safe adult makes you feel

Safe Adult Identification Page [Teacher’s Copy]

[Teacher hands out Safe Adult Identification Page.] “Now that you know how safe adults talk and behave, list the safe adults in your life and what they do that makes you feel safe.”



_____ is a safe adult in my life because



_____ is a safe adult in my life because



_____ is a safe adult in my life because



_____ is a safe adult in my life because

Name: _____

Safe Adult Identification Page



_____ is a safe adult in my life because



_____ is a safe adult in my life because



_____ is a safe adult in my life because



_____ is a safe adult in my life because

Student assessments/reflections:

Teacher:

“We’ve just learned that we identify safe adults by what they say and do, not who they are. A safe adult is respectful of your feelings, of your body and its private parts, and of the rules. It’s possible that someone we know may not behave and talk in ways that make us feel safe and comfortable. Even people we’ve known for a long time may make us feel bad. It’s ok to tell someone if someone you know makes you feel bad because feeling bad is a clue that some bad secret is surrounding this adult. You must give that bad secret to a trusted adult, so they can help you feel better and help the person you feel bad about. You are growing up fast, but adults are still bigger and stronger to handle bad secrets.”

FOURTH GRADE: Lesson Plan C

Learning Objective 3:

Learn how to respond to situations that make them feel uncomfortable.

Estimated Lesson Time: 30 minutes

Materials needed:

Scenarios, one for each group

Activity:

Teacher:

[Teacher assigns groups of no more than three.] “Now that you are in your groups, you are going to practice good ways to respond when someone says or does something that makes you feel uncomfortable. I am going to give each group a situation, and I want the group to develop a skit showing how the fourth grader in the skit should respond and how that fourth grader can give the bad secret or bad situation to the safe adult in the skit.”

Here are the scenarios:

For some groups:

**Three characters: A 4th Grader
Unsafe Adult
Safe Adult**

For other groups:

**Three characters: A 4th Grader
A Bully
A Safe Adult**

For other groups:

**Three characters: A 4th Grader
A Stranger
A Safe Adult**

Cut the scenarios out and give one to each group. You can ask that all children participate in groups, or you can ask for volunteers.

Scenario One:

An adult says he'll give the 4th grader 20 dollars, but he asks the fourth grader not to tell.

Scenario Two:

An adult offers to buy the 4th grader a video game that the fourth grader's parents don't want him to have.

Scenario Three:

A bully starts a rumor about a 4th grader that isn't true.

Scenario Four:

A 6th grade bully dares a 4th grader to break a touching rule. He dares the 4th grader to hit him. For example, "Go on, you baby, hit me!"

Scenario Five:

As the 4th grader is walking home from school, a car pulls to the curb, and a strange man asks the 4th grader to come to the car to help him with directions.

Scenario Six:

A 4th grade teacher often talks to one of her students about her (the teacher's) boyfriend, but she tells the 4th grader not to tell.

Scenario Seven:

The soccer coach tells one of the 4th grade team members that she is the best player he's ever seen. He thinks that if she'll practice with him on weekends, he can help her get a college scholarship one day. He tells her, though, that she shouldn't tell anyone else that they will be working alone together because they wouldn't understand.

Scenario Eight

A college student and counselor in the after-school care program always want to play with one of the 4th graders. The counselor shows him magic tricks and asks the boy to sit in his lap. He tells the boy that he'll come to the boy's house and do magic tricks for the boy's birthday. But he doesn't want the boy to tell anyone.

Teacher:

(After skits are performed) “Good job. You’ve learned a lot about how to tell trusted adults bad secrets and to keep yourself safe in uncomfortable situations. Do you think you would respond this way if someone were bothering you? Why? Why not?”

Student Assessment/Reflection:

Teacher:

“These lessons have shown you many things. First, you’ve learned that it’s possible for you to use your intuition to understand what makes a good friend. Also, you’ve learned what makes a safe adult and how they can help you overcome a bad secret. Finally, you learned how to tell safe adults if you are in a dangerous or uncomfortable situation.”