

Summary of Children's Safe Environment Training *Right Relationships* Questionnaire

Background. In August 2008, the Diocese of Salt Lake City deployed *Right Relationships*, a curriculum designed to educate children attending religious education programs or Catholic Schools in the Diocese on the Safe Environment Program. The curriculum was distributed to all Directors of Religious Education and Principals of Catholic Schools. At the end of the school year, the Diocesan Office of Safe Environment developed a questionnaire to solicit feedback to ensure the curriculum was meeting its goals and objectives; to revise the curriculum; and to develop supplemental materials that might assist teachers/catechists to present the lessons. The questionnaire was sent to the principals of 11 Catholic elementary schools, 3 Catholic high schools, and 14 Directors of Religious Education throughout the diocese with the request that they distribute the questionnaire to the teachers/catechists who had been involved in the training.

Twenty-eight individuals (respondents) responded to the questionnaire. The largest number of respondents were Catholic School Teachers (17) followed by Religious Education Teachers (8). Two Directors of Religious Education and one principal completed the questionnaire.

The questionnaire consisted of 11 informational questions (name, position, level of program, etc) and 11 questions relating to the curriculum. The respondents were requested to answer "yes" or "no" to the "curriculum" questions regarding the effectiveness/clarity of each specific section (Outline, Materials Needed, Instructions, Opening and Closing Prayers, Discussions/Activities, and Handouts) of each lesson (Know the Rules; Communication; Rules and Boundaries; Respect and Trust; and Unconditional Love, Forgiveness, and Reconciliation) In addition, respondents who answered "no" to any question were requested to identify the specific area of concern and make recommendations for improvement.

Although requested to complete an individual questionnaire for each lesson, some respondents "consolidated" all their responses on one form. Some respondents did not answer all the questions. Some respondents who answered a question "no" either did not identify the specific area of concern, or did not make a recommendation for improving the area, or did not provide any comment at all. Although comments were only requested when the respondent answered a question "no", some respondents who answered a question "yes," also provided a comment.

By far the largest responses reflect lessons taught at the primary level (22) as compared with six responses at the secondary level. Slightly more respondents use the "core" section of the lesson plan (14) as opposed to using the entire lesson plan (10).

Although one of the goals of the questionnaire was to identify the commercial textbook section that the “core” *Right Relationships* lessons supplemented, the goal was not achieved because of the variety of texts in use and the fact that the respondents did not identify the specific section of the text they used.

Summary of the responses to the questions relating to the curriculum:

Question 8. All but one response agreed that the Learning Objectives of the lessons to be clearly articulated. This respondent commented that the Learning Objectives were too simplistic for High School Students.

Question 9. All but one response agreed that the Outline supported the learning objectives. This respondent commented that the material was too simplistic to hold attention of High School students.

Question 10. All but two of the responses agreed that the list of Materials Needed to be complete. One respondent did not provide a comment and the other commented on the fact that reproducing some of the handouts used too much ink.

Question 11. All of the responses agreed that the Instructions in the lesson plan were clear and easy to follow.

Question 12. All of the responses agreed that the Instructions helped them achieve the goals of the lesson. Several respondents provided comments on how they adapted the Instructions to achieve the goals of the lesson.

Question 13. All but two of the responses agreed that the Opening and Closing Prayers supported the lesson objective. One respondent provided a suggested a revision that was incorporated into the lesson.

Question 14. All but two of the responses agreed that the Discussion areas and Activities were clearly written and easy to follow.

Question 15. All but six of the responses agreed that the Discussion areas and Activities helped them achieve the goals of the lesson. The respondents asked a number of questions about how the lessons and provided suggestions for improving the curriculum. Responses to the comments are provided in the Questionnaire Summary.

Question 16. All but ten of the responses agreed that the Discussion/Activity areas were easy to use. Communication and Love, Forgiveness and Reconciliation were the lessons for which respondents provided the most comments although several respondents who answered the question “no” did not provide a comment. Responses to the comments are provided in the Questionnaire Summary.

Question 17. All but six of the responses agreed that the Handouts helped support the objectives and goals of the lesson. Responses to the comments are provided in the Questionnaire Summary.

Question 18. All but nine of the responses agreed that the Handouts were easy to use. The handouts for Unconditional Love, Forgiveness, and Reconciliation received the most “no” responses (4) although two of the respondents did not provide comments to explain their response. Responses to the comments are provided in the Questionnaire Summary.

Question 19. All but five of the responses agreed that the Handouts were age appropriate for the lesson being taught. Responses to the comments are provided in the Questionnaire Summary.

Question 20. Respondents were asked to identify how they “felt” using the lesson plan by selecting from a list of phrases: Extremely comfortable, comfortable, Neutral, Uncomfortable, Extremely Uncomfortable. Overall, more than 70% of the responses reflected that the respondents were extremely comfortable or comfortable using the lesson plan. The lesson that drew the most “uncomfortable” responses was Unconditional Love, Forgiveness, and Reconciliation. Responses to the comments are provided in the Questionnaire Summary.

Question 21. Respondents were asked to identify what type of training or assistance the Diocese could provide that might help them overcome any difficulties they encountered teaching the lessons. Comments and responses are provided in the Questionnaire Summary.

Question 22. Respondents were asked if they would participate in these training sessions if offered by the Diocese. For those who indicated training was needed, about half indicated they would not participate if it was offered.

Question 23. Respondents were asked to provide comments on any other area of *Right Relationships* not covered in the questionnaire. The most prevalent comment was that the Questionnaire should have been provided earlier in the school year while the lessons were being taught. The Questionnaire will be posted to the diocesan website.

Conclusion: Two changes were made to the curriculum as a result of this survey: the prayer in the lesson on Communication has been modified to include the following: *“Please give us the courage to tell our feelings to people we trust”* and sample responses have been included in the Activity under Rules and Boundaries for “How to Say ‘No’”. These revisions are available at www.dioslc.org/safe-environment/childrensafeenvironmentcurriculum.