



Sample School Communications

The Monique Burr Foundation for Children is proud to partner with you to offer the *MBF Child Safety Matters*® program. Thank you for agreeing with us that Child Safety Matters and for implementing our program.

Protecting children requires the involvement of parents/guardians, schools, and communities. To assist you with educating and empowering parents and school staff, we are providing you with sample communications you may use on your school website and social media pages, in school newsletters, and for announcements to staff and students. We hope you will use these communications to introduce and reinforce the Safety Rules and safety concepts taught in the *MBF Child Safety Matters* program. You may also visit the Resources section at www.mbfpreventioneducation.org for additional content; and view our social media sites for other ideas to share with parents.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Use this brief program description on your website or in a school newsletter to inform parents about the program and where they can find more information.

Our school will be partnering with the Monique Burr Foundation for Children, a leader in abuse and bullying prevention, to implement their comprehensive, evidence-based prevention program called *MBF Child Safety Matters*®. Students receive two fun, engaging, and developmentally appropriate classroom lessons that educate and empower them to prevent, recognize, and respond appropriately to bullying, cyberbullying, all types of child abuse, digital abuse, and other digital dangers. A trained facilitator will be implementing the program in classrooms. Parents will receive information and materials as students participate in the lessons. To learn more about the program or about child safety, visit www.mbfpreventioneducation.org or download the mobile app, "Child Safety Matters," available at no cost from the App Store or Google Play.

TOPIC/INFORMATION BRIEFS

Use these topic and information briefs in school newsletters and on your social media pages to educate and empower staff and parents about the dangers faced by students and how to help better protect students.

The Need for Prevention Education

A high need for prevention education exists in schools as abuse and bullying have reached epidemic numbers in our country.

- » 1 in 10 children will be sexually abused before they reach their 18th birthday
- » 160,000 students stay home from school every day for fear of being bullied
- » The Department of Justice reports that 1 in 4 children is, or will be, bullied, and 1 in 5 cyberbullied

By using the *MBF Child Safety Matters*® program, our school is being proactive and helping to better protect our students.

Learn more at www.mbfpreventioneducation.org.



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Do You Know the 5 Safety Rules?

The MBF Child Safety Matters® program is based on 5 Safety Rules. Learn how to use these rules to better protect children at www.mbfpreventioneducation.org.

Safety Rule #1 – Know What's Up. Know personal information and general safety information and procedures.

Safety Rule #2 – Spot Red Flags. Recognize warning signs for yourself and others.

Safety Rule #3 – Make a Move. Respond to warning signs and unsafe situations to stay safe.

Safety Rule #4 – Talk It Up. Use a strong or assertive voice to say NO and to talk to a Safe Adult.

Safety Rule #5 – No Blame | No Shame. If you are hurt, you are never to blame and you should never be ashamed to tell.

October is Bullying Prevention Month

1 in 4 students will be bullied and 1 in 5 will be cyberbullied. Do you know how to prevent it from happening? We do. Our school is partnering with the Monique Burr Foundation for Children to provide the MBF Child Safety Matters® program to our students. By teaching students 5 Safety Rules they can use in any unsafe situation, we hope to prevent bullying and cyberbullying before it starts! Learn more about bullying and how to protect your child at www.mbfpreventioneducation.org.

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month

Did you know that most children are victimized by someone they and their family know and trust? Our school is partnering with the Monique Burr Foundation for Children to provide the MBF Child Safety Matters® program to our students. By teaching students 5 Safety Rules they can use in any unsafe situation, we hope to prevent abuse before it happens! Learn more about how to protect your child at www.mbfpreventioneducation.org.

Are you a Safe Adult?

The MBF Child Safety Matters® program teaches children to identify two Safe Adults who will help keep them safe from bullying, cyberbullying, all types of child abuse, digital abuse, and other digital dangers. If you are a Safe Adult, it means that you should be familiar with the 5 Safety Rules and how to respond if a child comes to you with a concern. Learn more and join our Safe Adult Club at www.mbfpreventioneducation.org.

Safety Rule #1: Know What's Up – Talk to children, listen to them and ask them questions about their activities and the people they spend time with. Learn about the technology and devices they are using (or can access).

Safety Rule #2: Spot Red Flags – Teach children safety concepts such as personal space and boundaries, to respect themselves and others, secrets and tricks, and online safety. Educate them on the dangers present in society and how to Spot Red Flag behaviors to identify unsafe situations, and how to seek help to minimize their risk of being victimized.

Safety Rule #3: Make a Move – When you suspect a child is being harmed, trust yourself and act. If a child tells you about abuse or bullying that has happened to him/her or another child, praise him/her for telling you and take action right away. Report bullying to the school or organization where it occurred. Report any inappropriate content or other unsafe online situations to the Cybertipline at 888-536-5678. Report suspected child abuse to your state child welfare agency (visit <https://www.childwelfare.gov/organizations/> for contact information).

Safety Rule #4: Talk It Up – Talk to children and other adults about safety, unsafe situations, and the Safety Rules. Let children know they can talk to you about safety when the need arises.

Safety Rule #5: No Blame | No Shame – Let children know they are never to blame if anything happens to them because adults are responsible for keeping them safe. Let them know they should never be ashamed to tell you about Red Flags, abuse, bullying, or anything else related to safety. Tell them you are there to help them.

What Will Your Digital Reputation Be?

According to the Institute for Responsible Online and Cellphone Communication (IROC2.org), all digital device users need to understand these concepts:

- » Public – Everything you post online is visible to anyone, no matter your privacy settings.
- » Permanent – Once you post something, it is out there forever. There is no way to take back words or images (pictures, videos, etc.), even if you press delete, because once shared, it may be viewable on the World Wide Web forever.

Even if your intentions are good as you use digital devices, information can spread that can cause harm or hurt. You should NEVER post anything if you are not okay with it becoming public and permanent. Visit www.publicandpermanent.org to learn more about digital risks and responsibilities and find other great resources, including a family contract regarding the use of digital devices.

Empathy, Kindness, and Bullying Prevention

According to Verywell.com, when we teach children to be kind and show empathy, we are helping to prevent bullying. Here are 7 ways to teach children to be empathetic:

1. Make sure children's emotional needs are met.
2. Ensure that children can identify and share their feelings.
3. Encourage children to explore other perspectives.
4. Model empathy using everyday experiences.
5. Teach children to find common ground with others.
6. Encourage children to imagine how someone else feels.
7. Talk to children about how their behavior impacts others.

Visit www.verywell.com/teach-empathy-and-prevent-bullying-460744 for helpful examples of these suggestions.

Upstanders Make a Difference

Research tells us that when peers intervene in a bullying situation as an Upstander (vs. being a Bystander and not taking action), the bullying stops nearly 60% of the time. Learn more about bullying prevention and #kindvibes at www.mbfpreventioneducation.org. Here are some ways to encourage children to be Upstanders in bullying situations:

- » **Confront the instigator in action.** If they feel safe, children can say something like, “Hey, that’s not cool, why are you doing that?” If children are friends with the instigator, they can talk to them later and ask them. Saying something like, “Did you know that you were being hurtful?” can help prevent similar behavior in the future.
- » **Walk away from the incident.** If there is no audience for the bullying, the incident is likely to stop. Students should encourage others who are watching to stop watching and to walk away. If they feel safe, children can also help the target of bullying get away.
- » **Reach out and talk to the target in private.** The impact of bullying won’t be as devastating if the target of the bullying feels they have support from their peers. Encourage children to talk to any target of bullying, and let them know it wasn’t their fault. Being present and supportive can make a big difference.
- » **Get help from a Safe Adult.** If children don’t know what to do, or if they feel it is unsafe to intervene directly, they should talk to a Safe Adult. Make sure children know who they can talk to, and encourage them to tell a teacher or counselor if they see anything that makes them uncomfortable.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Announcements are the perfect time to share information with your students and staff to educate and empower them with information to better protect students. Incorporate information about the program during announcements daily, weekly, or monthly. You can also have students recite the 5 Safety Rules during announcements each day.

Who are your Safe Adults?

Adults are responsible for protecting children, but there are things children can do to help adults keep them safe. All students need Safe Adults.

Has your class been through the *MBF Child Safety Matters* program yet? If so, you know the importance of having a Safe Adult. Remember that a Safe Adult is someone that is older than you who can help you when you are faced with an unsafe situation, an adult you can trust and depend on when you need help, someone who will take care of you and keep you safe. If you haven’t already identified your Safe Adults, think of two people you can trust for help. Choose one Safe Adult in your home and one outside of your home. Talk to your Safe Adults any time you Spot Red Flags or unsafe situations, or if you’ve been hurt. Safe Adults should join our Safe Adult Club to better protect children. Remind your Safe Adults to visit our website.

A Week of Safety!

With 5 Safety Rules, you can announce a rule a day for a week to introduce the Safety Rules to students and staff who have not yet received the *MBF Child Safety Matters* program, and to reinforce the Safety Rules to students and staff who are familiar with the program.

Monday: **Safety Rule #1 is Know What's Up**, which means:

- » You know your personal information such as your home address, and parents' full names and phone numbers.
- » You understand what to do in an emergency (Who you should call; where you should go; how to dial 9-1-1, etc.).
- » You have a private family password that can be used if someone ever needs to pick you up due to an emergency.

Tuesday: **Safety Rule #2 is Spot Red Flags**, which means:

- » You can spot warning signs that tell you that a situation is unsafe. One way to think of it is like a traffic light, and the red light means "do not go". Red flags are the same way; they are warning signs that let you know that you, or someone you know, might be unsafe.
- » You know who can hurt children and how.
- » You know your personal space and boundaries and when someone is violating them.
- » You know the warning signs of unsafe situations, such as someone trying to trick you, asking you to keep secrets, or looking at or touching your private body parts.
- » You know how to stay safe online.

Wednesday: **Safety Rule #3 is Make a Move**, which means:

- » If you are in an unsafe situation, you understand there are moves you can make that can help keep you safe.
- » If you are being hurt, or believe a friend is being hurt, you will Make a Move to help you or them stay safe.
- » If possible, you will Get Away from any unsafe situation.
- » If you know people or places that are unsafe, you will Stay Away.
- » You will also Get Away and Stay Away from unsafe situations online.

Thursday: **Safety Rule #4 is Talk It Up**, which means:

- » You will use a strong or assertive voice to say "No" in unsafe situations, for example if someone is hurting you.
- » You can even say "No" to an adult if they are doing unsafe or hurtful things.
- » You will use a strong or assertive voice to tell a person to stop hurting someone else.
- » You will talk to a Safe Adult if you feel unsafe, or if you aren't sure if a situation is safe.

Friday: **Safety Rule #5 is No Blame | No Shame**, which means:

- » If you are ever hurt, you know it is never your fault, no matter what happens. No matter when, where, how, or who hurts you, it is never your fault.
- » You know if someone hurts you (an adult or another child), you are never to blame and you should never be ashamed to tell a Safe Adult, even if it happened a long time ago.
- » You know that even if someone says you will get in trouble if you tell someone, it's not true.