

TEENAGERS PROGRAM FOR FAMILY SAFETY AND SECURITY: SANCTUARY

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In some families, members can get out of control and hurt or scare other members of the family by shouting loudly, by breaking things (like slamming doors or stuff like that), by swearing and calling names, by pushing or hitting. At times like that, family safety should be the most important thing. Otherwise, damage can happen that can take days or even months to repair.

So every member of the family should have a safe place where they can escape violence or extreme emotional upset. In that place, no one is allowed to make contact with you. They cannot yell at you, call you names, grab you, or hit you. **THIS PLACE SHOULD BE IN THE HOME SO THAT YOU DO NOT HAVE TO LEAVE HOME TO FEEL SAFE AND SECURE.** This place could be in your bedroom, or if that fails, in the basement, or if that is not available, try the garage. Make sure you remember to take your jacket and something to read or play with.

First, you have to let the parents know that you are scared. You tell them by using a special word that you only use in times like this. The word is "SANCTUARY." It's like when you are in this

state you are like an endangered species that needs special protection. You can have SANTUARY for 15 minutes at a time. During this time, all other family members are to leave you alone. At the end of this time they can come to see you, but if you are not ready yet, you can call SANCTUARY which protects you for another 15 minutes. If anybody doesn't respect SANCTUARY, a family meeting must take place as soon as possible because family safety is at stake.

Second, a problem can arise when you call SANTUARY when a parent or brother or sister needs your help right now. Like when they give you a job to do that's important to carry out soon, or when they have to leave to go somewhere but you're too upset or scared. The only fair thing to do is to take your SANCTUARY, but be prepared to face the consequences if something else bad happens because you didn't do your job. Like, if your SANCTUARY results in your missing a schedule to go somewhere, you may have to apologize to the other people for being late or absent, or pay a fine or other punishments, whatever the family decides at the next family meeting.

Third, it's a good idea when you call SANCTUARY not to do anything really provocative (needling, teasing, trying to pick a

fight) first. Like, don't say "You're a mean and selfish
brother. SANCTUARY! Ha! Ha!" And certainly, don't you say
anything else for 15 minutes after you've said SANCTUARY or you
have lost your protection. Sanctuary is a place for peace.