

We Care Parent Newsletter: Your Child's Boundaries

WHAT ARE BOUNDARIES?

Boundaries are limits on how we want others to act with us. We can put boundaries on personal space, physical things, communication and emotions. Everyone has a right to be heard and respected. Teaching children to recognize and recognizing personal boundaries is important in building healthy relationships. It is important to be aware of, and respect, the messages we receive about personal boundaries. By teaching children to set personal boundaries and respect other people's boundaries we are decreasing their risk of being victimized by, or engaging in, sexually harmful behaviors.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Model boundaries for your child and show them how you can recognize boundaries, check in with others about their boundaries and both communicate “no” and accept “no.”
- Talk with your child about what boundaries are and provide them with examples they can understand.
- Ask them to give you an idea of what situations they feel comfortable in and which ones they feel less comfortable.
- Talk about how to ask for permission from others by using words your child can understand and appropriate body language. Model how to accept “no.”
- Parents are advocates for their children and when a child's boundary for example, is crossed or the child is clearly uncomfortable, a parent needs to step in and help resolve the issue.
- Your child does not want to hug grandma goodbye and you suggest your child give grandma a high-five or a wave goodbye instead.



Questions?

If at any point you have any questions or concerns about We Care Elementary, please contact the We Care Elementary Team at:

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Vermont**

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Things to Think About

- There may be certain situations in which a child does not feel comfortable saying “no” and that is okay.
- As adults, we do not want to send the message that children are wrong for not communicating their boundaries or for not reporting boundary violations to adults. This may create a sense of guilt in children who are unable to do these things.
- Adults can help children work through confusing or mixed-up emotions. Parents can teach their children to recognize other adults (besides parents) who can also help when their child is confused about a feeling or boundary.

Curriculum at a Glance

Third Grade

1. Program Introduction and Safe Spaces
2. Self-Esteem
3. Support Systems and Understanding Feelings
4. Recognizing and Responding to Feelings
5. Body Language and Mixed Messages
6. Wrap-Up

Fourth Grade

1. Program Introduction and Safe Spaces
2. Trusted Adults and Asking for Help
3. Recognizing Feelings in Ourselves
4. Personal Boundaries
5. Mixed Up and Confused
6. Wrap-Up

Fifth Grade

1. Program Introduction and Safe Spaces
2. Empathy
3. Recognizing Others' Boundaries
4. Asking for Permission
5. Coping and Accepting No
6. Wrap-Up

Sixth Grade

1. Program Introduction and Safe Spaces
2. Sexuality
3. Sexual Harassment
4. Body Language
5. Adult Support and Resources
6. Wrap-Up