



GCAPP PARENT TOOLKIT:

Personal Safety and Boundaries

Teaching children to establish and respect boundaries is essential for understanding consent. Parents and caregivers have a vital role by demonstrating this behavior and respecting boundaries in daily life.

What Are Personal Boundaries?

Boundaries are limits people set to protect their physical and emotional space. They help individuals feel safe, in control, and respected in relationships.

- **Verbal boundaries:** e.g., "I prefer handshakes to hugs."
- **Nonverbal boundaries:** e.g., choosing to sit across from someone instead of next to them.

Boundaries should be consistent and clearly communicated, especially if someone feels they've been crossed.

Teaching Children About Boundaries and Consent

► **Setting their own boundaries:**

Help children understand what they're comfortable with in different situations and remind them that it's okay if those boundaries change over time.

► **Respecting others' boundaries:**

Teach them that when someone says "stop" or shows discomfort, the right response is to stop immediately.

► **Consent in everyday life:**

Show them that consent applies beyond sexual situations. Encourage kids to ask before borrowing items, posting photos, making group plans, or touching others.

Key Messages for Children

Your body belongs to you.

You decide if, when, and how people touch you. If someone touches you in a way that makes you uncomfortable, tell them to stop. If they don't stop, come to me or another trusted adult.

Respect others.

You cannot touch someone if they don't want to be touched. If someone asks you to stop, you must stop right away.

You can always come to me.

If you or someone you know feels unsafe or is in an unhealthy relationship, talk to me or another trusted adult. You can also visit breakthecycle.org for help.

Privacy matters.

Never share private texts or photos without permission. Sending or forwarding explicit photos even to a romantic partner can be against the law and have serious consequences.

If someone ever forces you into sexual activity

tell a trusted adult right away so you can get the care and support you need.

TIPS FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

- *Advocate for your child if they seem uncomfortable in situations, such as being pressured to hug someone. Point out their cues and support their decision.*
- *Model healthy relationships by practicing respect, communication, compromise, and boundaries in your own life.*
- *Talk openly about your friendships and what makes them healthy, so your child learns from real examples.*

SOURCE:

- Talkingtokids.org

RESOURCES:

- <https://www.virtusonline.org/educators/Teaching-Boundaries-and-Safety-Guide-English.pdf>

CITES:

- <https://childmind.org/article/teaching-kids-boundaries-empathy/>
- <https://youthvillages.org/5-ways-to-teach-your-teens-healthy-boundaries/>



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