

Lesson 12: Understanding Boundaries & Setting Boundaries

OBJECTIVES

1. Students will identify characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationships
2. Students will understand how people establish and maintain clear boundaries and why boundaries are an important part of a healthy relationship.
3. Students will understand and be able to practice setting clear boundaries

AGENDA

5 minutes	Do now
2 minutes	Review Group Agreements/Ground Rules
8 minutes	Setting Healthy Boundaries
20 minutes	Setting and Respecting Boundaries Worksheet Activity
5 minutes	Closing/Exit ticket & Homework

MATERIALS

- Whiteboard or flipchart paper
- Setting and Respecting Boundaries Worksheet Activity
- Homework worksheet
- Vocabulary Reference List

SUGGESTED ACCOMMODATIONS

- Do Now: Have students circle yes/no/I don't know, then provide students with visual selection of feelings to choose from.
- Setting Healthy Boundaries Chart:
 - Provide pre-written examples of personal boundaries and boundaries being crossed for students to share aloud with class.
 - For students with assistive communication needs participating in class discussion, collaborate with Special Education Staff to provide participation opportunities, (i.e., pre-program voice output device, have student hold up/point to selected example).
- Setting and Respecting Boundaries Worksheet:
 - If student is selected as recorder, provide option to dictate answer to group member.
- Exit Ticket:
 - Consider alternative exit ticket format, (i.e., multiple choice, fill in the blank).

CALIFORNIA HEALTH EDUCATION STANDARDS

2.5.G Recognize that there are individual, family, and cultural differences in relationships.

4.3.G Use healthy and respectful way to express friendships, attraction, and affection.

4.5.G Demonstrate how to ask for help from parents, other trusted adults, or friends when pressured to participate in sexual behavior.

7.1.G Describe strategy for refusing unwanted sexual activity.

8.2.3 Support and encourage safe, respectful, and responsible relationships

Note: Language is really important and we've intentionally been very careful about our language throughout this curriculum. You may notice language throughout the curriculum that seems less familiar - using the pronoun "they" instead of "her" or "him", using gender neutral names in scenarios and role-plays and referring to "someone with a vulva" vs. a girl or woman. This is intended to make the curriculum inclusive of all genders and identities. You will need to determine for yourself how much and how often you can do this in your own school and classroom, and should make adjustments accordingly.

DO NOW ACTIVITY
5 minutes
Materials

- Every student needs a notebook, journal, or paper and a pen
- Flipchart or whiteboard and markers

Do now activity

Have you ever asked someone to not do something?

How did it make you feel to have to say no?

How did the other person or people respond?

Review Agreements/Ground Rules
2 minutes

Review group agreements with students. Emphasize that today's lesson requires them to practice respect and empathy. Boundaries and boundary setting may be a sensitive topic to discuss for some of them.

Teacher Tip: The topic of boundaries and boundary setting can be a very sensitive topic and it may trigger students to feel uncomfortable, acknowledge that all feelings that come up are normal yet students still need to respect the class agreements. Most SFUSD middle schools have a Social Worker or School District Nurse on site. It is strongly suggested that you invite one or both the Social Worker and the School District Nurse to be present while the topic of boundaries and boundary setting is being discussed.

Setting Healthy Boundaries

8 minutes

Teacher script: Today we are going to talk about setting and respecting boundaries in our relationships. Boundaries are the guidelines, rules, and limits each person has for themselves to keep them safe, healthy and respected. We are covering this topic to support you to develop skills to have healthy, and equitable relationships that are free from violence. Thinking about personal boundaries can be challenging to do on your own, so we are going to have some activities where you will work in small groups. Let's get started!

Instructions:

1. On your white board or flip chart paper write the following:
 - ✓ What is a boundary? What are boundaries?
 - ✓ Examples of personal boundaries and examples of boundaries being crossed,
2. Tell students that as a class we are going to create a chart with examples of personal boundaries as well as examples of boundaries being crossed.
3. Let students know that the examples do not have to be their own personal boundaries, just ones they can think of.

The white board or flip chart paper might look similar to the chart below.

Boundaries and Boundary Setting Chart

Brain Storm: What is a boundary?	
Examples of Personal Boundaries	Examples of Boundaries Being Crossed

For the what are boundaries section of the chart:

What is a boundary? – a line, a limit of subject you are willing to talk about or a limit of things you are willing to do.

Examples of boundaries:

- “I want to hear about your day. I’ll be free to give you my full attention in 15 minutes.”
- “I’m not willing to argue with you.”

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- “I will hang out with you, but I will not gossip about other people.”
 - “I really enjoy holding your hand while walking together, but I don’t want to kiss you when we say good bye.”
 - “I like you but I don’t enjoying hugging people, please stop asking for hugs.”

For the Personal Boundaries Section of the Chart:

Examples of boundaries we set:

- **Physical contact**, (*i.e. I don’t like to hug people unless I know them well*)
 - **Keeping your personal space** (*i.e. I don’t like it when people I don’t know touch me or get really close to me or I prefer that someone asks to borrow my things before taking them*)
 - **Language** (*i.e. I prefer to not use cuss words when talking to people*).
4. Have students share examples of personal boundaries (gather at least ten examples): As students share out their examples of boundaries, **write the boundaries up on a piece of chart paper/chalk board/white board.**

Teacher Tip: It’s important to acknowledge that what is acceptable as safe or personal space is different around the world. In some cultures it’s polite to always make eye contact when talking to someone in other cultures it’s polite to not make eye contact when talking to someone older or in a position of authority. What’s important in this case is to let others know when they are crossing a personal boundary with you and respect if someone else let’s you know that you have crossed their comfort for personal boundaries. Each person will have a different personal boundaries – which is okay! Everyone’s boundaries are valid and need to be respected.

For the Boundaries Crossed Section of the Chart:

Examples of boundary crossing:

- **Bring up physical contact** (*i.e. someone I didn’t know well came up to me and hugged me*)
- **Keeping your personal space** (*i.e. someone touches your arm to get your attention or someone takes part of your lunch without asking*) **and**
- **Language** (*i.e. someone starts using cuss words to talk about another person while you are hanging out with them*).

Examples of boundaries being crossed (gather at least ten examples): As students share out their examples of boundaries crossed, **write the boundaries up on a piece of chart paper/chalk board/white board.**

Teacher script: *This is a long list! There are many examples of personal boundaries and boundaries being crossed here. Set boundaries to let people know what we like or don't like and what we want them to do or not do. All these boundaries listed here are important. Now we are going to think about setting personal boundaries with people.*

Teacher Tip: If students don't mention the following, add them to the chart.

- ✓ Cat calling,
- ✓ Sending unsolicited Snaps of someone's penis or sex organs,
- ✓ Human trafficking,
- ✓ An adult family member expects a hug or a kiss and you don't feel like hugging or kissing that person,
- ✓ Sexual assault also known as rape,
- ✓ Sending 'DMs' (*DM is short for a direct message that are sent through Instagram*) to people you don't know to tell them they are "hot" or proposing to have sex.

Setting and Respecting Boundaries Worksheet Activity

20 minutes

Teacher script: *Everybody has his or her own set of boundaries. It is their right to set those boundaries and for those boundaries to be respected. As you start to date, the issue of boundaries is going to come up around sex and sexuality which can make them more sensitive but still important to discuss.*

Instructions for Boundary Worksheet Activity:

1. Break the class into groups of 3. Tell them you are going to give them a worksheet with some scenarios on them. Ask them to complete the sheets in their groups. Distribute one sheet per group.
2. After about ten minutes of working, ask for the class' attention and ask a volunteer to read the first example. Ask different groups to share what they thought about how each person in the scenario responded, as well as what they could have done differently.
3. As students respond, write key words on the board or flipchart paper to reinforce effective communication about boundaries.

Teacher Tip: *Depending on the type of class you have, you may wish to have students actually role play these scenarios at the front of the class so they can see these suggestions in action to determine what was most useful or helpful and why.*

Examples of effective communication might include:

- ✓ “Be clear,”
- ✓ “Stop when someone says no,”
- ✓ “Be direct but try not to be mean about it,” etc.

4. Have a different student read the second example aloud and again ask for volunteers from different groups to share their responses to the two questions. If they refer to something already written on the board, write a check mark next to that term/phrase; if they contribute something new, add it to the list.

Teacher script: You just developed a really great list of effective ways to communicate boundaries. Now, we are going to take a deeper dive into the scenarios to think about what makes it hard to set boundaries sometimes. That way, we can feel more prepared when we get an opportunity to either set our own boundary or learn about someone else’s.

Discussion questions:

What messages have you seen in the media about boundaries? For example, how do you see men respecting or not respecting women’s boundaries in the media?

How do the messages you receive from the media influence how you or the people you know set or respect boundaries?

What can be hard about setting boundaries? Does it matter if you are in public or around other people?

How do you think it felt for Julia to have her boundaries disrespected? What do you think it feels like when boundaries are respected?

Teacher’s Script: *Everybody has their own personal set of boundaries. It’s important that we respect other peoples’ boundaries and that we can set our own boundaries. We get mixed messages from the media that make it seem okay to disrespect peoples’ boundaries or that our own boundaries are not important. We also know it may be hard to set boundaries with someone who has more power because they are older, they have more money, they are physically bigger, or because they are more popular at school. But it is never okay to disrespect someone else’s boundaries or to have yours disrespected—and that’s one of our main messages for today. You all did a great job today!!*

Closure

5 minutes

Give students three minutes to fill out the exit ticket before leaving class. Go over homework.

Exit Ticket

Name: _____ Period: _____

1. Today I learned...
2. I'm still wondering about?
3. Boundary setting is important because...

Exit Ticket

Name: _____ Period: _____

4. Today I learned...
5. I'm still wondering about?
6. Boundary setting is important because...

Setting and Respecting Boundaries Worksheet

Name of Group Members: _____, _____, _____

Period: _____ Date: _____

Instructions: Please read each example and discuss in your groups how you think the characters should handle each situation. Elect one person to be the writer and have that person record your answers in the space provided.

Chris and Jesse are one of the first couples in 7th grade. Chris loves that everyone knows they're a couple, and always holds Jesse's hand in the hallway or puts her arm around Jesse. Jesse really likes Chris, but has never been a really physical person and doesn't like the public touching. The next time Chris sees Jesse at school, she wraps her arm around Jesse's waist, gives a gentle squeeze and says, "Hi!" Jesse, embarrassed, says, "You don't have to do that every time we see each other." Chris pulls back immediately, says "fine" and walks away.

How do you think Chris handled this situation? What could Chris have done differently?

How do you think Jesse handled this situation? What could Jesse have done differently?

Max and Julia spend a lot of time together now that they're a couple. When they find some private time alone, they like to kiss a lot. Max really wants to do something more, and so the next time they're alone together, he tries to pull Julia's shirt up and reach for one of her breasts. She pulls it back down and says, "No," but keeps kissing Max. He tries again, and she says, "Max, no." Max remembers seeing in a movie that if you keep trying, sometimes the other person gives in – so he tries again. Julia pushes him off, stops kissing him, and says, "I'm going home" and leaves.

How do you think Max handled this? What could Max have done differently?

How do you think Julia handled this? What could Julia have done differently?

Homework: What's Your Advice?

Name: _____ Period: _____ Date: _____

Instructions: Read each of the situations described below. Then write down what you think the best advice is for the people seeking your help.

1. Your friend Star comes to you and says they really need to talk to you about something. Star says that earlier in the day, they cornered someone you both know at school in the bathroom when no one else was there and touched them between their legs, saying, "I know you want it." Star has a feeling that what they did was not okay but isn't sure what to do about it. What would you tell them to do?
2. Your friend Jazz is in a relationship with Sammy. Jazz really likes Sammy and wants to make out. Jazz isn't sure if Sammy is ready because they haven't talked about it. Last time they were physically affectionate together, Sammy seemed uncomfortable. Jazz is coming to you for your advice. What do you tell them to do?