

# Virtual Lab School



Welcome!

Live Webinar will begin at 11:00 EST

# Setting Professional Boundaries

September 12, 2024

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# To support your learning...

- ✓ All participants have been muted
- ✓ Please type questions or comments into Chat
- ✓ We will monitor the CHAT and answer questions throughout the training
- ✓ This session is being recorded to share on the Virtual Lab School site
- ✓ We encourage you to participate in the polls throughout the training
- ✓ Share your feedback after the training!
- ✓ If we disconnect – please log back in

# LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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- ☐ Describe boundaries and their importance in your role as a professional
- ☐ Discuss ways to communicate and model professional boundaries
- ☐ Evaluate strategies for maintaining boundaries with colleagues, families, and adolescents in youth programs
- ☐ Identify VLS tools and resources that support setting and maintaining boundaries



## SHARE OUT- CHAT

*What words or images come to mind when  
you hear the word boundary?*

*“When we define what we need to feel secure and healthy, when we need it, and create tools to protect those parts of ourselves, we can do wonders for our well-being at work and at home — which, in turn, allows us to bring our best selves to both places.”*

*-Sanok, 2022, Harvard Business Review*



# Benefits of Boundaries



Increases  
productivity



Lowers stress



Defines  
reasonable  
expectations

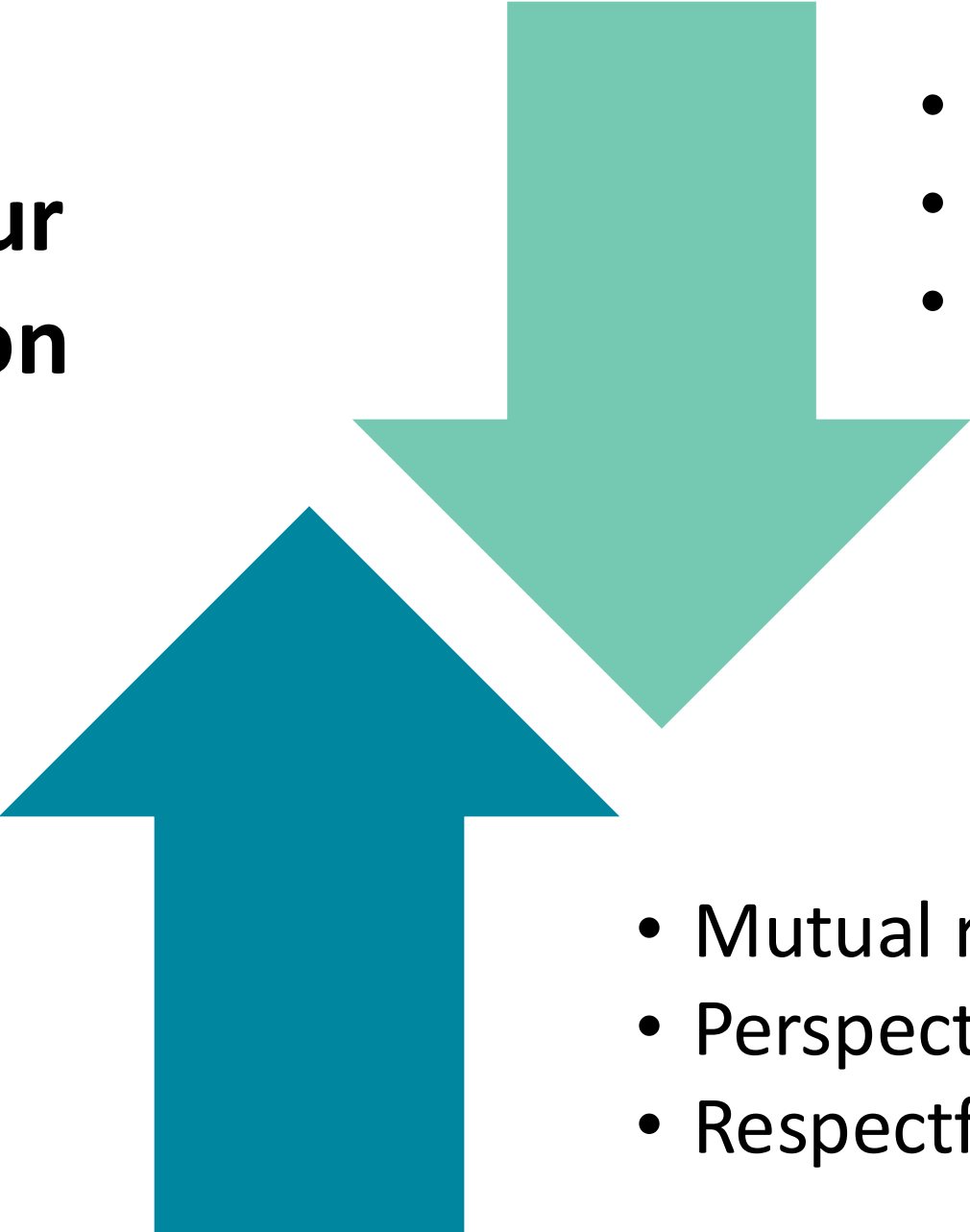


Reduces the  
risk of  
burnout



Sets positive  
example

# Effects of Your Boundaries on Others

- 
- Burnout
  - Resentment
  - Conflict

- Mutual respect
- Perspective taking
- Respectful dialogue



# Types of Workplace Boundaries

## Physical

*Shaking hands versus hugging*

*Closing your door to signal you're busy*

*Labeling personal belongings*

## Emotional

*Delegating work or tasks*

*Communicating how you prefer to receive appreciation*

*Avoid engaging with negative attitudes*

## Mental

*Establishing work-life balance*

*Practicing time management strategies*

*Refraining from gossip*

# Personal Boundaries

- Rules naturally develop
- Vision based on own values
- Fairness
- Intimacy
- Risk hurt

Collaboration  
Goals  
Mutuality  
Respect  
Norms

# Professional Boundaries

- Policies & procedures
- Vision based on organizational values
- Hierarchical
- Diplomacy
- Risk employment



Guide

Management / Professionalism / Lesson 1

## Content Area 10: Professionalism

The following core competencies provide guidance about the knowledge and skills needed to work effectively with children and their families. (Wisconsin Core Competencies For Professionals Working with Children and Families)

- A. Commit to working within the regulations, practices, code of ethics, and standards of the profession.
- B. Demonstrate knowledge of applicable state and agency regulations with respect to child abuse, neglect, and reporting of child abuse, and others.
- C. Be knowledgeable about community, county, state, and national resources; interact with families and professionals; and be able to make appropriate referrals.
- D. Value participatory management, model work standards, and other principles of professional practice.
- E. Work collaboratively with community and professional resources, and advocate for children and families.
- F. Work collaboratively as a member of a team by practicing openness to new ideas, using facilitation skills, and using conflict resolution skills.
- G. Become skilled at communication, conflict resolution, working with difficult people, and understanding limitations.
- H. Apply strategies to evaluate outcomes and assess effectiveness of programs and services.
- I. Utilize opportunities to regularly identify, gather, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information.
- J. Stay current on the latest research and technology.
- K. Practice visionary leadership, collaboration, and advocacy to a wide audience.
- L. Practice self-reflection and evaluation to have an effect on others.

### MGT, Professionalism, Lesson 1



Reflection

Management / Professionalism / Lesson 1

## Professionalism: Creating a Climate of Trust, Respect, and Safety

Use the following questions when you interview another program leader that you admire to help you complete this questionnaire.

1. Think about a program administrator, coach, or mentor that you admire. What do they do to earn respect and trust from staff?
2. What professional behaviors have helped the individual maintain the staff's respect and trust?
3. Has the individual created a safe environment where staff can speak honestly about concerns and issues about the individual's own leadership style and/or practices?
4. What advice does the individual have about developing professionalism among staff?
5. What resources has the individual found helpful to creating a trusting, respectful, and safe working environment?



## Code of Ethical Conduct

### Supplement for Early Childhood Program Administrators

Adopted July 2006, Reaffirmed and Updated May 2011

#### A Position Statement Supplement of the National Association for the Education of Young Children

Adopted by the National Association for Family Child Care

Programs for young children are re-seeing all program operations, serving programs, and representing the field. Early childhood program administrators to sustain relationships with a wide range of families, program personnel, government agencies, funders, regulatory agencies, and the profession. Administrators deal with unique responsibilities in the course of managing programs and assume leadership roles in their programs. As managers and leaders, they are called upon to share their professional expertise with families, personnel, government agencies, funders, regulatory agencies, and the profession. They demonstrate empathy for the children they serve; and communicate respect, knowledge, and expertise of teaching and learning to families, personnel, and families. Administrators accept responsibility for executing the program's mission and carrying out program duties that support that mission. They are committed to continue their own professional and the continuing education of the program they lead. Administrators ensure that all children being able to gain from programming. Some of the challenges administrators involve balancing their obligations to nurture children with their responsibilities to address the needs and safeguard the rights of families and personnel and respond to the requirements of their boards and sponsoring agencies.

sibility to address the needs and safeguard the rights of families and personnel and respond to the requirements of their boards and sponsoring agencies.

#### Purpose of the Supplement

Like those in the field who work directly with young children, program administrators are regularly called upon to make decisions of a moral and ethical nature. The NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct (revised 2005, reaffirmed and updated 2011) is a foundational document that maps the ethical dimensions of early childhood educators' work in early care and education programs. Program administrators share the ethical obligations assumed by all early childhood educators—obligations that are reflected in the core values, ideals, and principles set forth in the Code. Administrators embrace the central commitment of the early care and education field—and the Code—to ensure the well-being and support the healthy development of young children.

*Note:* This Supplement was reaffirmed by the NAEYC Governing Board in May 2011 and changes were made to Ideals and Principles that regard responsibilities to families to ensure alignment with current family engagement best practices in the field. In addition, references to the Code of Ethical Conduct, Section III, Part C: Responsibilities to Employees were deleted, as Section III, Part C was deleted in the May 2011 update of the Code.

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### FT, Leadership Essentials, Lesson 2



## SHARE OUT- POLL

*What areas do you find challenging with regards to setting and maintaining professional boundaries?*



## SHARE OUT- POLL

*Which of these thoughts best describes your challenge in setting boundaries?*

# Setting & Maintaining Professional Boundaries



Assess your personal needs



Set limits and realistic expectations



Communicate directly



Establish routines



Seek support

# Labeling Your Boundaries

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Hard Boundaries → Non-Negotiables

Soft Boundaries → Aspirations





## SHARE OUT- CHAT

*What is one hard boundary or non-negotiable  
you would like to (or have) set?*






# **Professional Boundaries in Specific Settings**

# Coaching Partnership



- Time Management
- Delegation
- Expectations
- Difficult Conversations

FT, Using the  
VLS, Lesson 3

  
Program Tool

Focused Topics / Using the VLS: Coaching to Enhance Practice / Lesson 3

## Coach-Staff Member Agreement



Share this agreement with each staff member that you work with. Review each statement, sign your name, and present this agreement to your staff. Discuss any questions that staff members have about this agreement. Keep a signed copy of this document for your records. Use the spaces provided to add any additional items to this agreement.

**As a coach, I will:**

- Commit to supporting the various needs of staff in my program, including your unique needs
- Focus on your strengths
- Recognize your professional growth and value toward progress
- Demonstrate flexibility, and understand that at different paces and in different ways
- Build your capacity for self-initiated learning and solving
- See things from others' perspectives
- "Roll-up my sleeves" and offer to model discussion
- Review and give feedback on coursework in a timely manner
- Follow through with commitments and timelines
- Recognize when your questions or needs are outside of knowledge and practice and find someone to ask for help
- Ask for and give objective feedback
- Keep information about you and other staff members confidential and only discuss performance with an administrator when necessary
- Engage in honest self-reflection about my coaching helpfulness to others
- Respect your beliefs and ideas

**As a staff member or family child care provider, I will:**

- Evaluate my own professional strengths and needs
- Recognize the perspectives of others

Sign and Date:

Staff Member:	
Coach:	

Live Leadership Webinar,  
Feb 2023

## Live Leadership Recordings

### Time Management & Organization in Leadership

16 FEB 2023

Time management and organization are essential to leading and managing high quality child and youth programs. This webinar focuses on strategies and tools to manage your time and tasks and highlights ways to become more organized and productive in your role as a program leader. In this training we examine the research on time management, strategies on how to manage your time more efficiently and effectively, and organizational systems to support the successful operation of your program. In addition, we highlight VLS tools and resources that program leaders can use to organize and manage tasks within the program.



**Time Management & Organization in Leadership**

February 16, 2023

Kristen Knight, M.S., Assistant Director of PD & Training, VLS  
Kaleigh Matesick, M.A., Training & Development Content Lead, VLS

Welcome everyone to our first live leadership webinar of 2023.

0:01 / 38:32

# Family Partnerships

Professional relationship	Social and personal relationships
Take place during "paid" time	Take place during "non-paid" time
Involve meeting designated job responsibilities	Not based on responsibilities
Service-oriented	Not intended to provide a service
Focused on serving the child and family	Focused on shared interests
Goal-directed	Not generally focused on a goal
Time limited - they exist for the length of time a service is provided	Time unlimited - they can go on for as much (or as little time) as the people involved choose

Source: Feeney, S., Freeman, N., & Moravcik, E. (2020, December). Focus on Ethics. Professional Boundaries in Early Childhood Education. Young Children. <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/dec2020/professional-boundaries>.

# Challenging our own or others' boundaries

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## Boundary Crossing

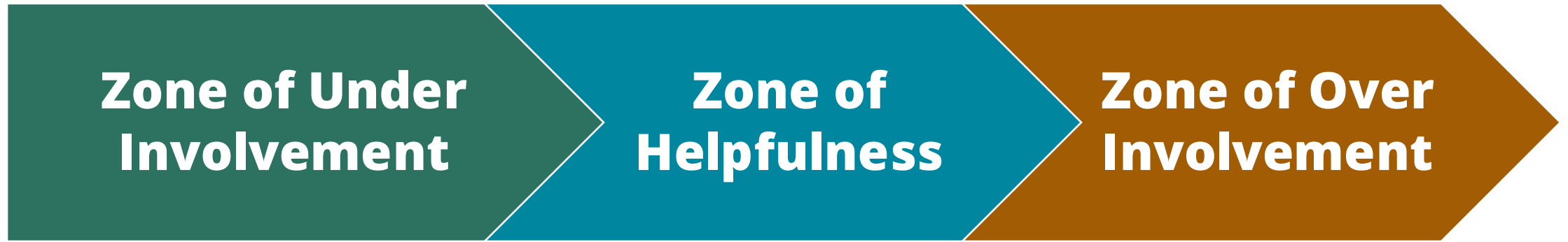
- Inadvertent
- Thoughtless
- Non-exploitative
- Attempt to help

## Boundary Violation

- Potentially Harmful
- Exploitative
- Consequential
- Self-serving



# Zone of Helpfulness



**Zone of Under  
Involvement**

**Zone of  
Helpfulness**

**Zone of Over  
Involvement**

Disinterested/ Uncaring  
*Not in the best interest of  
the child/ youth/ family*

Caring/ Helpful  
*In the best interest of the  
child/ youth/ family*

Inappropriate Engagement  
*Not in the best interest of  
the child/ youth/ family*

# Family Child Care Programs

- Unique Hours
- Continuity of Care
- Personal Space
- Provider's Family



## SAMPLE CONTRACT

Welcome! I am pleased that you have chosen my childcare home and look forward to sharing in the growth and development of your child. I offer a planned program of developmentally appropriate activities, which includes music and movement, outdoor play, story time and language development, art dramatic play and self-help skills. All of these activities are located on the Daily Activity Plan, which is posted on my parent board for your review.

This contract may be used freely.  
Modify it so that it adequately represents your personal style.

SAMPLE: Parent Provider Agreement  
Navy Region Southwest Child Development Homes (CDH) Program

Agreement entered into this \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_ between \_\_\_\_\_ herein referred to as Provider, and \_\_\_\_\_, parents of \_\_\_\_\_.

### HOURS & CHILD CARE FEES

My home is open for childcare from \_\_\_\_\_ AM until \_\_\_\_\_ PM, Monday through Friday.  
I agree to care for your child from \_\_\_\_\_ AM \_\_\_\_\_ PM, M ☐ Tu ☐ W ☐ Th ☐ F ☐  
Parents arriving late to pick up their child will be charged \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for every \_\_\_\_\_ minute(s) late.  
☐ I am available for evening care.  
☐ I am NOT available for evening care.  
☐ I am available for weekend care.  
☐ I am NOT available for weekend care.  
Additional Fees for evening and weekend care are \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per hour. Subsidized children are qualified for extended hourly care. For more information regarding extended care, please refer to the Parent Fee application.  
Childcare fees are due one week in advance. Fees for care are:  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_ per week, per child  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_ per hour, per child

### Fee Schedule:

For the above listed hours of care for \_\_\_\_\_, we agree to pay the fees listed above. We understand that this is a guaranteed rate and includes full pay for holidays with no credit for absent days, including your vacation time.

Although family daycare is a form of self-employment, unlike other businesses, there is no room for growth or expansion due to licensing regulation. I do not receive any benefits that most employees take for granted such as: health insurance, paid sick days, vacation days or personal days, workers' compensation, retirement/pension pay, unemployment insurance, annual raises and bonuses. My contractual policies reflect this.

Fees are due in advance and payable no later than the first day of the week that your child attends.

Late Fees: A \$ \_\_\_\_\_ fee will be assessed for every day your fees are not paid on time and your child may not be accepted until your fee is paid, except under circumstances prearranged and agreed to by provider.

Checks will be accepted. If, however, two checks are returned by the bank, your fee will be accepted in cash only. You will be responsible for any fees assessed to my account.

Parents will pay a \$28.00 fee for returned checks and will reimburse the Provider for any bank charges incurred for insufficient funds caused by the returned check(s).

# Youth Programs



Reflection

Training 8, Curriculum Specialist / Professionalism / Lesson 4

## Professionalism and Social Media



As a program leader, you are charged with helping staff members to succeed at their work and feel positive about their contributions to the quality of the program. Additionally, it is your job to help staff members understand and recognize the importance of professionalism in the workplace and outside the workplace. This can be difficult today given the prevalence of social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.). Individuals use social media to share personal information, post pictures, and discuss a variety of topics.

Write the answers to the following questions and develop a plan (collaborate with staff and seek family input) about expectations for professional behavior and use of social media with regard to the program.

1. What policies or procedures are in place regarding professional behavior?
2. What image do you have for the program?
3. How do you want the program's image portrayed to others on the installation and in the community?
4. What issues of confidentiality arise with the use of social media that involves the children, families and staff involved in the program?
5. How do we as a staff want to address professionalism when using social media?

Source: Schweikert, G. (2013). *Being a supervisor: Winning ways for early childhood professionals*. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press.

# Does a Situation Involve Boundaries? (NAEYC, 2020)

Here are some reflection questions that may help you determine whether you are about to cross a boundary as a professional.

- Why is this situation bothering me?
- Does the action I am considering primarily support the needs or well-being of the child and family, or does this action primarily support my needs or well-being?
- Does this action involve fairness for all children and families?
  - Might it be seen as favoring those of a particular group?
- Will this action cause a family to become dependent on me? Will they be able to manage if I am not available to them?
- Am I sharing highly personal information that is unrelated to work with children and families?
- Am I giving advice on an issue that I do not have training to address?

[Adapted from: https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/dec2020/professional-boundaries](https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/dec2020/professional-boundaries)



# Self-Awareness & Self-Care

## TCS, Self & Cultural Understanding, Lesson 3

### Taking Care of Yourself While Taking Care of Others

To help others do their best work, you must be at your best, as well. Reflect on why flight attendants instruct adults to put on their own oxygen masks before helping others. Your instinct may be to jump in to help others, but you cannot be effective if you are exhausted or unwell. Burnout is a real risk. Fortunately, there are steps you can take to manage your stress and build your resilience.

- **Values and vision:** Go back to lesson one of this course and think about the values that guide you. What is your mission? What do you want people to say about you at your retirement party? What parts of your work serve your mission and put you on the path you want? What parts do not? How can you start to change the parts that do not serve you?
- **Energy meter:** Spend some time paying attention to your own energy. What types of activities make you feel energized? What types of activities or situations drain your energy? What's your ideal energy state?
- **Build community:** Seek out others who do the work you do. Can you arrange a virtual book club or coffee chat with other trainers and coaches? If you live near other coaches, gathering monthly to share joys and challenges can be very restorative. Encourage staff to do the same.
- **Know your triggers:** Everyone has situations that make them feel escalated or overwhelmed. Make a plan for what you can do when these feelings arise. If you need time alone, plan for a way to naturally break from the situation. Volunteer to go change the laundry or deliver meal carts. If more sustained time away is an option, can you listen to a 5min meditation on your phone? Can you take a quick walk outside?
- **Plan your day:** Once you know your energy and triggers, plan your day thoughtfully. Build in transition time between classrooms, breaks for yourself, and time to get caught up on paperwork. Match tasks with your energy and moods. If you like to start the day with a clean desk, spend five minutes at the end of each day organizing and preparing for tomorrow. If email drains you, schedule time specifically for responding to emails and plan something energizing afterwards.
- **Fill your bucket:** You likely entered this career because you loved working with children. Maybe now your career focuses largely on adults, and this is hard for you. Seek out ways to get back into classrooms. This can help "fill your bucket" and re-energize you. Make a point of spending time each day just playing with or talking to children. Rock babies while a staff member takes a break or greet the youth as they get off the bus in the afternoon.
- **Play:** Model the value of play and fun. Dress up with preschoolers, dance with school-agers. Put a puzzle in the staff room for staff to work together on as they pass by. Notice the way play makes you feel.

### Virtual Lab School



Guide

Training & Curriculum Specialist / Self & Cultural Understanding / Lesson 3

## The Power of "No"

It's easy to feel overwhelmed by work and life. One of the easiest stress busters is learning the simple word, "no." It's not always easy! But saying "no" is an important part of setting boundaries and preserving time for the people and events that fulfill you. You likely get regular requests: volunteer at your child's school, coach a team, make and donate a craft, attend a meeting, cook for the potluck. The first step is to decide whether the request is something you *want* to do. If it is not something you want to do, decide whether you can say "No." If you need help finding the words, try the following ideas.

1. Keep it simple: "Thank you, but I can't make it."
2. It's not personal: "Thank you for asking, but I'm not hosting parties at my house until our puppy is bigger."
3. Ask me later: "I want to help, but this time of year is too busy. Will you ask me next month?"
4. Let me hook you up: "I can't do it, but I'll bet Shelly can. Let me ask her for you."
5. Keep trying: "None of those dates work for me, but I'd love to see you. Send me some more dates."
6. Try me last minute: "I can't put anything else on my calendar this month, but I'd love to do that with you sometime. Will you call me right before you go again?"
7. Gratitude: "Thank you so much for your enthusiasm and support! I'm sorry I'm not able to help at this time."
8. Give someone else a chance: "You know, I feel like moms are always getting to do the holiday party at school. Let's ask Dad if he wants to help this year."

Adapted from: Carter, C. (2015, November 25). Five research-based ways to say no. The Greater Good: The Science of a Meaningful Life.

# Boundary Setting Activities



Role Play

Journal

Visual  
Map

# Additional VLS Supports

*If you are interested in learning more about ways the Virtual Lab School supports boundary setting, we encourage you review these VLS courses more deeply:*

Lessons & activities referenced in today's session:

- ❑ Preschool, Professionalism, Lesson 4
- ❑ Management, Professionalism, Lesson 1
- ❑ Training & Curriculum Specialist, Professionalism, Lesson 4
- ❑ Training & Curriculum Specialist, Self & Cultural Understanding, Lesson 3
- ❑ Focused Topic, Leadership Essentials, Lesson 2
- ❑ Focused Topic, Using the VLS: Coaching to Enhance Practice, Lesson 3
- ❑ Focused Topic, Valuing and Building Family Child Care, Lesson 4
- ❑ Live Leadership Webinar, Time Management & Organization in Leadership, February 2023

Additional courses to review:

- ❑ Focused Topic, Leadership Essentials
- ❑ Focused Topic, Social Emotional Learning for Teachers
- ❑ Focused Topic, Using the VLS: Coaching to Enhance Practice
- ❑ Professionalism, all tracks
- ❑ Program Management, all tracks
- ❑ Family Engagement, all tracks
- ❑ Communication, Training & Curriculum Specialist & Management

# References & Resources

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*SHARE OUT: CHAT*

*What has been your biggest  
takeaway from today's session?*

”

Thank you again for joining us today!  
Any questions?

Please complete the QUICK feedback survey-  
What future training topics would be helpful?

<https://www.virtuallabschool.org/>  
[support@virtuallabschool.org](mailto:support@virtuallabschool.org)