

PERSONAL BOUNDARIES

Setting boundaries is a way of caring for myself. It doesn't make me mean, selfish, or uncaring (just) because I don't do things your way. I care about me, too. — Christine Morgan

In this newsletter, we want to cover how you as parents can best support your child's learning to make reasonable choices. The first way to support children's ability to make reasonable choices is setting boundaries at home. It is important for children to learn the boundaries between themselves and others from an early age. The first limits are learned in the family. The child, who grew up in a house where healthy boundaries are well established, will learn to use these boundaries in his own life, thus improving his capacity to make reasonable choices.

What does 'boundary' mean?

Boundaries are limits people set in order to create a healthy sense of personal space. Boundaries can be physical or emotional in nature, and they help distinguish the desires, needs, and preferences of one person from another.

1. Physical boundaries: This limit can be physical and tangible, such as one's own body parts. This involves explaining to a child that his body belongs only to himself and that nobody else teaches him to develop a sense of his physical self. Explaining, "Daddy's body belongs to him" and "Your body belongs to you" is a good place to start. The personal space is the space that a child draws a circle with open arms when he turns around himself. It is uncomfortable and unsafe for other people to approach and enter this area without permission. We include our family members, relatives and people we know and love in our personal space, at will. Children need to know that they have to right to set boundaries from an early age.

2. Emotional boundaries: Another type of boundary is more emotional and than physical. Teaching children that it's not okay to say hurtful things to others is an example of an emotional boundary. Teasing would be another way of crossing a person's emotional boundaries.

Why are boundaries important?

Healthy boundaries serve the important function of allowing people to take responsibility for themselves and their actions while helping them avoid being in a position where they unfairly or inappropriately take responsibility for the emotions and needs of others. Having well-developed boundaries in place can lead to healthier relationships and help a person to avoid feeling manipulated, violated, or otherwise mistreated by other people.

What should we pay attention to while teaching children to establish boundaries?

- The first important step in the process of setting healthy boundaries is generally identifying what behaviors from others are acceptable and what behaviors from others might lead to discomfort or distress
- The single best way to teach children healthy boundaries is for parents to have healthy boundaries themselves and to model them in the home. It can be a beginning to teach that you must enter your room with permission. The bedroom is the private area of the parents, and when the child wants to enter here, s/he must be taught that he must enter by knocking on the door and asking for permission.
- Children imitate their parents and behave like what they see from their parents' behaviors and attitudes. For example, pulling the TV remote from the child's hand, forcing them to take a shower will normalize the situation. In other case, they think that their friends can take their belongings without asking.
- Respecting each person in the house, having the right to express everyone's own feelings and talking openly and honestly about difficult circumstances. For example; when your child says no, you as a parent have to stop forcing them so that the child can learn the limit and being respectful. When a child does not learn personal spaces at home, s/he can turn into a child who does not respect for others in social environments such as school.
- When you're raising kids to have healthy boundaries, it's important to allow yourself as a parent to have and express your own feelings.
- As a parent, you should show your acceptance of your child's feelings. Each time you behave this way you reinforce your child's sense of self and boundaries.

Setting boundaries does not mean that everyone respects them. However, if we can show how much we care about these limits, we can ensure that the limits we set are taken into consideration by others. So, parents have to be consistent. Children learn to be sensitive to our limits only if they realize that they see our sensitivity in this matter and how seriously we take it.

Referanslar

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