

EXPECT SUCCESS



HEALTHY BOUNDARIES FOR YOUR CHILD

“You teach people how to treat you by what you allow, what you stop, and what you reinforce.”

When we get anxious about our kids, we often over-function for them and that’s when boundaries can get blurred. This means that we do too much for them, and “get in their box” instead of staying in our own. When this happens, we’ve forgotten where we end and where our child begins. It’s painful to see our kids struggle in life; we love them and feel responsible for them, so we want to make things better and “fix things.” But know when you aren’t able to let your child work through obstacles on his own, you’re denying him an important experience—the experience of how to overcome disappointment, how to deal with an argument with a friend, or how to talk to his teacher about a grade. Letting your child work through things is a way to respect them by observing their boundaries—and your own.



How do you know if you might be blurring boundaries as a parent? Here are some signs:

- ◆ Doing for your child what she can (or should) do for herself.
- ◆ Constantly asking questions; interrogating your child over everything.
- ◆ Letting your child invade your boundaries as a couple—making your kids the center focus at all times.
- ◆ Over-sharing with your child about your life; treating them like a friend rather than your child.
- ◆ Giving up your parental authority and allowing your child to take control of the household.
- ◆ Living through your child vicariously; feeling as if their achievements are yours, and their failures are yours as well.
- ◆ Your child is upset, and you fall apart.

Here are 4 tips that will help you set good solid boundaries with your kids.

1. **Define your boundaries.** To develop boundaries for yourself, you have to know what you value, think and where you stand. It is important your child knows who you are and what you believe. Kids are guided in life by watching what you do, which often makes more of an impression than what you say.
2. **Make your expectations known.** Make a list of what you expect for yourself in relation to your kids. Think about what you can and can’t live with; think through what matters most to you. Tell your kids what your guiding principles are.
3. **Get your focus on yourself instead of your child.** When your child is acting poorly and not listening to you, think about how you can more clearly communicate what you expect—and hold her accountable when she doesn’t listen. Try to say things in a way that conveys that you mean business; expect to be listened to and taken seriously.
4. **Let your child feel the impact of a crossed boundary.** Admit when you have crossed someone else’s boundary and apologize for it. And when your kids cross one, let them know and hold them accountable.