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- Questions can be directed to Matthew Zaradich:
 - mzaradich@erikson.edu
 - 312-893-7171



Jennifer Kemp, M.S., CCLS, DT, CPST



- Manager of the Infant Studies Certificate Programs at Erikson; adjunct faculty member
- 20 years of experience working with young children, families, and professionals
- Child Life Specialist, Developmental Therapist/Evaluator, and consultant
- Areas of interest include the birth to three population; prematurity; early childhood development; early care and education; attachment; infant mental health; children with special developmental and medical needs, among many others



Tell Us a Little About You...

- What field do you work in?
- What is your job role?
- How long have you been doing this work professionally?
- Why did you decide to attend this webinar?
- What are you most hoping to gain from today's webinar?



Moving On: Professional Boundaries and Transitions in Early Intervention, Education, and Care

with Jennifer Kemp, M.S., CCLS, DT, CPST



Workshop Goals

- Explain three or more ways that professional boundaries are helpful in the work we do;
- Describe four reasons that clear boundaries can be so hard to maintain;
- Identify at least two purposes for boundaries in relationship-based work;
- Name three strategies you can use to establish and maintain boundaries; and,
- List two strategies you can use to support transitions through the use of boundaries.



The Purpose of Boundaries

Audience Poll:

- Why do you think boundaries are so important in your role with children and families?
- What purpose(s) do they serve in the work that you do?



The Purpose of Boundaries

- Meant to protect all parties within a relationship
- Help to define roles and expectations
- Allow for partnership in the relationship, despite any differences in position
- Maintain focus on goals of partnership
- To support the function of a team of providers



The Purpose of Boundaries

“ Limits which protect the space between the professional’s power and the family’s vulnerability.”

From Peterson, Marilyn. 1992. *At personal risk: Boundary violations in professional-client relationships*. New York: Norton.



Why Are Boundaries So Challenging?

Audience Poll:

- What is the hardest part about maintaining boundaries for you in your work?



Why Are Boundaries So Challenging?

- Many times, services are delivered in the family's space
- We often want to help in any way we can
- We don't establish clear expectations from the beginning
- Relationships can be long-standing and sometimes feel unbalanced for those involved
- Wanting others to know we are human, too
- Lack of training about boundaries in professional preparation programs
- Lack of good reflective supervision
- Our own egos
- Many gray areas in boundaries and ethical guidelines



Statements of Professional Ethics by Field

- Social Work – NASW Code of Ethics
Social workers recognize the importance of human relationships: Social workers understand that relationships between and among people are an important vehicle for change. Social workers engage people as partners in the helping process. Social workers seek to strengthen relationships among people in a purposeful effort to promote, restore, maintain, and enhance the well-being of individuals, families, social groups, organizations, and communities.



Statements of Professional Ethics by Field

- Social Work – NASW Code of Ethics
 - 1.06 Conflicts of Interest
 - (c) Social workers should not engage in dual or multiple relationships with clients or former clients in which there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the client. In instances when dual or multiple relationships are unavoidable, social workers should take steps to protect clients and are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries.



Statements of Professional Ethics by Field

- Social Work – NASW Code of Ethics
 - 1.16 Termination of Services
 - (d) Social workers should not terminate services to pursue a social, financial, or sexual relationship with a client.



Statements of Professional Ethics by Field

- Early Intervention:
 - “Because interventionists work so closely with families, the boundaries between the parent-professional partnership and friendship can become blurred. This can happen for both people in the partnership, but it is ultimately the professional’s responsibility to maintain the boundary.”

From <http://veipd.org/earlyintervention/walking-the-parent-professional-boundary/>



Statements of Professional Ethics by Field

- Early Intervention:
 - 108.47 Early Intervention Specialist Code of Ethics
 - (7) EISs must establish professional boundaries and avoid establishing dual relationships or conflicts of interest with families. Any prior relationships with a family member must be reported to the EIS's supervisor immediately.

From Texas Health and Human Services Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services Early Childhood Intervention Service Delivery Code of Ethics found at texinfo.library.unt.edu



Statements of Professional Ethics by Field

- Home and Community Care Work
 - "It is certainly important that the carer makes sure clients feel at ease with approaching and relating to them – but it is equally important that the lines don't become blurred...Successful and ethical working relationships are based on a clear understanding of what the carer role is – and just as importantly – what their role isn't. The work is personal, but carers have to maintain professional boundaries...to protect the worker from burn-out – AND protect the client from having a staff member encroaching on their private affairs."

From "How to Maintain Professional Boundaries in Home and Community Care Work," DCA News, Direct Care Australia



Statements of Professional Ethics by Field

- American Nurses Association's Code of Ethics
 - When acting within one's role as a professional, the nurse recognizes and maintains boundaries that establish appropriate limits to relationships.



Statements of Professional Ethics by Field

• Nursing

"As health care professionals, nurses strive to inspire confidence in their patients and their families, treat all patients and other health care providers professionally, and promote patients' independence...This means that a nurse abstains from obtaining personal gain at the patient's expense and refrains from inappropriate involvement in the patient's personal relationships."

From "A Nurse's Guide to Professional Boundaries," published by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing



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Statements of Professional Ethics by Field

• End-of-Life/Palliative Care

"Boundaries serve to establish and maintain a trusting provider-patient relationships and help clinicians maintain 'justice and equality in dealing with all of their patients', not only a special few...In caring for seriously ill or dying patients it is common for strong emotional bonds to develop. However, when the limits of the provider-patient/family relationship are not clear or where normal professional boundaries are not respected, problems are likely to arise."

From "EPERC Fast Facts and Concepts #172"



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Statements of Professional Ethics by Field

• Child Life Code of Ethical Responsibility

Principle 10: Individuals shall use integrity to assess and amend any personal relationships or situations that may interfere with their professional effectiveness, objectivity, or otherwise negatively impact the children and families they serve. A minimum of two years following the conclusion of a professional role shall lapse before any personal relationship is permitted to develop with children or the members of families they serve.



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Statements of Professional Ethics by Field

- Early Childhood Education:
 “Parents...prefer cooperative, respectful communication within the context of reciprocal relationships. Without such relationships, parents can be reluctant to talk openly with teachers, drawing boundaries between what is personal and what is professional...With such relationships in place, we can respond more effectively to signs of family stress and provide appropriate support, information, and referrals to community services. Communication between educators and families – especially on difficult topics – is much easier when a supportive, reciprocal relationship is in place.”

From Olson, M., and Hyson, M. (2005). NAEYC explores parental perspectives on early childhood education. Young Children, May 2005, 66-68.



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Statements of Professional Ethics by Field

- Early Childhood Education:
 Primary Caregiving and Continuity of Care
 “Setting up a system of primary caregiving establishes an environment in which meaningful and lasting relationships can develop between caregivers and children as well as between caregivers and families...Keeping children and caregivers together for three years has several benefits. Close relationships between children and their primary caregivers can flourish. The child, who says goodbye to the ones she loves every morning when they leave her at the center, does not have to say goodbye to the person who has helped her to adjust to life in child care.”

From <http://www.zerotothree.org/early-care-education/child-care/primary-caregiving-continuity.html>



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How Boundaries Impact Our Work

Audience Poll:

- How do boundaries (lack of them, presence of them, or ambiguity about them) impact your work with children and families?



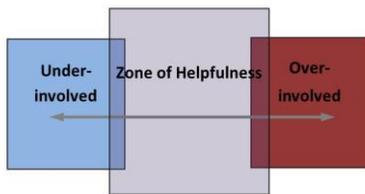
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How Boundaries Impact Our Work

- Ability to accomplish established goals
- Maintaining the right role (expert, partner, friend)
- What we “carry” with us from the work
- Time spent with child/family
- Potential for burn-out
- Ease of transitions
- Sense of pride in our work

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How Boundaries Impact Our Work



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From <http://correctionalnurse.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/Zone-of-Helpfulness.jpg>

Boundary Self-Assessment

- Have you ever treated a child/family differently than another?
- Have you ever confided something personal to a child/family in your work?
- Have you ever given them gifts or privileges that you haven't offered to other children/families?
- Have you ever felt that you are the “only person” that gets a certain family and can help them?
- Have you ever felt personally responsible for the outcome of a child/family's progress or failure, positively or negatively?
- Have you ever performed actions outside the scope of your service and/or training?
- How would a particular action in question be viewed by a child's family?
- How would that same action be viewed by a different child's family or a professional peer?
- Do your actions contradict anything in the Standards of Professional Conduct or Code of Ethics of my professional role?
- Do your actions take away from the collective work of the team?
- Are you comfortable documenting your actions in the child/family's case notes?

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Strategies for Creating Healthy Boundaries

Audience Poll:

- What is your favorite strategy for maintaining good boundaries with a family?



Strategies for Creating Healthy Boundaries

- Think about your boundaries before you get into a situation – what do you believe?
- Work to establish an understanding of your professional role from the beginning
- Be clear about what a family can/should expect from you during the time you work together
- Assure them of your care for them BY providing guidelines to help all involved
- Have a plan/language in place for unexpected events
- Use other professional peers or supervisors to help support you; honesty is key
- When challenged, think about the motivations of all involved



Supporting Transitions

Audience Poll:

- How have you been successful in creating healthy transitions for families?



Supporting Transitions

- Early, open communication
- Using clear language with the child at appropriate time
- Collaborative planning
- Concrete information for them to hold on to
- “Memories” based activity
- Upselling the next step for child/family
- Allowing yourself space to grieve the loss



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Case Studies

Do you have a particular situation that has been challenging to you that you would like to share as a potential case study for the group this morning?



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Case Studies

- How would you define the boundary issue or challenge?
- How does this have the potential to impact the client/family/child?
- How does this have the potential to impact the professional?
- How does this have the potential to impact other professionals on the team?
- What can be done to work through this challenge in a way that is most helpful to all involved?



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Q & A



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Ask questions in the Q&A panel



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Upcoming Webinars

- How to Tell the Dust From the Magic in Children’s Interactive Media
with Warren Buckleitner, Ph.D
Wednesday, December 10, 2014
1:00-2:30pm Central Time
- Coming Soon! Be on the lookout for our Spring Webinar series

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