

Maintaining Healthy Boundaries for Supervisors



Objectives:

- 1) Define boundary issues as it relates to social services supervisors.*
- 2) Brainstorm ideas to prevent and address boundary issues in the workplace.*
- 3) Review common malpractice issues related to boundary issues.*
- 4) Learn how to manage professional boundaries in the workplace.*



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Boundary Checklist

Did anything surprise you?

How do you feel about your tendencies?

Is there any areas you wish you were different?

Consider how being that way has served you?

If you were to change those areas, how would you get those needs met?

What kinds of support can help?

Understanding our own boundary issues:

If I know my own boundaries,
I can respect other's boundaries.

Boundaries are essential to protect you.

I am responsible for knowing, guarding
and communicating my limits.

Various Types of Boundaries to Maintain and Monitor

Emotional - a person's feelings, when to share and when not to share.

Mental - Signing off at 5pm and using a "do not disturb" message.

Time - refer to how a person uses their time, a person must set aside enough time for each facet of their life.

Physical - personal space and physical touch (hug or shake hands). Also, not working on weekends and making time to eat lunch. Take sick days when you are ill.

Intellectual - refer to thoughts and ideas. This is violated when someone criticizes, belittle's or dismisses another's ideas.

Material - money and possessions, this can occur when someone feels pressured to give or lend a possession.

Boundary issues, as it relates, to social services:

- *A clear set of limits and responsibilities, of your role*
- *Clarify expectations, from the start*
- *Do not become the client/staff*
- *Being friendly, not friends*
- *The ability to know where you end, and the client/staff begins*

Why are professional boundaries important?

- ✓ *Stay focused on responsibilities to client/ staff*
- ✓ *Avoiding burnout and compassion fatigue*
- ✓ *Role modeling health communication and professional relationships*
- ✓ *Maintain a functioning team*
- ✓ *Maintain one's physical and emotional safety*

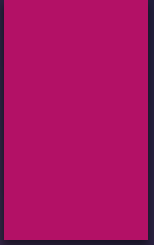
What factors make it difficult to maintain boundaries?

- dual relationships*
- values conflict*
- vicarious trauma/transference*
 - “save” the client or staff*
 - lack of trust at agency*
 - culture issues*
- capacity of the client or staff*
- knowledge of personal history*



“Drowning in Empathy”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zsaorjlo1Yc>



*Vulnerability sounds like
truth and feels like courage.
Truth and courage aren't
always comfortable, but
they're never weakness.*

Brene Brown

Boundaries of Competence

- *knowledge and understanding*
- *clinical skills*
- *technical skills*
- *problem solving and clinical judgement*
- *personal attributes*

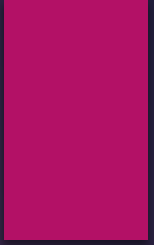


Main Social Service Issues with Boundaries and Dual Relationships:

- *Intimate contact*
- *Personal gain*
- *Emotional and dependency issues*
- *Altruistic instincts (benefits others, at a cost for one's self)*

Empower versus Rescue





“Awareness is the key. Professionals who are clear about their own needs and the needs of their clients/staff, and who can separate the personal from the professional, will find themselves acting in the best interest of their clients/staff.”

(www.nursingboard.state.nv.us)

What are the consequences of a supervisor having poor professional boundaries?

- *Liability issues*
- *Staff may be exploited*
- *Therapeutic process threatened*
- *Compassion fatigue*
- *Splitting on teams*
- *Staff may not get helpful guidance*
- *Reputation of agency affected*

Review common malpractice issues related to boundary issues

Failure to be available when needed
Inappropriate bill collection methods
Failure to report suspected child neglect
Failure to report suspected child abuse
Failure to achieve satisfactory results
Practicing beyond the scope of competence
Failure to control a dangerous client
Breaches of Confidentiality with Clients
Abrupt or inappropriate termination

Receiving gifts
Violating parental rights
Inadequately protecting a child
Inadequate foster care services
Client abandonment
Interacting on Social Media

*Brainstorm ideas to prevent and address
boundary issues in the workplace:*

SELF CARE

SELF CARE

SELF CARE

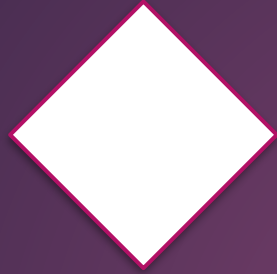
*Discuss problems IMMEDIATELY
CLARIFY roles and boundaries
Use consultation and DOCUMENT
Dual relationships - watch POWER
PROMOTE and ROLE model positive behavior*

Scenario A



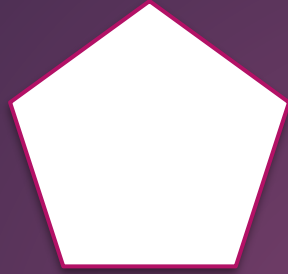
You live in a small town and your
staff, walks by your home and
stops for a visit.

Scenario B



Your staff ask you multiple questions about your personal life, how do you handle this?

Scenario C



Your staff contact you, after 5:00pm often
and for non-emergencies.

How to manage professional boundaries in the workplace

- *Eliminating negative talk*
- *Find rituals of self care*
- *Choose optimism*
- *Avoid taking on too much work*
- *Nuture your non-professional life*
- *Delegate tasks when you have too much on your plate*
- *Defend your time - place project time on calendar*
- *Limit interruptions during focus time*
- *Practice saying “no”*
- *Be honest about your feelings and needs*
- *Stand up for yourself, when boundaries are crossed*



Other Boundary Issues To Discuss?

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