

## PROTECTING THE BOUNDARIES OF PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

### *A Fact Sheet for Provider Agencies*

# The Risks

Unprofessional Boundaries place staff and people receiving services at risk

Compromises the care environment for people receiving services and for staff members

Places people receiving services at risk of being traumatized or re-traumatized

Removes opportunity for people receiving services to learn and develop safe, healthy boundaries with others

Damages the therapeutic relationship between staff and the person receiving services

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# Protect People Receiving Services

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## What You Can Do

- **Establish a mission statement that demonstrates the agency's commitment to a safe and therapeutic environment.** A strong mission statement can foster an agency culture dedicated to developing and maintaining healthy boundaries between staff and people receiving services. All staff, people receiving services and advocates should be aware of and educated on this mission statement.
- **Have a policy on maintaining professional boundaries.** Revise or develop policies that reflect how boundaries impact care, the responsibility of staff to maintain professional boundaries, and how to manage boundary concerns that arise. Provide training and regular refreshers to all staff on this policy.
- **Promote educational opportunities for staff.** Provide resources such as Employee Assistance Program services and trainings on maintaining professional boundaries. Encourage staff to seek out support from their supervisor in cases where they are unsure of a boundary.
- **Develop policies and practices to address boundary issues.** All staff should be aware of the consequences of crossing boundaries and the obligation to report related incidents.

**Report Abuse or Neglect to the Justice Center's 24/7 Statewide Toll-Free Hotline.** Call: 1-855-373-2122/ TTY: 1-855-373-2123

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## Justice Center Information and Referral

Toll-Free: **1-800-624-4143**

TTY: Dial 7-1-1 for the NYS relay and give the operator **1-800-624-4143**

Individual Family Support Unit:

Email: [supportcoordinator@justicecenter.ny.gov](mailto:supportcoordinator@justicecenter.ny.gov)



Justice Center for the  
Protection of People  
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