

Spotlight on Prevention

Partnering to Protect People with Special Needs

PROTECTING THE BOUNDARIES OF PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

A Fact Sheet for People Receiving Services, Advocates, Families and Friends

The Risks

Unprofessional boundaries jeopardize the care and treatment of people receiving services

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 and healthy boundaries with others

Damages the therapeutic relationship between staff and the person receiving services



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Protect Yourself and Others

Speak Up

- Tell staff the types of talk, touch, and topics that are okay and not okay for you so they are aware of the physical, social, and emotional boundaries that are important to you.
- Participate in programs and activities that can help you understand and develop skills in setting healthy boundaries.
- Speak up to advocate for yourself or ask for someone to help you speak up if you think someone has crossed your boundaries.

Speak Out

- Ask your staff and agency leaders what your agency is doing to make sure everyone understands and maintains healthy and professional boundaries.
- Ask about the agency's process for developing support/treatment plans. How often are plans updated? Do plans include information on a person's boundary needs? Do people in care and advocates have input into the development of the support plan, treatment goals, or other treatment guidance?
- Ask to bring in experts to educate people in your agency about boundaries.
Establish a regular forum for people receiving services, advocates, families and staff. Use this forum to support agencies measures to reinforce and ensure use of professional boundaries in the provision of care.

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

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



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