

**Maintaining Professional Boundaries  
FSS Forums  
October 15 & 16, 2024**

Facilitators: Isabel DaSilva and Lisa Galatio, PCANY

Participants: (47) Albany x 3, Broome, Buffalo x 2, Bushwick, Cayuga x 2, Central Harlem x 2, Chemung, Columbia x 2, Corona x 2, Cortland, Fulton, Herkimer x 2, Jefferson/Lewis x 2, Madison x 2, Morris Heights x 2, Niagara, Oneida x 2, Ontario, Oswego x 2, Parkchester, Putnam x 2, Schenectady x 2, Schuyler/Tompkins x 2, Steuben/Livingston, Sullivan x 2, Tioga x 2, Washington Heights x 2, Yates/Seneca,

Number of Programs: (28)

Large Group Discussion:

What are the reasons maintaining boundaries can be challenging?

- Home visitors have strong compassion for families and want to help. We are empathetic and have big hearts!
- Sometimes “frustration” leads to going beyond boundaries, wanting to move the family towards success faster than they are going. Sometimes feeling like you’re not doing enough.
- Sometimes there is transference. We can really identify with some families
- Due to the long-term component of the program, home visitors spend a lot of time with families. We are with families over a long period of time and see them through many ups and downs. We bond and get very comfortable with them. We are with them right in their homes and get to know the whole family. This can sometime blur professional boundaries.
- Hard to remember how much to share about yourself when live in same community. Everyone in community is connected.
- Limiting answering phone after hours if we know family needs support. We want to be there for them yet it impacts our own down time.
- Remembering boundaries/confidentiality if working with both parents

Small Group Discussion:

What has helped you handle boundary challenges?

- Keeping everything discussable with supervisor so can talk through situations when they come up. Communicate any issues with them immediately.

- Know your program's policies and procedures. Reminding families of the limitations or permissions you have based on program rules helps keep a clear boundary for both the family and home visitor.
- Remember what Mindful Stress Regulations (MSR) work for you so you can use them when you are feeling stressed. You will make better decisions and will be better able to maintain boundaries.
- Take a few breaths and listen to your body (especially your tummy). If something doesn't feel right, talk with your supervisor.
- Set and communicate expectations about boundaries early in our relationships with families.
- Find a routine that allows you to not take work home.
- When we 'do with' instead of 'do for', it highlights opportunities to say, "I believe in you."
- Reminder that there are activities on the TOL that encourage you to reflect on professional boundaries.