

## HOW TO SET PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES WITH STUDENTS

In the dance education event industry, professional boundaries are a mainstay of a safer, healthier event. When minor students are only a text or direct message away, it's not enough to say, "We keep students safe—at our event." If you commit to keeping students safe, you must face the fact: there is no "off-season" for professional behavior.

Professional boundaries set a tone for the workplace, clarify gray areas, and eliminate confusion about acceptable and not-acceptable behavior.

### In the classroom

Assign an adult staff member to monitor the room throughout class time. Set up a clearly delineated "teaching space" that is off-limits to students.

To prevent faculty from "mingling" too long with students after class, have the room monitor gently break off any conversations after a set period of time and usher out the teacher or schedule classes back-to-back.

### In the venue

It's natural that some casual conversations between teaching faculty/judges and students will occur during a weekend-long event. Advise your adult staffers to be polite and professional and "keep it brief." During training, role-play possible scenarios. Brainstorm language adults can use to gently extricate themselves from potentially lengthy, boundary-crossing conversations.

### With photos and videos

Faculty should not be recording or sharing recordings directly with students. If a faculty member wants a photo or video for his or her résumé reel, an event staffer can forward the video to him after it has been reviewed and approved by event management for that purpose.

Remember, when parents sign event waivers, they are giving *the event* permission to take and post photos and videos: they are not giving permission to all teachers or judges working at the event. While it does take time to follow official event communication channels, this extra layer of security will prevent any inappropriate images (e.g., dancers in potentially vulnerable poses) from being distributed.

Sources:

[YPAD™ Education](#)

[U.S. Center for SafeSport](#)