

ETHICS AND BOUNDARIES

Staying in Your Lane



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WELCOME

DDS Mission

Our mission is to help individuals with developmental disabilities and their families help themselves to lead safer, healthier, more independent and productive lives.

Ask yourself

Why do ***you*** do this work?



SESSION OBJECTIVES

- Define ethics and professional boundaries
- Establish ethical guidelines
- Determine consequences of overstepping boundaries
- Identify strategies
 - To help you be mindful of ethics and resolve ethical dilemmas
 - To help you maintain professional boundaries

IMPORTANCE OF PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

“There are four ways, and only four ways, in which we have contact with the world. We are elevated and classified by these four contacts: what we do, how we look, what we say, and how we say it.”

— Dale Carnegie

“What do I want
someone to
remember
about me?”

“How can I **create**
the right
first impression?”

“How do I
want to be
perceived?”

WHAT ARE ETHICS?



System of moral principles that guide our actions

Where do these come from?
How do we learn them?



Guidelines to determine what is right and wrong

Is this always the same for each person?
Why would they not be?



Why is it sometimes hard to do the right thing?



Do laws and policies always guide our decisions?

ETHICAL DILEMMAS

Situations where it is not as easy as choosing between:

- Yes or no
- Good or bad
- Right or wrong

Making good choices in a complicated world:

- There is a line where the law no longer protects or guides us
- There is a place where the only standard left to gauge our behavior is ethics

“Ethical decision-making tethers us to our humanity — it helps us keep human beings front and center at all times.”

ETHICAL DILEMMAS

Thoughts and questions to consider

Avoid
oversimplifying
ethical dilemmas

Not all ethical
dilemmas are
straightforward,
even if they look to
be so

What are the
circumstances?

What other factors
and people should
be considered?

PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES

Professional Boundary

- An emotional and physical limit placed on the client-caregiver relationship
- A barrier that makes it possible to perform your duties well and preserve a healthy interaction

Defines the space between your professional power and your client's vulnerability

Establishes and maintains a boundary that is fundamental to a safe and therapeutic environment for your clients



PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES

Professional boundaries remind us that our job is to:

- First ensure no harm
- Promote the well-being of the clients
- Ensure that safe and client-centered care is delivered
- Help clients lead safer, healthier, more independent and productive lives



EXAMPLES OF BOUNDARY ISSUES

- Conflicts of interest:
 - Dual relationships
 - Exerting influence over the client or their family that benefits you, not them
- Personal benefit — monetary gain or goods and services
- Emotional and dependency needs — promoting client or their family's dependency for your emotional needs
- Breach of confidentiality

BOUNDARIES CROSSSED – CONSEQUENCES

- Can cause you to:
 - Exert undue influence over your client or their family
 - Make recommendations that may not be in the best interest of the client
 - Become too involved in your client's — or their family's — personal lives
- May result in unintentional harm to client
- Can cause the client and their family to lose trust in you

Always be careful that your desire to help your client and their family is not in conflict with what is best for the client.

SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY

CASE STUDY (15 minutes)

- At your table review the assigned case study
- Discuss the ethical dilemma
- Share insights and determine how to move forward

PERSONAL REFLECTION (10 minutes)

- In your experience, what is a frequent ethical challenge that you have encountered?

STRATEGIES FOR MAKING ETHICAL DECISIONS

Do I have the information I need to make this decision?

What are the information gaps between what you should know and what you can know?

Have you consulted multiple sources and cross checked?

Are you seeking facts or just looking for what you want to see?

When you make poor decisions, look back and determine why — this is where ethics comes in:

- You didn't know a fact and could not have known it
- You didn't know a fact but could have known it
- You didn't know a fact but should have known it
- You knew, but you claimed you didn't know
- You knew, but you ignored it

STRATEGIES TO MAINTAIN GOOD BOUNDARIES



Learn to recognize when you may be starting to cross a boundary



Balance empathy and separation



Respect the client's autonomy — to the level of autonomy they are capable of



Provide clear communication about your role and what the client and their family can expect from you



Identify and avoid situations where there is risk of a boundary being crossed




Maintain client confidentiality

ENGAGE IN GOOD SELF-CARE

Not paying attention to ethics and blurring professional boundaries can lead to stress and burnout.

- Be kind to yourself
- Take time to do the things you enjoy

Remember — if you don't take care of yourself, you won't be able to take care of your clients.



“Above all, ethics are about creating the story we want for our lives and all the lives we are privileged to touch, by applying principled decision-making, no matter how close we are to the edge. Ethics require an unflinching commitment to truth and humanity. Ethics are the recording of the story that we will be proud for others to uncover as our view of a life well lived — however the facts may unravel, however we may succeed or fail, whatever luck we may or may not experience, while learning from, but leaving unedited, the inevitable human moments when we don’t live up to this definition.”

— Danielle K. Dyer



**THIS IS WHY
ETHICS AND
PROFESSIONAL
BOUNDARIES
ARE IMPORTANT**





QUESTIONS



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Headshot Station



**RESERVE
YOUR SPOT**

No spots left? Stop by!
We'll fit you in for a walk-up.