

# My Rights My Life for High School Students

## Class 5 Guide: Practicing Boundaries

### Pre-teach

To introduce the concept of boundaries for this lesson, help students think about things that get on their nerves or make them uncomfortable. Examples: people sitting too close, hugs or touching without asking, or people being rude. Make a list of these things as a class. Next, ask students to think about how it makes them feel when these things happen? Make a separate list of all of the feelings that students name.

Have each student think about one thing that really annoys them and draw a picture of how it makes them feel. Students can also cut out pictures from magazines or write about how it makes them feel. At the end of the activity, discuss how anything that makes students feel uncomfortable is something that crosses their boundaries. When students feel strong emotions such as mad, sad, scared, nervous, or weird, this is a sign that their boundary is being crossed. Emphasize to your class how important it is to pay attention to those feelings when they come up.

Finally, in the days leading up to this class, you can also introduce the vocabulary from this lesson's Important Words Sheet (see suggested definitions below). To enhance understanding, you can ask students to come up with their own definitions for vocabulary words or to provide a sentence or scenario using the new word.

### *Vocabulary terms and definitions*

- Boundaries: your limits; what you are okay and not okay with in your relationships
- Cool: something you are okay with
- Not cool: something you are not okay with
- Self-Advocate: people who speak up for themselves
- I want: an I statement you can use when you would like something
- I need: an I statement you can use when you must get something
- Safe: the feeling that you are not going to get hurt and that your feelings are okay

### Post-teach

In this lesson, students will begin to learn how to recognize and state their boundaries. In addition, they will learn about ways to get safe if their boundary continues to be crossed even after they have stated it. This lesson introduces the NO! Tool. This is a crucial tool for all people who want healthy relationships, but especially for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Many people with IDD experience compliance training from a young age. They are taught that they need to control their behaviors and do whatever a person in authority tells them to do, no matter what. This training often leaves people with IDD more vulnerable to abuse. People with IDD need

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to learn that it is okay to say "no" to things that make them feel uncomfortable, unsafe, or scared. They need to learn that if someone does something to their body that they do not like, they can get help.

In our classes, we teach students that they have the right to say "no" to anyone or anything that crosses their boundary. We also acknowledge that just because the student with a disability says "no," it does not always mean that the thing won't happen. For example, if you ask a student to work on an assignment, and they say "no," they likely still need to complete the assignment. But you can help the student understand *why* the lesson is important, and why you are continuing to ask them to work on it in spite of them saying "no." If they say "no" to something related to their body or their emotions, have a conversation. Ask them if there is another way you can provide assistance, or an alternate way of working together, that feels more comfortable. It is crucial that you role model how to listen to and respect another person's boundaries.

You can continue to build upon these lessons throughout the week and the school year. Help students understand that they can say "no" to anyone, regardless of where the person is on their Relationship Map. In our classes, we'll often ask students, "Can you say 'no' to your mom? Your dad? Your best friend?" Often students will think it is not okay to tell people they love "no." Spend some time explaining to students that it's always okay to set their boundaries, even with someone they really love. Discuss that even if the person who crosses the student's boundaries is someone they are close to, they can still always get help. Students who do not use verbal communication can point to the NO! Tool, and can have the symbol programmed into any communication device they use. As time goes on, you can also help students use the I Statements Tool to further clarify their boundaries. Use the pull-off Velcro tools from the Relationship Map for visual support as needed.

One other key concept from this lesson is getting safe after boundaries have been crossed. For this lesson, you'll need to look up the local domestic violence or rape crisis center in your area. You might consider contacting this center and asking if they ever provide tours for the public. You and your students may be able to practice taking public transportation (if available in your area) to the center, and may also be able to meet some of the staff who provide services. If this is not an option, you could still practice role playing with students what it would be like to call the center for help. You can pretend to be the hotline operator, and students can practice calling and asking for help. Students can also use I statements to tell you as the operator how they feel, what they want, and what they need.

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## **Class 5: Practicing Boundaries**

Estimated time: 1 hour to 1.5 hours

### **Objectives**

Students will:

- Learn that their feelings let them know when a boundary is crossed.
- Know that they have the right to set their own boundaries by saying "NO!" to anyone or anything that crosses those boundaries.
- Understand that boundaries can be set in any location including in hallways, classrooms, bathrooms, dorms, all modes of transportation, and the community.
- Explore ways to get safe if their boundaries are crossed.

### **TEKS Alignment**

#### **Health Education, Subchapter C, Rule §115.38, Health 1**

(19) Reproductive and sexual health--personal safety, limits, and boundaries. The student understands how to set and respect personal boundaries to reduce the risk of sexual harassment, sexual abuse, and sexual assault. The student is expected to:

- a) describe the characteristics of sex trafficking such as grooming, controlling behavior, exploitation, force, fraud, coercion, and violence;
- b) analyze the characteristics of harmful relationships that can lead to dating violence;
- a) analyze healthy strategies for preventing physical, sexual, and emotional abuse;
- b) analyze how a healthy sense of self and making and respecting decisions about safe boundaries and limits promote healthy dating/romantic relationships;
- c) explain and demonstrate how refusal strategies can be used to say "no" assertively to unhealthy behaviors in dating/romantic relationships;
- d) examine factors, including alcohol and other substances, that increase sexual risk and that affect setting, perceiving, respecting, and making decisions about boundaries;
- e) examine and discuss influences and pressures to become sexually active and why it is wrong to violate another person's boundaries and manipulate or threaten someone into sexual activity; and
- f) explain the importance of reporting to a parent or another trusted adult sexual harassment, sexual abuse, sexual assault, and dating violence involving self or others

### **Materials**

- Dry erase board and dry erase markers or flipchart paper and markers
- Pens/pencils for all students
- Blank index cards
- Computer
- Projector

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- Projector screen
- Class Healthy Relationship Toolbox
- Class Healthy Relationship Tool Manipulatives (I Statement and Relationship Map Tools)
- Student Healthy Relationship Toolbox with Student I Statement and Relationship Map Tools glued on
- Class 5 PowerPoint
- Printed copies of Class 5 PowerPoint for all students (one slide per page)
- Printed copies of Cool or Not Cool Game Cards (see template at end of lesson)
- Tape
- Class NO! Tool Manipulative (see template at end of lesson)
- Velcro
- Printed copies of Student NO! Tool for all students (see template at end of lesson)
- Glue sticks for all students
- Printed copies of Boundaries Guide for all students (see template at end of lesson)

## **Class Preparation (5-10 minutes)**

Give each student a copy of the PowerPoint so they can follow along and take notes. We found that student understanding increases when they have two options for viewing information: on the screen at the front of the room and on their own printed PowerPoint.

Display and discuss slides 1-4.

## **Boundaries Talk (10-15 minutes)**

Display and discuss slide 5-7. Give students time to process the information and check in periodically for questions.

## **Cool or Not Cool Game (5-10 minutes)**

Slide 8 includes the instructions for the Cool or Not Cool Game. You will need the Cool or Not Cool Game Cards and tape for this game. After the students have completed the independent work portion of the game, display and discuss slides 9-30. Give students time to process the information and check in periodically for questions.

## **Brain Break (5 minutes)**

Display slide 31. Use one of the suggested brain break activities from the slide notes or come up with your own.

## **NO! Tool (10-15 minutes)**

Display and discuss slides 32-34. Give students time to process the information and check in periodically for questions. Slide 34 includes instructions for the Healthy Relationship Toolbox activity. In several of the classes in this unit, students will add a

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new tool to their individual and class Healthy Relationship Toolbox. For this activity, students will need glue sticks and printed copies of the Student NO! Tool. See templates at the end of the lesson plan.

### **Boundaries Guide (15-20 minutes)**

Give each student a printed copy of the Boundaries Guide. Display and discuss slides 35-39. Give students time to process the information and check in periodically for questions. For slide 39, you may need the phone number for your local domestic violence and/or rape crisis center. See the Facilitator's Guide for more information on finding a center near you.

### **Questions (5 minutes)**

Display slide 40. Collect any notecard questions from students. Before your next class session, research and prepare answers to students' private questions.

### **Exit Ticket (5 minutes)**

Use slides 41-43 to check for student comprehension of major class topics.

### **How to Get Help (2 minutes)**

Display slide 44. Discuss what they should do if someone hurts them or makes them uncomfortable:

- *You did not do anything wrong.*
- *You are not alone.*
- *Talk to a trusted adult from your Inner Green Circle of Trust.*
- *If the first person doesn't help, keep telling others until someone does.*
- *If it's an emergency, call 911.*

### **Power Huddle (2 minutes)**

Display slide 45 and lead the class in the Power Huddle.

### **Closing (5 minutes)**

Display and discuss slides 46-47.

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## Materials

### Cool or Not Cool Game Cards

Print and cut out each of the cards below.



Your best friend wants to spend time alone with their family.

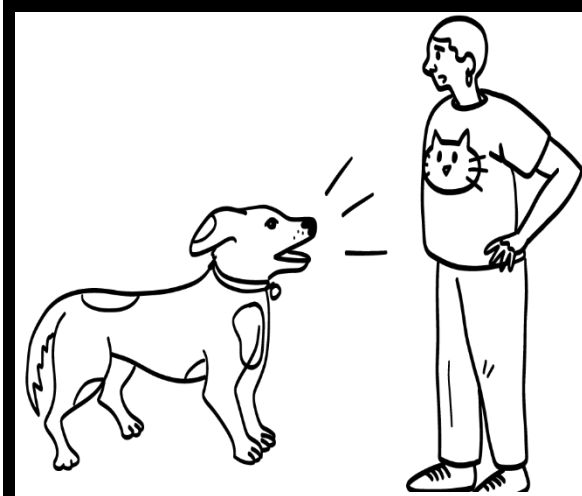


Can I pick the movie?

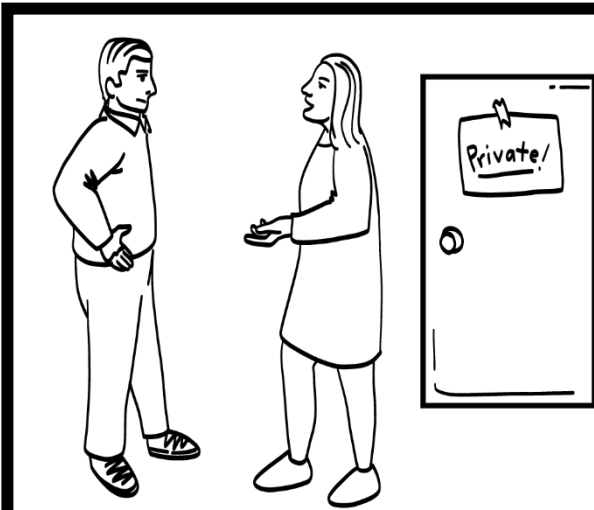


Your friend asks if they can pick the movie for movie night.

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Your friend is afraid of dogs and asks you to put them in the other room.



You tell your parent you need time alone in your room with the door closed.

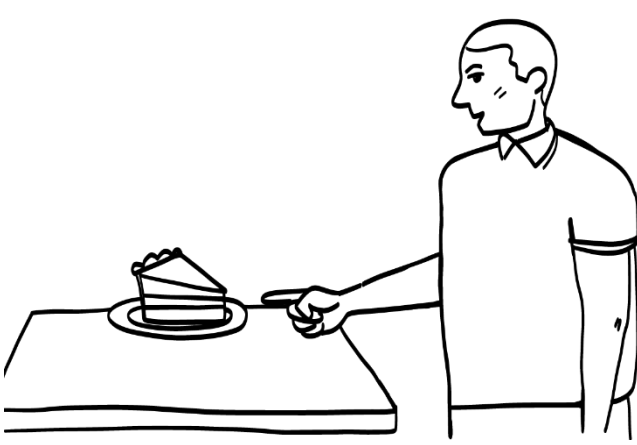


You are having a bad day and your classmate asks if they can give you a hug.

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An illustration of two young men walking side-by-side. The man on the left is wearing a long-sleeved shirt with a horizontal stripe and pants. The man on the right is wearing a plain t-shirt and pants. The man on the left is slapping the man on the right on the back of the buttocks. The man on the right has a surprised or annoyed expression.

Your friend slaps your butt and when you get mad, they say it was just a joke.

An illustration of a man in a collared shirt standing at a table. He is using a knife to cut a slice of cake on a plate. The table is covered with a white cloth.

Your uncle says you shouldn't eat cake because you will get fat.

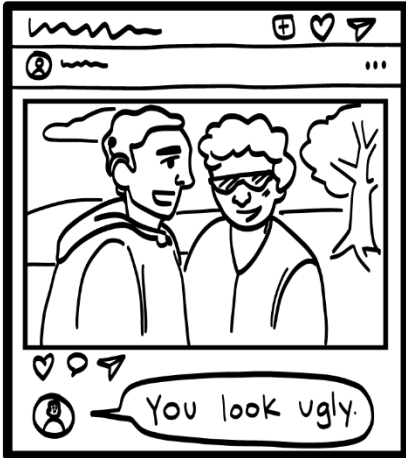
An illustration of a man in a collared shirt, likely a coach, pointing his finger and yelling at a person whose back is to the viewer. The coach has a stern expression and sound lines around his head indicating noise or shouting. The person being yelled at has long hair and is wearing a jacket.

Your coach yells at you because you made a mistake while playing.

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Your friend looks through your text messages when you are not in the room.

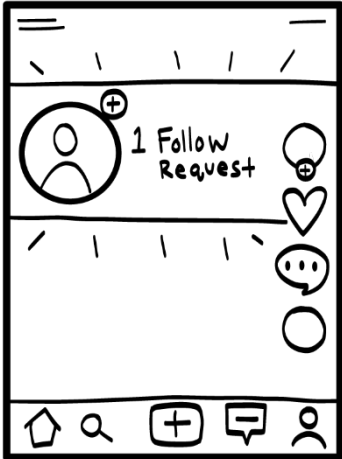


Someone comments on your photo and says you are ugly.

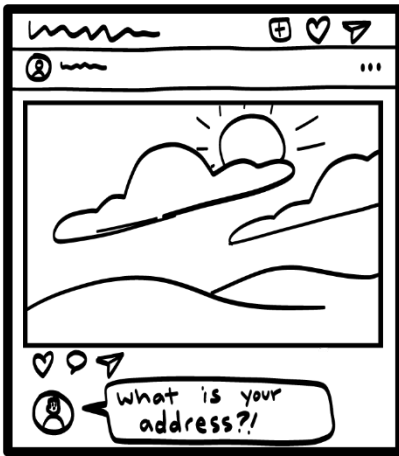


Your classmate asks for the passwords to your social media accounts.

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Someone you don't know asks to follow you on Instagram.

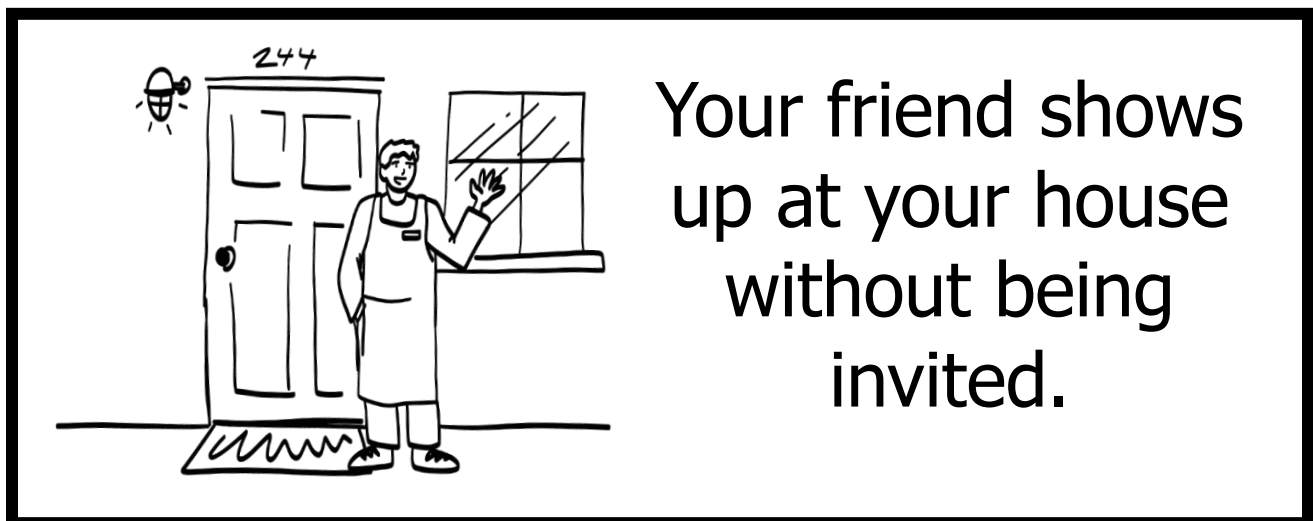


Someone you met online asks for your address.



Your parent is always on the phone when you try to talk to them.

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Your classmate keeps staring at you and blowing kisses.

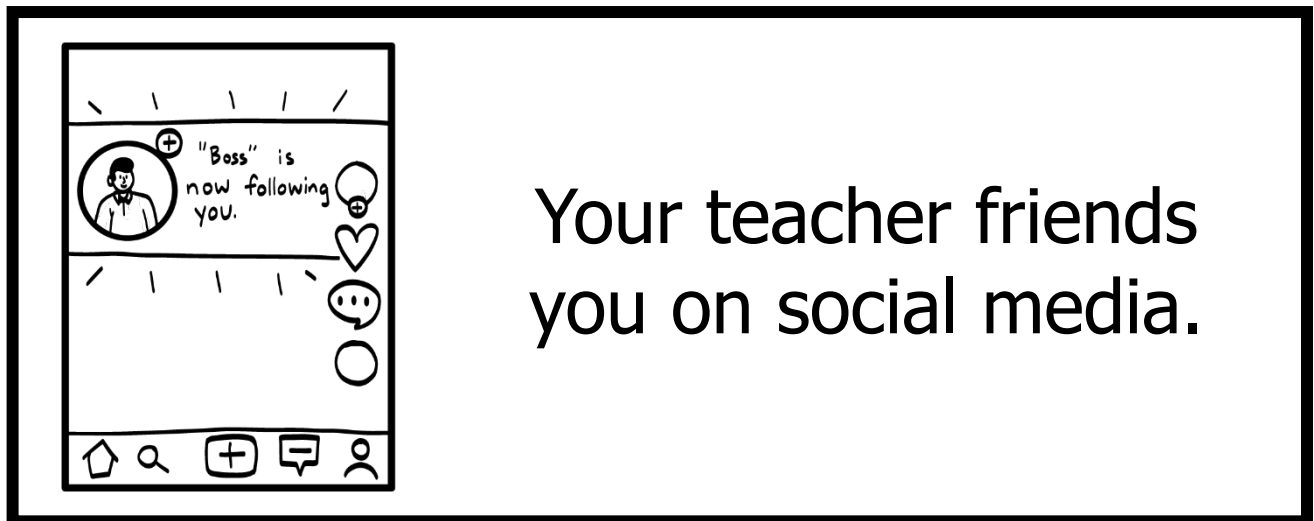


Your teacher says you look nice today.



A stranger touches your hair and says, "You are beautiful."

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### Class NO! Tool Manipulative

This is the third tool for the Healthy Relationships Toolbox. Print and laminate the graphic below. Add a piece of Velcro to the back of the laminated graphic to fit one of the pieces of Velcro on the Class Healthy Relationships Toolbox.



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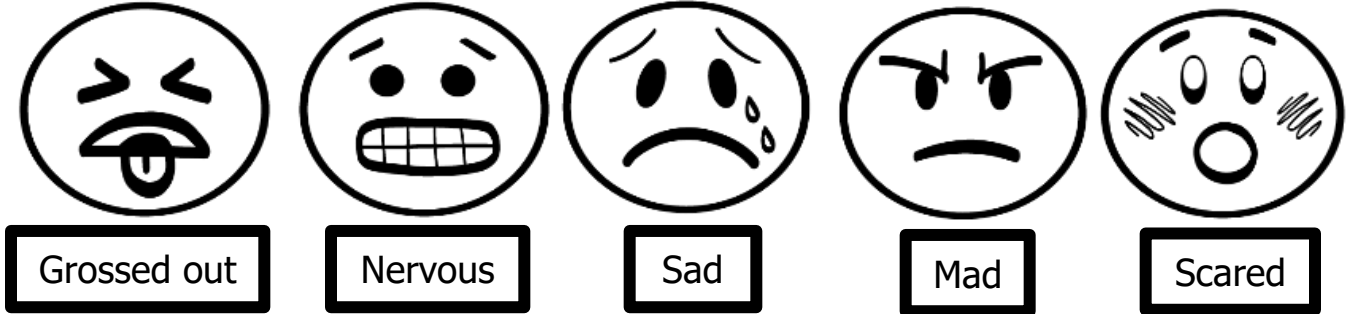
### Student NO! Tool

Print and cut out one NO! tool for each student in your class. Students will glue these onto their Student Healthy Relationships Toolbox.



# Boundaries Guide



## 1. Trust your feelings



## 2. Say your boundary

- Use your voice, signs, pictures, or body to say NO!
- Use the I Statements Tool



I STATEMENTS	
 I WANT _____	
 I NEED _____	
 I FEEL _____	

## 3. Get safe

- Leave the situation
- Talk to an adult in your inner green circle of trust
- In an emergency, you can call 911

