

STRESS HAPPENS. HEALTHY BOUNDARIES CAN HELP.

THERE'S
A HERO
IN YOU

YOU
ARE
BRAVE

YOU ARE
A ROLE
MODEL

2019 APRIL NEWSLETTER

Brought to you by Kohl's Cares® and Beacon Health System

Your student is receiving Healthy Boundaries Course in the classroom. This course helps your student manage stress and set strong healthy boundaries. Last month, we introduced the idea of healthy boundaries and how they can help your 5th grader prepare for the journey from elementary school to middle school. If you would like more information, please visit www.stresshappens.org to review past newsletters, including last month's newsletter, to find some answers to these questions.

A Real Life Example of a Healthy Boundary

You may not know it, but your child has been learning about boundaries for many years—like good touch and bad touch, use respectful manners, and don't take things that belong to others. As children move from elementary to middle school, their social interactions with peers can get more complicated, and sometimes those simple rules won't be enough. You can help your children get ready for those challenges by asking them to share some examples of what they really value and think is important. Whatever they value can be protected with a healthy boundary.

When our daughter was in the 5th grade, she began wanting to close her bedroom door to have some quiet time to read. To protect this value, Jenna established a boundary. She put a sign on the door that said, "Please knock and then wait for permission to enter." It took a little while for everyone else in the family to get used to her boundary—especially when she sometimes answered no and said we couldn't come in. That was hard at first, but we learned to listen and respect her wishes.

This is a simple example of how a healthy boundary works. The owner of the boundary has the freedom to say yes or no about letting people in or staying out. The sign on Jenna's door told us that she valued having time to herself. Every time we knocked on the door, we showed Jenna that we cared about her and were choosing to honor this personal boundary even when it was less than convenient for us.

Whenever we let our children practice establishing and enforcing one of their own boundaries in the safety of our families, we give them permission to show us who they are and we affirm what they value. When our children see adults honoring their boundaries, they can feel what it's like to be respected by another person. Then it becomes easier for them to respect other people's boundaries. They can grow, try new things, and learn from their mistakes in the most safe

place possible where they are loved and cared for.

The world around us has lots of scary things in it, but boundaries can help our children become the heroes of their own story—and give them power in their own lives. When we feel powerful, we are more likely to make healthy choices when we face life's challenges.



TIPS:

To help your child develop more self-awareness, help them understand their reactions to things that happen in their lives. Ask them put into words: How did that make you feel? Do you think that was right or wrong? Why? As you ask these kinds of questions, you will help build your children's knowledge of themselves and learn more about them to appreciate!

