

Safe Adult Boundaries Around the Child

For Our Children and Families - practical public-use support for moments when families need calmer next steps. Not legal advice. Start with safety first.

Public-use guide. Parenting and family-stability information only. Not legal advice.

Use these boundaries when adults are trying to reduce harmful conflict and keep the child's world from getting smaller.

Keep these boundaries:

- The child does not carry adult messages.
- The child does not explain adult motives.
- The child does not comfort adults about adult conflict.
- The child does not keep adult secrets.
- The child does not serve as witness, proof source, or loyalty test.

Use school and providers carefully:

- Share what the child needs.
- Keep updates short, factual, and current.
- Do not recruit school or providers into adult grievance when the real need is a child-support update.

Use handoffs carefully:

- Lower conflict at the switch.
- Keep belongings, medication, and timing clear.
- Repair the next practical step fast after a rough exchange.

Use language that helps:

- Short.
- Practical.
- Child-centered.
- Focused on what happens next.

Avoid language that harms:

- Character attacks.
- Adult scorekeeping around the child.
- Explanations that force the child to choose a side.
- Flooding the week with adult detail that the child cannot carry.

Keep one honest safety boundary:

- Conflict reduction is not the same as ignoring abuse.
- If coercion, threats, stalking, violence, or real fear are present, go to the safety lane first.