



## SAMPLE MATERIAL

### Parent Workshop: Developing Effective Guidelines

Everett Area Elementary School, Pennsylvania (taken from *Raising Healthy Children - Guiding Good Choices*)

**Topic:** Reducing Behavior Problems

**Practice:** Collaborative Relationship

This activity is part of a workshop session to help parents develop their children's behavior skills at home. This session is dedicated to the Law of Least Intervention, which arranges the choices parents have about shaping their children's behavior on a continuum based on the amount of time, effort, unpleasantness, and disruption they require. This continuum identifies developing and communicating clear, effective guidelines as taking the least effort to shape children's behavior while in a way that teaches skills and maintains positive interpersonal relationships.

As part of this activity, the workshop instructors go through familiar scenarios encountered by parents and children at home and propose ways parents can teach and reinforce behavior guidelines. The strategies offered parallel those teachers use to teach and reinforce classroom behavior rules.

Schools may encourage parental attendance by communicating the benefits of workshops and offering incentives such as a lottery for gift cards. Each workshop activity is designed to engage parents in actively thinking about applying the workshops materials to help overcome

everyday challenges. Workshops can help develop a shared vocabulary among teachers and parents and a common skill set to be taught in parallel at school and home.

## Workshop Leader's Guide

### Activity 4

5  
minutes

# Developing Effective Guidelines

## Objective

Explain how to develop and use effective guidelines.

**Note to Workshop Leader:** This is the first time you will use the Law of Least Intervention poster. As you talk about effective guidelines, have your Co-leader place a sticky note labeled “Teach Guidelines” at the far end of the continuum, above the arrow.

\_\_\_\_\_ We are now going to learn one of the tools you can use to apply the Law  
\_\_\_\_\_ of Least Intervention. Developing and communicating clear, effective  
\_\_\_\_\_ guidelines is one of the best ways to shape your child's behavior in a  
\_\_\_\_\_ way that teaches skills and maintains strong bonds. Guidelines are the  
\_\_\_\_\_ way we communicate our healthy beliefs and clear standards to our  
\_\_\_\_\_ children. (Point to “Healthy Beliefs” and “Clear Standards” on the SDS  
\_\_\_\_\_ Tree.) Take one minute and review with your partner why healthy beliefs  
\_\_\_\_\_ and clear standards are important for healthy development.



## Debrief

by asking one or two groups to share their responses.

\_\_\_\_\_ Let's take a minute to think about situations where you have  
\_\_\_\_\_ encountered guidelines. You might think of the guardrails on the side of  
\_\_\_\_\_ the freeway as guidelines. Has anyone ever been bowling and used  
\_\_\_\_\_ those “bumper guards” that keep your ball from going in the gutter?  
\_\_\_\_\_ What other kinds of guidelines do you have in your life?

\_\_\_\_\_ Take a few responses.



## Brainstorm

\_\_\_\_\_ Label an easel sheet with “How Guidelines Help Children.”

\_\_\_\_\_ Let's take a minute to think about how guidelines can help our children.

\_\_\_\_\_ Record answers on easel sheet.

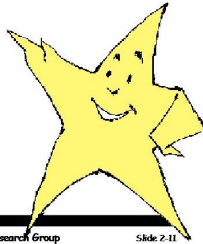
\_\_\_\_\_ Great ideas. Here are some other purposes of guidelines.

## Activity 4

### Purpose of Guidelines



- **Simplify life.**
- **Clarify the expectation.**
- **Establish limits.**
- **State what's included, what's not.**
- **Keep on track.**
- **Provide safety and security.**
- **Protect what's valued.**



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Slide 2-11

Show Slide 2-11:  
Purpose of Guidelines



## Workshop Leader's Guide

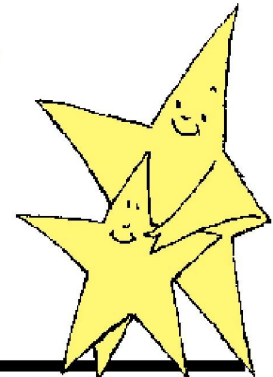


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Effective Guidelines

### Effective Guidelines



- **Simple.**
- **Clear and understandable.**
- **Enforceable.**
- **Known by all involved.**
- **Monitored.**
- **Have consequences: positive and negative.**



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## Rehearsal

We're going to do a short scenario for you, and we'd like you to "rate" the "parent" on how effective her guideline is.

**Parent** Sheena, I'd like to talk to you about something.

**Child** Okay, Mom.

**Parent** I really need to have some help from you in keeping the family room clean. I know you like to have snacks while you are watching TV or doing your homework, but it really irritates me when I wake up in the morning and have to deal with dirty dishes while I'm getting ready for work. From now on, the guideline is going to be that all dishes must be brought into the kitchen and put in the sink before bedtime. If dishes are left in the family room after bedtime, then you will lose your right to eat in the family room the next day. Do you understand what that guideline is?

**Child** Sure. I have to bring my dishes in before bedtime.

**Parent** And what will happen if you don't bring them in?

**Child** I will not be able to eat in there the next day.

(Fast-forward to next day.)

**Child** is sitting watching television.

**Parent** Sheena, I saw that you have already put your ice cream dish in the sink. Thank you. I really appreciate your help with this. I'm going to be in a much better mood tomorrow morning!

## Activity 4

### Debrief



by asking parents to give you a thumbs-up if they agree with the following:

*Was the guideline simple?*

*Was it clear and understandable?*

*Could it be enforced?*

*Was it known by all?*

*Was it monitored?*

*Were there consequences? What was the negative consequence for not following the guideline? What was the positive consequence when Sheena did follow the guideline?*

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### Individual Activity

*Think of one guideline that you want your child to work on.*

*One of the most important aspects of positive parenting is that we want to make it as easy as possible for children to be good. If we expect children to follow guidelines, we must be sure they have all the skills they need to be successful.*

**Using page 7 of your Family Guide**, I'd like you to think about the skills your child has, the skills that give him trouble, and the skills he will need to follow the guidelines you selected. Take about three minutes to complete this activity.



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