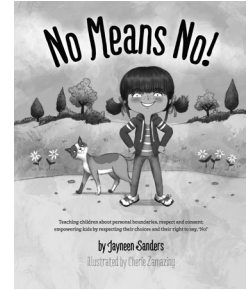


3 Lessons in Understanding Boundaries, Consent and Respect



FOCUS TEXT: *No Means No!* (ages 3–9 years)

Depending on the age of the children, the following lessons will take place over three sessions. Please adapt the lessons to suit the needs and ages of the children.

KEY OBJECTIVES

Children will understand that:

- they are the boss of their body, their actions and their choices
- it's their right to say 'No' if they feel uncomfortable in any situation
- everyone has a personal body boundary
- we show respect to others by listening and responding to their requests.

In these lessons children will:

- discuss who is responsible for different decisions within their lives
- understand that they have many responsibilities, particularly in how they act, how they treat others and how they allow others to treat them

- understand that everyone has the right to say 'No'
- analyse common situations that require choice/consent, examining various options and possible outcomes
- realise that we each have a body boundary and require personal space.

For the lessons you will need:

- large sheets of poster/butcher's paper
- coloured pencils, textas
- whiteboard, markers
- music, speakers
- resource masters: 'Responsibility Cards', 'My Body Boundary'

Lesson 1: Choices

Tuning In: Are You in Control of ... ?

You will need: resource master 'Responsibility Cards', a large open space

Have students stand in the middle of the room. Explain that you are going to read out a series of options and students are to decide whether they are in control of the choices 'always', 'sometimes' or 'never'. If 'always' is chosen they then move to the left side of the room, 'sometimes' to the middle and 'never' to the right side of the room. Select options from resource master 'Responsibility Cards' or develop other options to better suit your class. Read out options as a full question, e.g. 'Are you in control of what you wear to school?' or 'Are you in control of what you say to your friends?' Students move to respond 'always', 'sometimes' or 'never'.

Whole Class Activity: Who's Responsible?

You will need: resource master 'Responsibility Cards' (copied to A3 and cut out prior to class), whiteboard/poster paper, textas

On the whiteboard (or a large sheet of poster paper) draw a large 3-circle Venn diagram. Label the circles: 'Teachers', 'Parents/Caregivers' and 'Me'. Hand out a responsibility card to each student, and have them think about who is responsible (or in control of) the choice on their card. Draw their attention to the overlapping sections of the Venn diagram to represent shared responsibility. In turn, have students read out their card and decide who's responsibility it is, or who is in control of this choice. Discuss placement as required.

Individual Task: I'm in Charge of ...

You will need: A3 paper, textas

Have students draw a self-portrait in the middle of the page. Then, have them write all of the things they are in charge of around the outside. They may draw from ideas in the whole class activity, and/or develop their own.

Reflection

Select students to share their work, discussing the things in their lives that they are in control of. Emphasise the idea that they have control over many aspects of their own lives, and most importantly, they get to choose the kind of person they are, how they treat others and how they allow others to treat them!

Lesson 2: No Means No!

Tuning In: Saying No!

You will need: whiteboard, markers

As a class, brainstorm as many different words or phrases students can think of that mean 'No'. Discuss when these phrases might be used, e.g. you might say 'No, thank you' when you are offered a glass of milk and you don't feel like one or 'Not now, but maybe later' when you're asked if you want to go for a walk. Discuss the use of 'tone' in the way we say 'No' and how this can vary and will affect how a person might interpret the 'No'. Have students practise saying different phrases in different tones and discuss when you would use them. A stern 'NO!' should be reserved for when you feel threatened or unsafe. When talking to friends, family or teachers, there are lots of ways to say 'No' that provide children with control over the situation.

Whole Class Activity: In-depth Reading

You will need: No Means No! by Jayneen Sanders

Read *No Means No!* to the class. The discussion questions for each page are located on pp.24–25. It would be beneficial to keep these in mind while reading; stopping for discussion where relevant for the class as/if required. After reading, ask students if they have any questions or comments about the text. If time allows, read the text again, emphasising the other options provided when the girl doesn't want to hug, play or hold hands with others.

Group Task: Building Our Options

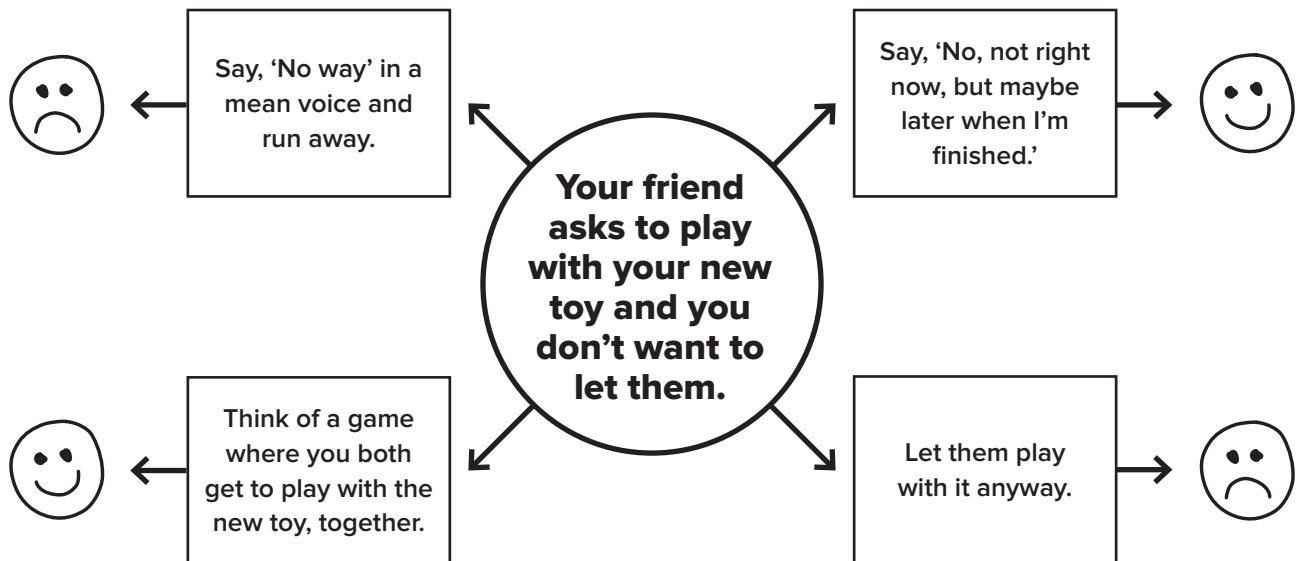
You will need: A3 paper, coloured pencils, textas

In groups of three, have students create a 'mind map' of response options to common scenarios faced by students. Encourage students to come up with at least four options of things they could say or do when faced with the scenario, with both positive and negative outcomes. Then, have them discuss and write the possible outcome/s for each scenario and judge their effectiveness (see the mind map example on p. 4). Use the examples provided or develop new scenarios based on student needs.

What could you do:

- When you don't like the game that your friends are playing at playtime?
- When you don't want to give your relatives a kiss goodbye?
- When you see someone being picked on by another child in the playground?
- When your friend asks to borrow your new toy but you don't want to let them?
- When you're asked for a play at a friend's house but you don't want to go.

You might be happy but
your friend is sad.



Both of you are happy; you've been
honest and they should understand.

You've made a compromise, but
maybe this new game will be fun.

Your friend is happy
but you're sad.

Note: for younger students mind mapping may be too complex. Instead, use dolls to role-play the scenarios, and act out different response options and discuss their effectiveness as a class. A follow-up activity may be to write down a simple statement, e.g. 'When a friend asks to play with my new toy and I don't want them to, I can...' and draw a picture of their response.

Reflection

Have students present their posters to the class, discussing which option they liked best and why they think it would be the most effective for them. Emphasise the idea that it is everyone's right to say 'No'; we all have control over the choices we make and acknowledging this is a way of showing respect.

Lesson 3: Personal Boundaries

Tuning In: Partner Freeze

You will need: a large open space, music, speakers

This game is a variation on the standard musical statues. Have students dance to the music, and when the music stops, they freeze and listen to the instructions. Each instruction will involve a partner, and students need to choose a different partner for each activity. Instructions may include:

- high-five a partner
- stand back to back with a partner
- link arms with a partner
- touch toes with a partner
- sit cross legged, facing a partner, knees touching
- sit back to back with a partner
- hold hands with a partner
- hold out one arm and touch finger tips with a partner
- sit side-by-side with a partner.

On completion of the game, ask, 'Did anyone feel uncomfortable with any of the instructions given? In what way?' Discuss.

Note: students do not need to 'go out' in this game. If there are odd numbers allow one group of three (which will differ each time).

Whole Class Discussion: Personal Space — Body Boundary

You will need: a large open space

Have students stay sitting with last person they partnered with in the Tuning In activity. Discuss the idea that each of us has an invisible body bubble/boundary around us and that this can also be referred to as our personal space. The body boundary can be different for each individual, i.e. some people require a lot of personal space, and others not so much. It also varies for each person, depending on who is entering their personal space, e.g. you may feel okay having your parents close to you, but prefer more distance with unfamiliar adults. We often let our close friends hug us to say 'Hi', but may feel uncomfortable if people we don't know very well go to hug or kiss us on the cheek, especially if they don't ask our consent/permission. If time allows, share a story of your own experiences with personal space in order to show students this is relevant for adults as well as children. Most of us have experienced a 'close-talker' who seems to always be inside our personal space or the 'over-hugging' acquaintance, etc.

Say, 'We're going to try to get an idea of the personal space (body boundary) each of us needs, remembering that it is different for each person.' Select a student to come to the front of the room to demonstrate the activity with you. Have them stand facing you, side on to the class and about five metres away. Explain that you are going to slowly walk towards the student, and as you get closer, have his/her classmates look at the student's body language and facial expressions. When the student feels that you are close enough, i.e. you are on the verge of invading their body boundary; they can say 'Stop'. As a class, discuss the distance — is it an arm's length? Longer than an arm's length? etc. Did the class notice anything in the student's body language (and facial expressions)? Now take a tiny step closer to the student so you have just invaded their personal space. Discuss their body language. If you feel it is okay to do so, take another tiny step forward. Discuss their body language (student may be leaning away) and ask them how they are feeling. There are many physical signs (our early warning signs) when we feel we are at risk, e.g. flutterings in the tummy or throat, our breathing changes, legs begin to shake, etc. To avoid the student being uncomfortable for too long, turn side on so you are both now facing the class, side by side. You may be just as close, but ask if this feels different? Our personal space is generally widest at the front because exposing the front of our body makes us more vulnerable to potential threats.

Partner Activity: My Personal Body Boundary

You will need: a large open space

Have students stand up, facing their partner in two lines down the middle of the room. Have one side take about six big steps backwards, so there are a few metres between them and their partner. Have students repeat the activity demonstrated in the previous Whole Class Discussion; walking slowly forwards until their partner says 'Stop'. Look at the different distances as a class — it is likely that most students will be around a meter away from their partner, but others may be much further or closer. Discuss this as a class, taking note of the differences in students' needs. Have students take a small step forward to cross into their partner's personal space to give an idea of what it feels like when the boundary is crossed. Now swap roles so the other partner has a turn. If time allows, repeat the activity allowing students to use both their voice and their body language to stop their partner moving forward, i.e. by standing in a 'superhero' pose, putting up their hand, using their facial expression and saying firmly 'Stop!' Discuss the power of body language and how we use this in combination with our facial expressions, voice and tone to send a really clear message.

Individual Task: If Boundaries Are Crossed

Have students complete resource master 'My Body Boundary'.

Reflection

Have students sit in a circle and hold up their work to show the class. Select students to talk about their body boundary and why it is important to them. Have students think about adults in their lives who they could talk to if they feel unsafe or unsure.

Note: Lesson 2 in the *Resilience* lesson plan series deals specifically with support networks where children list their own 'support team' of people who they trust. If you haven't already completed these lessons with your class, it would be valuable to work through these lessons. If you have already completed the *Resilience* lesson sequence, refer students back to their support teams within this lesson.

Note: for more in-depth lessons on Body Safety and children's early warning signs see the Body Safety Teacher's Resource Kit at www.e2epublishing.info

Teaching notes written by Yale Mercieca

Responsibility Cards

What you wear to school	What you are taught at school	The colour socks you wear	How hard you try at school
How you behave at school	The way you style your hair	The sport or activities you do in PE	The games you play at playtime
The sport or activities you do outside of school	How hard you try at the sport that you play	What you have in your lunch box	What you have in your sandwich
What time you go to bed	The pyjamas you wear	The books you read at school	The books you read at home
How you treat other people	How you respond when someone is being mean	What you say to your friends	Getting dressed for school in the morning
The movies/TV you like to watch	The movies/TV you are allowed to watch	When you are allowed to watch TV	What you have for dinner
Who you play with at school	If you allowed to go to a friend's house for a play	Whether you want to go to a friend's house for a play	Who you invite for a play at your house

My Body Boundary

I have an invisible body boundary around me that belongs to only me and helps me to feel safe.

This is what I imagine my body boundary looks like.



If people get inside my body boundary, it makes me feel...

My body sends me warning signs such as ...

When I feel this way, I can tell the person to move away.

If they don't listen, I need to tell an adult I trust straight away.

