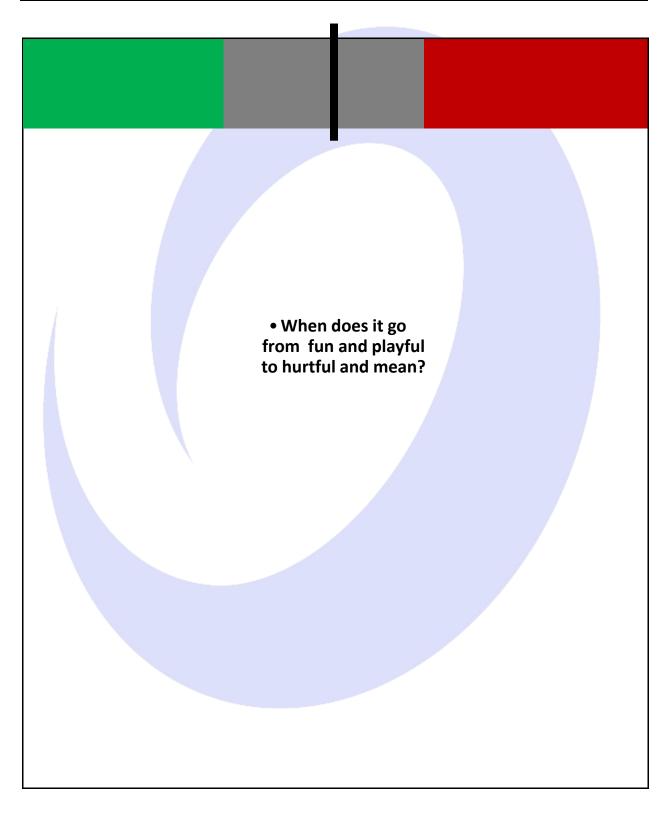


Learning Right from Wrong: Continuums

Sometimes, youth truly do not understand the severity of their actions. When does sharing a story become gossip? When does teasing turn into taunting? There are often subtle differences between what can be acceptable and not acceptable; much depends upon who is involved, where it is happening, the relationships that already exist, and individual differences. We all need opportunities to draw distinctions between behaviors and practice an understanding of right and wrong. A continuum allows an opportunity to visually draw out the differences between acceptable and unacceptable behaviors and help determine the point that "crosses the line" from being fun and playful to being aggressive.

Continuum Template



Continuum Walk-Through

Acceptable Behavior Depends on context Unacceptable Behavior

THE LINE

- What does this behavior look like, sound like, feel like?
- What positive norms are supported by this behavior?
- What are the positive qualities of this behavior?
- What are examples of this acceptable behavior?

- When does it go from fun and playful to hurtful and mean?
- Who would this be acceptable with?
- Who would this be unacceptable with?
- Define "crossing the line." This is the moment when something that was harmless has now become hurtful.
- How can you know when you've crossed the line?
- Is the line in the same place for everyone?
- What causes the line to shift?
- How can you let others know when they have crossed the line with you?

- What does this behavior look like, sound like, feel like?
- What norms/rules does this behavior violate?
- Why is this hurtful or wrong?
- What are examples of this unacceptable behavior?

Continuum Example

Teasing

- Fun and innocent
- Allows the teaser and person teased to swap roles with ease
- Not intended to hurt the other person
- Maintians the basic dignity of everyone involved
- Pokes fun in a lighthearted, clever, and benign way
- Meant to get both parties to laugh
- Only a small part of the activities shared by peers who have something in common
- Innocent in motive
- Discontinued when person teased becomes upset or objects to the teasing

 When does it go from fun and playful to hurtful and mean?

Taunting

- Based on an imbalance of power and is one-sided; the aggressor taunts, the target is taunted
- Intended to harm
- Involves humiliating, cruel, demeaning, or bigoted comments thinly disguised as iokes
- Includes laughter directed at the target, not with the target
- Includes fear of further taunting
- Sinister in motive
- Continues especially when the target objects to the taunting