

Healthy Boundaries PEVA Script

Note for the Leader: To do this training, you will need a computer or device with Canva on which to play the slide show, and a way for the group to view it-either from a tv or with a projector, connected to the laptop or compatible device. If that is not a possibility for your session, please contact the PEVA Office and we will work something out.

Also please have copies of the case study document printed out for people to see and discuss, and distributed to them prior to this training, so they have time to read through all the case studies

Slide 1 Healthy Boundaries

Slide 2 Introduction

Open with Prayer, read John 10: 7-10

As followers of Jesus, and leaders in our congregations, we are called to be Good Shepherds of our flocks, and so we are doing this training to know how to protect our people, prevent abuse and misconduct, and preserve and create peace and justice for all involved.

NOTE: per our Book of Order, all congregations MUST have both a Child, Youth, and Vulnerable Adult Abuse Prevention Policy and a Sexual Misconduct Prevention Policy. These policies MUST include requirements for boundary training which includes the topic of sexual misconduct, and child, youth and vulnerable adult sexual abuse prevention training for its members at least every thirty-six months. (Book of Order G-3.0106)

This means that all Elders in active service on the Session are required to do this training, every 36 months. Your policy might require, (but if it doesn't, it is a good idea to) have youth volunteers/Sunday School teachers, and others take this training as well.

The more people who know and have healthy boundaries, the healthier the congregation will be.

Slide 3 Topics Covered:

Healthy Boundaries-What are they? What are they not?
Abuse/Misconduct
Prevention
Responding to an Allegation

Presbytery of Eastern Virginia is:

Slide 4 Goals of Training

Slide 5 As We Begin

Whether you are here because you must be, or because you want to learn more about creating a healthy congregation, welcome!

NOTE: some of the topics we will discuss today might bring up some feelings for some people. If you need to take a break/step out/etc., you are welcome to do so. But if you are unable to complete this training today, you will need to do it again. Those who complete today's training will receive a certificate stating that they have done so.

*Clerk of Session: please record in the Session minutes the date and the names of those who completed the training.

Slide 10 video- click on arrow in middle to get video to start- NOTE: need internet for this to play

Slide 6 Boundaries- what do you think?

Discuss: are they a gift? A burden? Do they get in the way of relationships?
Are they rude? Withholding? Culturally shaped?

What is our church culture like regarding boundaries?

Slide 7 Presbyterian Apron

What is/might be wrong with this?

Slide 8 Presbyterian Apron

Where are the boundaries? Where is asking for consent?

Note: this does not mean you cannot hug anybody, ever. BUT ask if they would like a hug—allow people to have consent over their own bodies

Slide 9 Boundaries are...

Slide 10 Book of Order

Healthy Boundaries help us in this manner of life and the demonstration of the Gospel.

Slide 11 The Nature of Boundaries

Boundaries are like a fence- and in congregations, the pastor, by the nature of our structure, has more power, and others have less – even if it feels like Mrs. Johnson, who has been there since God made dirt, holds all the power in the congregation.

Slide 12

People with More power/greater resources have more potential for abusing others

People with less power/resources more potential for being abused

Slide 13 The Nature of Boundaries- What boundaries ARE...

Slide 14 The Nature of Boundaries- What boundaries are NOT...

Again, healthy boundaries are more like a fence than a solid wall-or more like a semipermeable membrane or filter- some things can pass through, but not all

Slide 15 Boundary Crossing v Boundary Violations

Sometimes, in ministry (and that's all of us- Ministers, Elders, Deacons, SS and Youth leaders), we might have to cross a boundary- say, visiting somebody in the hospital who is in their bed/not wearing their usual clothes. This is a boundary CROSSING, because the ministry moment is happening where the person is at that moment.

IF, however, you are spending time with congregation members in their bed/pjs, and it is NOT a ministry related event, and you do NOT have another

elder/Minister with you, then that would be a boundary VIOLATION- see the difference?

Slide 16

You always must ask yourself the question: Is this in the best interest of the congregation? ALL abuse, at heart, whether financial, emotional, physical or sexual, is about someone's meeting their own personal needs, not the needs of another

Slide 17 Definitions of Sexual Misconduct

Slide 18 Ethical Analysis of Sexual Misconduct

Slide 19 Meaningful Consent

Definition: two adults who can consent to the intimate contact/relationship. An employer/employee, pastor/congregation member, youth leader/youth can NOT, by definition of the relationship, have meaningful consent, due to the inherent power difference in those roles.

Slide 20 Sexual Abuse

Slide 21 Sexual Harassment

Slide 22 Predators/Wanderers/Lovers

Three types of people who are perpetrators in Misconduct/Abuse

Slide 23 Predators/Wanderers/Lovers (information from FaithTrust Institute)

Slide 24 What our Book of Order says

Slide 25 Dating, Friendships, Dual Relationships, and Gifts

Slide 26 Dating

In the "old days" it was common for a single male pastor (they were always male) to date and marry a member of their congregation. This is a boundary violation on several levels. It is impossible to have meaningful consent between a pastor and a

congregation member in an intimate relationship, due to the inherent power dynamics. It is also extremely difficult to be a person's pastor and a romantic/intimate partner and maintain objectivity.

If the relationship is to continue, ONE of them will need to find a new worshipping community.

Slide 27 Dating

Slide 28 Friends

Note: if your pastor comes with spouse/family, then think about possible conflict of interest areas/i.e., is it appropriate for them to serve on Session, be employed by the church, volunteer to lead SS, PW, youth group, etc.?

Slide 29 Friends and Healthy Boundaries

Many of us serve (as Ministers, CREs, Elders, Deacons, SS teachers) in congregations in which we have family and/or friends.

We like to say that we are a 'friendly' congregation. But if our relationships with friends or family members gets in the way of your ministry as Elder/Deacon/Pastor/Youth or SS leader, then it is time to think about what healthy boundaries would look like in those relationships, and how you can create them, and what conversations you will need to have.

Beloved Former Pastors: "BFPs." When a pastor leaves a congregation, that person is no longer your pastor. While you might still consider them a friend, and may send Christmas cards, etc., that pastoral relationship has ended.

This does NOT mean that you can no longer speak to your former pastor, but it does mean that any pastoral relationship/action will happen through your new pastor. See PEVA's Departing Minister Policy.

Slide 30 Dual Relationships

Where someone from the congregation is also your: barber/dentist/car repairman.

This doesn't mean you cannot have these relationships, but it does mean we have to have good boundaries-

It also is a reminder that healthy churches keep confidences, but do not have secrets. It is appropriate that some things remain confidential, but that other things can be openly known and discussed.

Slide 31 Dual relationships

Slide 32 Gifts

Does your church have a limit on gifts? Does the Session HAVE TO accept every gift, even if it does not meet the needs/mission of the congregation? (no, you don't)

Is there a limit on \$ amounts for gifts to individuals? Are there any people in your congregation who feel their gifts to the church entitle them to more sway/influence in decisions?

Slide 33 Financial Healthy Boundaries Book of Order

Slide 34 Financial Healthy Boundaries Book of Order Continued

Slide 35 Financial Boundaries in Practice

Slide 36 Case Studies

Break out into small groups (2-4 people, depending upon the size of the group) and choose a case study to read/discuss, and then share with the larger group.

BREAK TIME

Slide 37 Policies and Procedures for Abuse and Misconduct Prevention

Slide 38 Data

Please note that it is estimated that nearly 80% of abuse does NOT get reported, so these #s are low compared to actual abuse.

Each year, 1 in 7 nursing home residents and thousands of adults with disabilities are abused.

There are more than 60 million survivors of child sexual abuse in America, and child abuse costs the United States approximately \$103 billion per year.

Given that knowledge, it is statistically very likely that your congregation has survivors of abuse and misconduct. It is also likely that you might have a perpetrator of abuse/misconduct in your congregation.

Slide 39 Data Regarding Abuse and Misconduct

NOTE how FEW false allegations were received.

We often hear stories about “oh, that one was just a troublemaker, stirring up trouble,” but this data doesn’t show that about those who report abuse/misconduct.

Slide 40 Resources from the PCUSA and FaithTrust Institute

Slide 41 How do we PREVENT abuse and misconduct?

Slide 42

You need to have a policy before anything happens, because you cannot react appropriately if you do not know, ahead of time, what to do- think about a fire drill. We don’t ever want to experience a fire, but we do need to know, ahead of time, where the exits are and how to evacuate safely.

Slide 43 Mandated Reporting

This means that all who are ordained: Ministers, CREs, Elders and Deacons (whether they are in active service on the Session/Board of Deacons or not) are **REQUIRED** to report any abuse or reasonable suspicion of abuse.

Slide 44 Every state has an 1-800 child abuse reporting number

If the abuse is against an elderly person, there are elder abuse numbers as well.

Slide 45 Book of Order

There is no statute of limitations for reporting sexual abuse. You also need to know if you have knowledge of abuse/reasonably should have known of the abuse and **FAIL** to report, there is no statute of limitations on charging you (through the

church) with the failure to do so, and church disciplinary action may be taken against you.

Slide 46 The Good Samaritan Law

Every state has one, which says, in essence, if you made a report of abuse in good faith, then you cannot be held liable in either civil or criminal courts, if the report turns out not to be sustained.

NOTE: this does not apply if you intentionally make a false report of abuse

Slide 47 Questions? Comments?

Slide 48 What are policies and procedures designed to do?

Slide 49 Based on Scripture

Slide 50 Three Components Should Be Included In Your Policy

Slide 51 #1 Training and Education

Who? How often? How to communicate to congregation.

Note: it is important to let the congregation know about the policies, and that people are being trained in them = a healthier congregation. If you want families with children, they will want to know their children are safe while at church/youth group, etc.

Slide 52 #2 Prevention

Not only policies, but physical – doors/windows/ratios

Slide 53 Best Practices

Slide 54 Social Media Policy

If you do not have a social media policy, you need to create one. It should replicate online what is practiced in person: respect for all, including an adult/family member in any electronic communication with youth, never any 1:1 communication with minors-group text/emails are best.

Slide 55 These policies are required: if you do not have them, please contact the Presbytery office for help/resources. If you do have them, review/update annually.

Slide 56 # 3 Response to an Allegation

Again, you need to have policies already in place- and everyone needs to know them-Session/Deacons/Youth and SS volunteers/staff and congregation-before anything happens, so you can respond appropriately) Think: we have fire drills so we know how to respond in an emergency, even when we hope we never have to evacuate.

Slide 57 Steps to Take Immediately

REMEMBER – we receive a report with respect, but we also hold it is an allegation, not a definitive judgement, and as confidential, certainly not as gossip.

Slide 58 Responsibility of the Clerk of Session

AND the obligation to report child/youth sexual abuse or harm still applies= call child abuse hotline

Slide 59 Care for All

Slide 60 Clarity in Your Policies

Slide 61 When You Receive a Verbal Report

In our polity, there must be a written report in order to take ecclesial (church) action and discipline.

Often, people are not comfortable with making a written complaint.

Complaints should come to the Session through a “response team,” a small group of people who are the ones who will receive the complaint, and bring it to the Clerk of Session, and the rest of the Session. Include in your policy have where/how confidential complaints/reports will be stored, for how long, and who will have access to them.

Again, healthy churches can keep confidences, but do not have secrets.

Slide 62 If the allegation is against the pastoral leader-contact the Presbytery

Slide 63 Allegation against a staff/member/volunteer-what does your policy say?

Slide 64 Informing the congregation if an allegation is made:

Again, note how this preserves confidentiality yet informs the congregation

Slide 65 Book of Order-

Taking these steps might seem risky, we often feel like we don't want to say anything/stir up trouble-but the Gospel of Jesus Christ compels us to take these steps for the health of our church.

Slide 66 After

Slide 67 Questions to Ask When Reviewing Your Policy

Should review your policies annually.

Slide 68 What is the real objective of your policy?

Is it justice and healing, or protecting the assets of the church? Is it about keeping quiet, or letting the sunlight of the Gospel prevail?

Slide 69 Clearly State Prohibited Behavior

Slide 70 Annual Policy Review

Slide 71 Church Discipline is for the building up and healing of the church.

Slide 72 Healthy Boundaries = Healthy Church!

Slide 73 Anyone who is enrolled in the PCUSA's Call to Health can get 50 points for doing this training.

Slide 74 Next required boundary training will be in 36 months- write it down on your certificate and put it in your calendar. Also, tell the whole congregation about the fact that you have done this training, to create a healthy, thriving church!

Close with thanks to all who participated, and prayer!