

The “Hold the Line” Script Sheet

Expectation → Boundary → The YES Zone

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PHYSICAL AGGRESSION

Expectation: We keep bodies safe.

Boundary (Parent action):

“When you hit. I will move my body back.”

YES Zone:

“You can stomp, squeeze a pillow, or come sit next to me when you’re ready.”

Expectation: We use toys safely.

Boundary:

“When you throw the toy, it gets put away.”

YES Zone:

“You may roll it, build with it, or choose a soft ball to throw.”

Expectation: We move to safe spaces when overwhelmed.

Boundary:

“When your body is not safe, I will guide us to a different room.”

YES Zone:

“You can jump, squeeze, or take space until you feel ready.”

SIBLING RIVALRY / FRIEND CONFLICT

Expectation: We speak and play safely with others.

Boundary:

"I won't let you stay together when it's not safe. I will separate you to help you cool down."

YES Zone:

"You each can choose a quiet activity or ask for help before trying again."

Expectation: Toys are used kindly.

Boundary:

"When the toy causes fighting, I will put the toy away for today."

YES Zone:

"You may each choose a different toy or take a turn with a timer."

Expectation: We use words, not hands.

Boundary:

"I will listen and keep everyone safe."

YES Zone:

"You may ask for help, take space, or try again with safe words."



RESPECTFUL SPEECH / YELLING

Expectation: We use safe voices with each other.

Boundary:

"I can explain my reasoning, but I won't be arguing with you."

YES Zone:

"I will talk with you when voices are calmer or when you're ready to try again."

Expectation: We speak to each other with kindness.

Boundary:

"I won't respond to name-calling. I will pause and check back in a moment."

YES Zone:

"You may tell me you're mad or ask for help using safe words."

Expectation: We speak with a gentle tone.

Boundary:

"I'll continue this conversation when voices are back to normal."

YES Zone:

"You can yell into a pillow or take a break until you're ready to talk."



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CLEANING UP

Expectation: We clean up before moving on.

Boundary:

"We will start the next activity once the toys are put away."

YES Zone:

"You may choose music, a timer, or ask me to help you start."

Expectation: We care for our things.

Boundary:

"If something is left out, I will place it on the counter/shelf for you to take care of before bed."

YES Zone:

"You can tidy as you go, or I'll remind you before bed and you can tidy your pile then."

Expectation: Clean-up is shared responsibility.

Boundary:

"I'll help you start, but we do this together."

YES Zone:

"You can clean 3 toys, do the floor pile, or put books on the shelf."



HOUSEHOLD RESPONSIBILITIES

Expectation: Everyone contributes.

Boundary:

"I'll remind you once and then the job is yours, but I'll check on you to see how it's going."

YES Zone:

"You may choose when to do it/what order to do it within the time window."

Expectation: Responsibilities come before screen time.

Boundary:

"I'll unlock the screens when your responsibility is done."

YES Zone:

"You may choose to do the job now or take a break first — screens come after."

Expectation: You follow through on your jobs.

Boundary:

"I'll support you, but I won't do it for you. I know you can do it."

YES Zone:

"You can ask for help getting started or break it into smaller steps."



HOMEWORK

Expectation: Homework gets done before free time.

Boundary:

"We can do family screens after homework time."

YES Zone:

"You may choose to work at the table or on the floor, with music or quiet."

Expectation: Homework time has structure.

Boundary:

"I'm going to work on my ____, but I'll check in every 10 minutes."

YES Zone:

"You can ask questions during check-ins or try a problem and then ask."

Expectation: We do our work calmly and safely.

Boundary:

"I am available to help when voices are calm and your body is safe."

YES Zone:

"You may take a break, drink water, or ask for help."



ARGUING / INTERRUPTING

Expectation: We wait our turn to speak.

Boundary:

"I'll pause until you're ready to hear me."

YES Zone:

"You may put your hand on my arm or wait until I finish speaking."

Expectation: We discuss calmly.

Boundary:

"I'm not having an argument, but I'll have a gentle discussion with you."

YES Zone:

You can share your feelings or ask a clarifying question."

Expectation: The answer doesn't change.

Boundary:

"The answer I gave you is the best one I have."

YES Zone:

"You may express disappointment or offer a compromise."



DINNER TABLE BEHAVIOR

Expectation: We stay at the table while we eat.

Boundary:

"When you leave the table, I will assume you're done eating."

YES Zone:

"You may sit on your chair, sit on your knees, or take small breaks in your seat."

Expectation: Food stays on the plate.

Boundary:

"If food is thrown, I will pause the meal."

YES Zone:

"You may push food aside, ask for help, or tell me you're done."

Expectation: We eat a variety of foods..

Boundary:

"I won't make extra meals during dinner, but I'll always offer something on the table you like."

YES Zone:

"You may try a bite, leave it on your plate, or fill up on the safe side options."

