

Birth to 3 Wisline Presentation – Ethics & Boundaries and Home Visiting
June 11, 2009
1:00p.m.-2:30p.m.
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Definitions

Ethics – the principles of conduct governing an individual or a group; a guiding philosophy, the discipline dealing with what is good and bad and with moral duty and obligation, a set of moral principles: a theory or system of moral values (Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, 2009).

Boundaries- Limits within the professional relationships that allow for safe connections based on the needs of individuals. Some boundary areas include: physical contact, acceptance of gifts & money, appropriate clothing, self-disclosure, roles, language, space and time boundaries (Jacobson, 2002).

Boundary issues – Involve circumstances in which social workers (i.e. home visitors, early interventionists) encounter actual or potential conflicts between their professional duties and their social, sexual, religious, or business relationships - includes circumstances involving dual and multiple relationships. Not all boundary issues are problematic; however many times this is the case (Reamer, 2003). **Boundary violations** may be subtle and ambiguous or blatant and clear (Jacobson, 2002.)

Dual Relationships – Service provider has a professional relationship and a personal, social, or business relationship with a client (Barndt, 2008). Dual relationships occur when professionals engage with clients in more than one relationship (Reamer, 2003).

Example: Family wants their child's Physical Therapist to be the family's paid house-sitter while the family is on vacation.

Conflict of Interest – Service provider's involvement with a client poses confidentiality concerns (Barndt, 2008) Interfere with exercise of professional discretion and impartial judgment (Reamer, 2003.)

Example: An Educator is asked to do a file review of a child not on her caseload. The file happens to be that of a child who lives right next door to the Educator.