Setting Boundaries

- Remember that setting boundaries can sometimes make children feel safe when the world seems otherwise out of control.
- Occasionally giving children responsibility for their own safety is a good thing.
- Make a visual poster and ask them to help draw it with little symbols so they feel a part of it.
- Get books to help you reinforce your message, online book stores will have lots of different books that are age appropriate.
- It is ok to try lots of different ways before you find a method that works well for your family.
- When your young child does keep within the boundaries you have set, give them lots of praise and positive attention.
- Allow them time to practice and understand that they may slip up now and again.

Information obtained from: https://www.familylives.org.uk/advice/early-years-development/behaviour/setting-boundaries-for-toddlers-and-preschool-children/

For Older Children:

- Establish rules and clear consequences of breaking those rules. Writing the agreed rules down in the form of a contract works for many families. There can be no disagreement about what the rule was and what the consequence of breaking it might be if it is written down and signed by all parties. That might seem a bit formal for you but give it a try, you might be pleasantly surprised.
- Stick to the rules and back each other up. Teenagers are going to test the boundaries, although some will do it in a small way while others will go for the “grand gesture”. As parents, you need to maintain a united front, and you must stick to the consequences when your teen breaks rules.
- Give positive messages. Teenagers are going through a difficult phase of discovering who they are as people and there is often a big drop in their self-confidence during this period. Parents can help by reinforcing the positives to remind their teens of their strengths and qualities. Tell them you love them as often as you can – and teens are never too big or old to need a hug.
- Share responsibility for the boundary setting. Ask them what they think would be reasonable – be willing to listen to a reasonable argument, and give way on some things. Part of setting boundaries for teenagers is helping them learn to set their own boundaries.
- Lead by example. Demonstrating acceptable behaviour is sometimes more important than simply telling them what to do. Teenagers won’t accept the “do as I say, not as I do” argument easily. Parents need to show that they live within reasonable boundaries themselves, and that they consider the consequences of their behaviour on other people.

Information obtained from: https://www.relate.org.uk/relationship-help/help-family-life-and-parenting/parenting-teenagers/behaviour/setting-boundaries-teenagers

We take great care over the websites we link to and review them regularly, but the Surrey County Council Early Help Partnerships Team is not responsible for the content of these sites. The inclusion of a link shouldn't be interpreted as an endorsement of that site, its content, or any product or service it may provide.