

Parents Are Sharing The Family Boundaries That People Hate

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What's your strongest parenting boundary?

"Many people forget that children are human and may not be able to fully express themselves," Ashley Samiez, a Los Angeles mom, tells [TODAY.com](#). "We, as parents, often have to be their voices."

Samiez revealed her parenting boundary on [TikTok](#), asking parents to share their rules.

"I don't let people tickle my toddler if he says no — even if they're 'just playing,'" Samiez captioned her post. "It's not cute if it's not consensual and I'm not here to raise a people-pleaser who laughs through discomfort."

Samiez continued: "This is the kind of boundary that makes people roll their eyes but my job isn't to make them comfortable — it's to teach my kid he is allowed to own his body."

The mom asked: "What's a parenting boundary you stand firm on, even when others don't get it?"

There were rules about sleepovers, mealtime, naps and manners:

- "If you can't respect me/get along with me, you won't be around my kids."

- “I don’t force my kids to provide physical affection. If they don’t want to hug you, that sucks for you.”
- “I’m not letting anyone take my kids near water unless I’m there. Period.”
- “We leave to put the kids to bed at a reasonable time, no matter the family function.”
- “No sleepovers.”
- “If my kids are overstimulated, we will leave. Their peace is more important than you wanting the ‘perfect’ family function.”
- “Not posting my baby’s face online.”
- “I don’t let my baby cry … if she is not self-soothing, I am holding her. If she doesn’t want someone else to hold her, I am taking her.”
- “We don’t do playdates.”
- “My kids will not go anywhere if they even have the slightest sniffle Also, my kids will miss birthdays, holidays, etc. if anyone in attendance is sick or was just recently sick. Coming from a mother whose child has an immunocompromised system.”
- “I don’t make my kids act respectfully to people that don’t treat them with respect.”
- “She is 6 months old. I don’t allow people other than myself and my husband to kiss her.”
- “Giving him food that is not approved by me.”
- “We don’t let our toddler spend the night with either grandparent. Sorry, not sorry.”
- “My kids say, ‘Yes ma’am’ and ‘Yes, sir.’”
- “No dyes and only sweet treats only once in a while. Our son didn’t have his first sugar until he was a year and a half. Everybody was very upset, especially at his first birthday when he had a homemade cake made from banana and coconut.”
- “Don’t take my baby where I can’t see him. Why do you need to be alone with him??? Anything that you’re doing in the next room over, you should be able to do in front of me.”
- “Eating. I’m a helicopter. I’m so scared of choking. I don’t like my kids eating certain foods (some are really choking hazards for their age) and I don’t like people offering my kids food without my knowledge or letting them run around with food.”

Samiez tells TODAY.com that her toddler has “super strong” boundaries.

“So many people have tried to tickle my toddler,” says Samiez. “He is a strong-willed child and he will say, ‘No.’ People are taken aback by it, because he is 2.”

Samiez adds, “We are teaching body autonomy from a very young age — and that includes hugging we won’t force it. It’s his body and he gets to decide what he does with it.”

According to Samiez, some adults disagree with her limits. She always asks why.

“I try to understand why it bothers them and where it comes from,” Samiez says, adding that it’s usually to bond with her child. In which case, she might suggest other ways to do that.

"We live in an age of information," explains Samiez. "When you know better, you do better."

Why boundaries are hard

"It's really important that parents understand what their own rules are — not just rules *for* their kids but also rules *about* their kids and for their families, to help children have safe experiences," [Deborah Gilboa](#), a family doctor and resilience expert, tells TODAY.com.

She adds, "It's also really important to model for kids how to have a rule and not bend it."

Some people feel uneasy enforcing their boundaries.

"Girls and women are taught more that making people feel comfortable is more important than their own comfort and safety," explains Gilboa.

Rules are "kind," says Gilboa, because they help people understand your expectations and what happens when they are not met.

What to say when someone questions your boundary

When someone violates a boundary, it's awkward to call it out — especially if it happens spontaneously.

So, if you're at the playground and someone snaps a photo of their kid, in which your kid is in the background and you don't like it, Gilboa would say:

"I am more comfortable not having pictures of my kids on other people's phones — would you please show me that you're deleting that?"

Sometimes, the reasons for boundaries are private and you could just say: "This is just my thing."

If someone doesn't respect a boundary, Gilboa says you can steer your child away without addressing the other person.

If a boundary-pusher wants to argue, Gilboa has a retort: "I appreciate that your point of view is different from mine."

"Leave it there," adds Gilboa. "Don't keep explaining and don't get into a debate — even if it's somebody with whom you want to figure it out. Don't do it in the moment in front of your child because you're teaching them how to set boundaries for themselves."



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