

Signs of Unhealthy Boundaries

For Family Promise staff and volunteers - these lists help makes us aware of potential danger zones in relationships with guests.

Signs that an at-risk guest has unhealthy boundaries:

- Tells all
- Talks at an intimate level at first meeting
- Falls in love with an acquaintance
- Takes as much as possible regardless of need
- Gives as much as he/she can for the sake of giving
- Believes others should anticipate his/her needs and fulfill them
- Falls apart so someone will take care of them
- Self-abuse
- Goes against personal values or rights to please others
- Allows people to take advantage of him/her
- Food and chemical abuse
- Sexual and physical abuse

Signs that staff / volunteers working with at-risk guests have unhealthy boundaries:

- Giving your home phone number to guests and/or telling them to call anytime
- Giving intimate information about yourself to guests
- Believe that only you can 'save' this person(s)
- Believe that the 'system' doesn't understand but only you do, therefore you must intervene
- Believe that colleagues don't understand when you discuss/defend your behavior with guests Lending money to guests
- Physical abuse
- Taking sides in an argument between guests
- Considering yourself 'part of the family' with guests
- Experience stress induced illnesses such as asthma, angina, back pain, migraines, etc. when involved in interactions with guests