



PERSONAL SPACE + PRIVACY

Description of this class for parents + caregivers

When young kids learn about consent, they must start with its most basic meaning: asking for permission and requiring others to ask permission of them. Two very central pieces to this involve personal space and privacy.

Children's brains are wired to seek connection through touch at the very same time their impulse control is developing. This combination explains why so many of them wind up in each other's spaces—grabbing (or even just touching) each other's hair or bumping up against one another. One of the earliest interventions is to teach body boundaries. These help activate self-monitoring and empathy. When kids master these skills, they feel a sense of power over what happens to them and agency that their bodies belong to them. It also reinforces that all people deserve to be treated with respect and dignity, just like they do.

This type of consent teaching has little overlap with the sexual consent taught to teenagers. But older kids cannot possibly know how to behave consensually during intimate moments if they don't understand the fundamental concepts of personal space and privacy. These are the building blocks of *all* healthy relationships, beginning with friendships all the way up to romantic and physical ones.