



★ Early Essentials ★

## Quick Start Guide for Self Care and Professionalism

### Know the Essentials

- Although working with children and families is important and rewarding, it is hard work and can often be stressful.
- It's important to recognize signs of stress in yourself and to ask for and receive needed support.
- Having the dual roles of parent and staff member in a program may pose challenges in setting professional boundaries.
- Strategies for self-care and professional development should be part of your routine.

### Take a Deeper Look

- How do you know when you are experiencing too much stress? Share some concrete examples with your co-workers.
- What types of activities or strategies do you use to take care of yourself and minimize stress?
- How do you use your knowledge of your program's resources to support yourself? For example, do you receive reflective supervision or access to relevant professional development?
- What does it mean to you to have professional boundaries?
- How do you establish professional boundaries with families and co-workers in your program?

### Explore Resources

- Listen to the audio conference **Professional Boundaries in Work with Expectant Families and Infants, Toddlers, and Their Families** at: <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/ehsnrc/comp/program-design/EHSNRCProfession.htm>
- Read **News You Can Use: A Circle of Support for Infants and Toddlers: Reflective Parenting and Strategies in Early Head Start** at: <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/ehsnrc/docs/nycu-circle-support.pdf>
- Review the ethics position statement of the **National Association for the Education of Young Children Code of Ethical Conduct and Statement of Commitment** at: [http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/image/public\\_policy/Ethics%20Position%20Statement2011\\_09202013update.pdf](http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/image/public_policy/Ethics%20Position%20Statement2011_09202013update.pdf)
- To familiarize yourself with your state's professional development system, review the **National Center on Child Care State/Territory Professional Development Systems Overviews** at: <https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/stateterritory-professional-development-system-overviews-0>