

## Lesson 3 Consent

(In every area of life, only “yes” means yes!)



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- Before we do anything with another person, it's important we get their permission first!
- It is just as important that we give (or don't give) permission to others, too!
- Thinking about what matters to us - our values and boundaries - helps us make good decisions for ourselves.

Have you ever done something you didn't want to do because someone else made you feel bad about saying “no?” Have you ever convinced someone to do something even when you knew they didn't want to?

Learning about consent and how to ask for and give (or not give) it helps us keep ourselves - and others - safe and healthy. No one should ever do what goes against what they feel is right for them (except the doctor and dentist - we have to do those things!), and it helps to know how to communicate that.

This unit will explore consent and how to live in a way that respects ourselves and others.



“An investment in knowledge always pays the best interest”  
– Benjamin Franklin

When our students and children are beside us, we can keep them relatively safe.

We look out for who comes in and out of our space.

We can monitor behavior.

We can teach as we go along.

But the more they learn and grow, the more unfettered our students invariably become (and - hooray! - that is the goal). Therefore, we need to ensure that before they venture out, whether for just a few hours or to live independently, they have the knowledge and ability to keep themselves safe from personal victimization. We must also ensure that they understand how not to mistakenly commit personal safety violations against others.

Our Personal Safety Curriculum teaches students basic concepts to keep themselves and others protected from harm without delving into topics of sexuality.

Because instilling and bolstering general safety concepts will pervade all areas of their lives. Boundaries are boundaries, whatever the situation.

Consent is consent, whatever the activity.

We will continue to repeat and reinforce these principles throughout the curriculum so that students will always know that they can - and should - communicate what they do and do not want, whatever the scenario.

Please continue to role model these concepts as you work with your students!

They are watching us...

This unit is about CONSENT.

We cannot make others do what we want... and they can't make us!

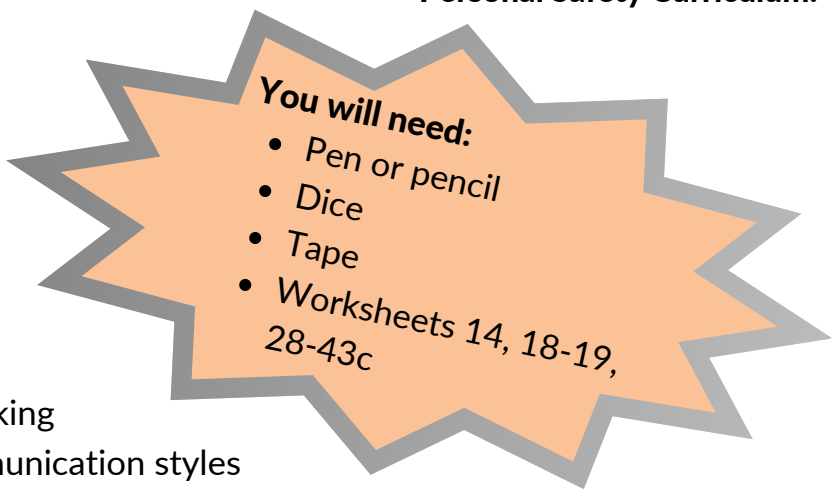
**Topics will include:**

**Why consent is important**

**How to give and not give consent**

**How to ask for consent**

**How to accept rejection**



### Learning objectives for this lesson:

- Recognizing steps to decision making
- Demonstrating appropriate communication styles
- Understanding the concept of boundaries
- Understanding values and consequences
- Identifying personal values
- Giving and accepting non-consent/rejection

**You may read this lesson as it is written or use your own words.  
And because everyone's abilities are different, you may choose to skip some worksheets.**

### Section 1: Decision-making overview ★

Imagine this:

You are a rock star. Like, a really big rock star. Your tour bus is bigger than your house.

You have a concert in New York City coming up and your manager suggests you do something major for it - she wants you to fly into the arena on wires and drop down onto the fans who will then body-surf you up to the stage.

Do you go for it?

Maybe your answer is clear.

Maybe someone else's is not.

The fact is, not every decision is right for every person!

If being famous matters to you, maybe you'd say "yes" to this scenario (situation).

If keeping your body safe matters to you, maybe you'd say "no."

If you love the feeling of flying, maybe you'd say "yes!"

But if you don't like the feeling of being touched, you might want to say "no."

Get the picture?

The reason some people's decisions are different than others' is because the things that matter to them and their boundaries may be different.

And sometimes what matters to us and our own boundaries make decisions really hard to make!



It's important to look at all sides of a scenario before we decide whether or not to consent to them. (Remember *consent*? It means "agreement." We mentioned it way back in Lesson 1, but we'll go over it again later. We promise.)

And that's because while some decisions are not that important (do I or do I not put a squirt of caramel in my coffee??? I can't decide!!!), others are important for your safety and happiness.

Different ways consenting to a situation can affect you are:

Physically: Could it hurt your body or would it feel good?

Mentally: Could it make you feel sad, guilty, or anxious, or would it make you feel happy and proud?

Goals: Would consenting to an activity help you do what you aim to do in life (become an astronaut, learn to do a cartwheel) or could it hurt your chances?

Future: Could a bad outcome affect the rest of your life (like getting you thrown out of school or losing your job), and what about a good outcome (introducing you to your best friend or favorite new activity)?

That's a lot to think about! Let's go back to the rock star scenario.

It might be tempting to say "yes" to flying in and body-surfing to the stage.

- But is flying in on wires and body-surfing too dangerous for you to chance it?
- Would the fear you felt in doing this leave you anxious or upset?
- Could a YouTube video of your doing this affect your goal of becoming President one day? (Has a president ever been dropped onto a crowd?)
- Would hearing damage from the screams of the crowd last forever?

These possibilities might make you want to run in the other direction.

But before you rush into saying "no," let's explore what "yes" might also bring about:

- Would the activity leave you feeling strong and powerful?
- Would the excitement inspire you to take on new challenges?
- Could a YouTube video of your doing this get you 10 million followers on social media?
- Would the whole experience make a great story to tell over coffee for the rest of your life?

The different possibilities are why we need to *think* before we consent to any activity!

Especially since what you do - and if someone does it with you - can affect those around you, like:

Family

Friends

Loved ones

Caregivers



Take out **WORKSHEET 28, “The Great Decide.”** Our decisions don’t only affect us, they can affect other people, too. Review this list to learn all the different ways good decision-making can help (or not help!) us. Then discuss your ideas about how decisions can affect **YOU!**  
**BONUS:** Give each other hypothetical (pretend) decisions to make and discuss who it can affect, and how!

So, how do we make these decisions? We think about **VALUES, BOUNDARIES, and CONSEQUENCES.** Let’s learn about them now!

## **Section 2: Values** ★

What are *values*?

**VALUES** are the things we care about. They are what matter most to us. And they can affect our decisions!

Let’s read a story:

“The Not-Quite-Exact-But-Sort-Of-Similar Tale of Goldilocks and the Three Bears”  
 (The not-so-babyish version. You’re welcome.)

There once was a girl named Goldilocks. She was always getting into trouble (seriously, this kid got more penalties in one week than the New Jersey Devils got in an entire season!).

One afternoon, Goldilocks snuck out of her house, ran through the woods, and entered a little house. It was adorable - good lighting, shabby chic design, bric-a-brac from Homegoods...

She found three bowls of porridge. Her stomach was growling from hunger, but she was trying to avoid gluten. She didn’t know what to do! After thinking about it, she realized that she would need food for energy to get back home later, and so she ate a bowlful.

After the snack, she strolled into the living room, sat down, and turned on the TV. Her favorite show was on! She wanted to record it to DVR so she could sneak back later and watch, but the DVR was already recording something: The Real Housewives of The Enchanted Forest (season 3).

Goldilocks didn’t want to fall behind on her own show, so she cancelled the recording and saved her show, instead.

After a few minutes, she felt a little tired, so she climbed into one of the beds she found upstairs, shoes and all, and fell asleep.



About an hour later - you guessed it - the three bears came home.

Papa Bear noticed someone had eaten his porridge. He didn't particularly mind - porridge gave him heartburn - but Mama Bear was furious. It had taken her 1/2 hour to cook that, and she hated having her time wasted, not to mention the 63 cents worth of porridge mix.

They then walked into the living room to watch their recording and found that someone (eh-hem) had taped over it!

Baby Bear didn't really care - he much preferred Grizzly Adams - but Papa Bear was so upset! He always made time for The Housewives, even if he had work to do. Now, the evening was ruined. So, they decided to go to sleep.

They entered their room and gasped when they found a stranger snoring in one of their beds! Mama and Papa Bear weren't that angry - they had an open-door policy - but Baby Bear was in tears... not because someone had entered their house, but because that person had worn shoes on his sheets! Cleanliness was everything to that little cub, and he was seriously grossed-out to have muck in his bed. In the end, they decided to call out for pizza and make Goldilocks do their laundry as punishment.

The End

Ok, the story wasn't great, but it included loads of values! Can you pick them out?

1. Goldilocks didn't want to eat the porridge because of its ingredients, but staying strong and well-fed for her walk home was more important to her. Having energy to get home was her VALUE!
2. Mama Bear got upset that someone had eaten the porridge, wasting her time and 63 cents. Papa Bear was not upset. Not wasting time, food, and money were Mama Bear's VALUES. They were not Papa Bear's.
3. Papa Bear freaked out when he realized his show wasn't recorded - remember, he always watched, even when he had work to do. Baby Bear didn't really mind. Viewing the show was Papa Bear's VALUE. It was not Baby Bear's.
4. And Mama and Papa Bear were really fine with Goldilocks having broken in and fallen to sleep in one of their beds. Baby Bear didn't really care about someone sneaking into his house and using his bed, but he was really angry that Goldie had gotten his sheets muddy. Not-breaking-and-entering wasn't any of their VALUES; cleanliness was Baby Bear's VALUE.



As we can see from the story, everyone has values that help them decide what they should and shouldn't do, or what they will or won't accept.

But how do we figure out what *our* values are?

Take a pen or pencil and write down your answers to the following questions:

To begin with, think about your perfect day: what would you do? Who would you want to be with?

Then think about next week: what do you hope to accomplish? What will you spend time on?

Finally, look back on this past year: what were your most special moments? What makes you proudest?

These answers are actually values! They are what you love, what make you proud, and what matter.

Now, look at two of the values you just figured out (any two will do!).

Which of the two is more important to you? If you had to choose one, which would you pick, and why?

The one you choose is a more important value than the other!

Cross out the one you care about less, and look at another from the list.

Is your first choice more important than the new one, or does the new one matter more?

This is how you whittle (yes, I said "whittle") down your list of values to find the most important ones!

You can also play a game to figure it out...

Take out **WORKSHEETS 29a, 29b, 29c, 29d, 29e, 29f, and 29g**  
**"Drop in the Bucket: A Values Game."**

Print out each of the four "buckets" (Worksheets 29d, 29e, 29f, and 29g) and hold them horizontally. Tape the two short ends together to form a cylinder. (Those are your "buckets.")

Cut out the four VALUE cards on Worksheet 29b and tape one to each cylinder. Now they are your VALUE buckets!



Cut out the 28 activities on Worksheet 29c. Read each aloud and decide which value each activity best belongs to. Then, drop it in that bucket! (For instance, if there were an Eat Good Food bucket, a good activity to drop into it might be "try a new fruit today." Get it?)

Discuss why each activity belongs in the bucket you chose.

**BONUS:** Print out more buckets and assign new values to them. Then come up with more activities to drop into them!





We'll talk more in a little while about how to use our values when making decisions to consent!

### Section 3: Boundaries ★

Remember learning about boundaries in the lesson about, well, boundaries? Let's review!  
(Remember: *repetition helps us remember things!*)

**BOUNDARIES** are limits, almost like a fence or a bubble that no one else can see but that you can feel. That fence might be around part of your body or it might be around your entire body, keeping everyone out so they can't touch you at all. And sometimes the boundary isn't about a body part, but about the behavior with a body part: maybe you don't mind someone shaking your hand, but you don't want someone kissing your hand; maybe you like to talk quietly with a friend, but you don't like loud parties with lots of people.

These are your personal boundaries and only you know where they are!



Take out **WORKSHEET 30, "My Body Boundaries (Yeah, I Got 'Em!)."** Circle the body parts that you have a boundary around.  
(Don't like your elbows touched? Circle 'em!  
Don't want your ears tickled? Circle 'em!)  
Discuss why you have these boundaries.  
BONUS: Ask your teacher/caregiver what their boundaries are! See if their reasons are similar to or different than yours!

But, again, boundaries aren't just about your body! We can have boundaries around our:

Emotions: honoring our feelings and allowing ourselves to feel them, even if others think we shouldn't

Time: setting limits on how much time we are willing to give to others while keeping ourselves healthy and happy

Intellect: allowing ourselves to have our own thoughts and opinions, even if others disagree (they may have their own intellectual boundaries!)

Finances: restricting how much money you spend, and on what you spend it!



Take out **WORKSHEET 31, "My Other Boundaries (I've Got Those, Too!)."** Circle the pictures that are boundaries for you. Are some of these boundaries more important than others? Why or why not? Discuss!





As we've said, we are all allowed to have our personal boundaries - those which belong to just us - but there are times when we have to have them crossed. In other words, sometimes our boundary bubble has to "pop" and let others in, even if we are not that happy about it.

- For instance, we may have emotional boundaries around expressing our feelings, but there may come a time when we have conflict with someone else and we will be required to sit down and talk it through with them. In this case, we have to relax these boundaries.
- We may have time boundaries in which we do not want to spend more than a few minutes around other people, yet we have to spend more time than that around others at work or school.
- We have the right to our intellectual boundaries and believing in what others don't but, for instance, if we are certain the stove is cool yet the temperature shows it to be 350 degrees, we have to open our minds and accept this information (or get burned!).
- We may not want to spend our money, but we all have to pay bills, taxes, and other expenses!
- As for our physical (or body) boundaries, remember that we all have to go to the doctor and the dentist, even if we don't want to, and they may have to touch parts of us we have a boundary around in order to keep us healthy.

So, how do we deal with having our boundaries crossed when we have to?

It's all about having a plan!



Take out **WORKSHEET 32, "Fantastic Plan-It."**

Think of times your boundaries will have to be crossed (you can refer to the examples above if you like!), then fill in ways you can stay calm while it's happening. Use the suggestions at the bottom of the worksheet or come up with your own.

**BONUS:** Think of things you can say to the doctor, dentist, therapist, etc. who must cross your boundaries to let them know that you are uncomfortable.



Take turns letting the doctor, dentist, therapist, etc. know beforehand that you are feeling uncomfortable. Can you come up with ways to make it better? Remember your communication skills from Lesson 2!



Sometimes we establish boundaries because we are sensitive to physical sensations, like having water on our body, having wet hair, or drying off with a towel. This can make us not want to bathe or shower. And that is understandable. Bad physical sensations make us uncomfortable and make us not want to do certain activities.

There are some ways to make the activity feel better, though.

1. If you don't like water getting in your eyes when you shower or wash your face, try wearing swimming goggles! It will keep your eyes dry and give you a giggle when you look in the mirror!
2. If you don't like getting wet from a shower or bath, try washing your body *one part at a time* with a damp, soapy washcloth, taking extra time with underarms, private parts, and feet. Then wipe off the soap with a clean, wet washcloth and get that part completely dry before you start on the next part. It takes a little more time, but you won't get soaked.  
(Don't forget to follow up with deodorant under your arms!)
3. If you don't like wet hair, wear a bathing cap or shower cap on the days when you do not need to shampoo. It will keep your hair drier!
4. If you have afro-textured hair, think about styling in ponytails, braids, or locs. It will keep the hair stretched and prevent tangling. And instead of washing hair in a shower or sink, section the hair and spritz each with water until it is damp, then use cleanser on hair and scalp, finger comb, twist, then rinse. It is much less overwhelming than getting the whole head soaked at one time!
5. If you have smooth-textured hair, try to use lots of conditioner (rinsing it out well), to prevent painful tangles.
6. If minty toothpaste tastes too intense, use a different flavor! Children's toothpastes have all the fluoride and cleanser adults need, but they are often available in flavors like fruit, bubble gum, chocolate, and even flavorless varieties.
7. Toothbrushes can also be irritating to some people, so consider a nano-brush (with smaller, softer bristles) or a silicone finger brush. Mouthwash and water flossers are also helpful additions.
8. If you hate the feeling of having your nails clipped, try doing it after a shower or bath when nails are softer and easier to cut through. Caregivers might also consider cutting their own nails first (here's good role-modeling again!).
9. If you don't like washing your hands/face or putting on sunscreen, try a new product that feels good and smells even better (or not at all!). Enjoying a product can make the sensitivity less aggravating. Take a trip to the store and make an event out of choosing a product you like!

However you agree to wash and groom yourself, be sure to enjoy the clean, sweet-smelling (or fragrance-free) outcome! You should love what you see in the mirror, and others will love being near you. Most important, it will keep you healthy and feeling great about yourself.



Take out **WORKSHEET 33, "My Faves."** Keep a list of favorite products or something you want to try out so you never forget what to pick up at the store!  
BONUS: Keep a schedule to replenish your products so you never run out!

## Section 4: Consequences ★

Our last consideration before making a decision is *consequences*.

**CONSEQUENCES** are the things that happen because something else happened first. Some call it "results," some call it "effects," but all know that they don't happen on their own - they are caused!

Imagine you knock over your glass of water. What happens?

The water spills!

If you click your light switch off?

It gets dark!

And what if you hide behind a door and yell "boo!" when your caregiver walks in the room?

Well... they will either have a hearty laugh with you or you'll be washing dishes for the next month.

There are consequences to everything we do. Sometimes, we won't know what those consequences will be (like the scaring-our-caregiver one). So, we call those "potential consequences," meaning consequences that could happen.



Take out **WORKSHEET 34, "Action or Consequence?"**  
Circle each picture that shows an action, and make a check mark next to each picture that shows a consequence.  
Discuss your answers!  
BONUS: Draw a line from each action to its consequence!  
Discuss your answers!

## Section 5: How to make decisions ★

Ok, just like you have to gather the flour, water, and eggs before you can make pancakes, we learned about VALUES, BOUNDARIES, and CONSEQUENCES (we'll call it "VBC!") before making decisions!

So how do we go about it?

Whenever we are faced with a decision - say, whether to body-surf a crowd or break into a bear's house or even just make plans with a friend - we should consider our values, boundaries, and consequences before agreeing to it (also known as "giving consent." But more on that later...).

It is important to point out that there is no such thing as a "good decision," but only a "good decision for YOU." That's why your personal values and boundaries play such a big role!

What happens when we don't consider personal values, boundaries, and consequences first? Read on!



Consider this:

Rayan and Hannah spent every Saturday together at the dog park. They loved nothing more than talking with each other and playing with their pups - it was fun for both of them! They were always careful to stay away from the big hill at the end of the park, though, because Hannah was really afraid of heights and Rayan's dog tended to freak out at the top of tall hills, jumping up on everyone.

One Saturday, Rayan decided to bring another friend, Isabelle, along with them. She didn't have a dog - in fact, she hated the feeling of their fur against her skin - but she was fun to be with.

One way she wanted to have fun that day was to have a race with the dogs to the top of the hill...

...Are you waiting for us to tell you the end of the story?

Well, we're not going to!

YOU'RE going to decide the ending! (With a little help from us.)

Remember, you should think about your values, boundaries, and consequences before deciding to do anything. So, let's think about *Rayan's*, according to what the story told us:

## RAYAN

By reading the story, we learned the following:

1. His values: being with Hannah, playing with his dog, having fun

*Rayan and Hannah spent every Saturday together at the dog park. They loved nothing more than being with each other and playing with their pups - it was fun for both of them!*

2. His boundaries: going up the hill with his dog

*They were always careful to stay away from the big hill at the end of the park, though, because Hannah was really afraid of heights and Rayan's dog tended to freak out at the top of tall hills, jumping up on everyone.*

3. The potential consequences for him (what could happen):

*Rayan's dog tended to freak out at the top of tall hills, jumping up on everyone.*

If we look at Rayan's values, do we think he should take part in the race?

His value of being with Hannah should make him want to say "no." (After all, she avoids the hill, too.)

His value of playing with his dog should make him say "yes." (The dog would race with them!)

His value of fresh air should make him want to say "yes." (The hill certainly has fresh air!)

His value of having fun should make him say:

"Yes," because running with his dog and hanging out with Isabell will be fun, but

"No," because his dog will freak out up there, and that's no fun!



If we look at Rayan's boundaries, do we think he should take part in the race?  
His boundary of staying away from the big hill should make him want to say "no."

If we look at the potential consequences, do we think he should take part in the race?  
Rayan's dog freaking out is a potential consequence that should make Rayan want to say "no."  
Having fun with Isabelle (we know how fun she is!) is a potential consequence that should make Rayan want to say "yes."

That's a lot of yesses and nos. As we can see, making decisions is difficult! Even when we look at our values, our boundaries, and the potential consequences, it's not always clear what we should do.

Rayan has 4 reasons to say "no" (2 values, 1 boundary, 1 potential consequence).  
Rayan has 4 reasons to say "yes" (3 values, 1 potential consequence).

An even split! So, what should Rayan do?

What he should do is figure out what is most important to him out of those values, boundaries, and potential consequences. How much does being with Hannah mean to him? How important is his dog's health and happiness? To what extent is he willing to go to have some fun?

Like we said before, there is no good or right decision, only the good or right decision for YOU (or, in this case, Rayan).

Some people might think that Rayan should go for it. He'll be forging a new friendship with Isabelle, getting fresh air and sunshine, and spending time with his dog.

Some people might think that Rayan should decide not to participate. He has always had fun just spending time with Hannah, he won't be uncomfortable putting his dog in a bad position, and he can feel safe in knowing what works for him.

What would you do?

**On**  
*your own*

**Let's**  
**role**  
**play**

Reread the story and on page 11 and write down the values, boundaries, and potential consequences (VBC) for Hannah and Isabelle. Would running the race be the right decision for either of them? Why or why not?

Take turns making up values and boundaries for yourself, then think up an activity to consider (water skiing at night? Eating a roasted cockroach?). Considering your made-up VBC, should you participate?



Official White House Photo by Pete Souza

Mover and shaker **Lois Curtis**, an American advocate for independent living, spent her childhood institutionalized because of developmental disabilities and behavioral issues. At the age of 26, she took a chance and sued the state of Georgia on the basis of the Americans With Disabilities Act. She won the case, establishing the right for individuals to live in the least restrictive settings possible. Curtis' decision to go to court helped her and thousands of other people live their best lives. She sure pushed boundaries!



Take out **WORKSHEET 35, "How to Make a Good Decision...For YOU!"** Look over the questions to ask yourself when considering VBC (remember, that stands for "values, boundaries, and consequences."). Keep them handy or tape them on your wall so you can remind yourself how to come to the best decision for you!

Ready to try decision-making with VBC? Before we do that, we have a word to learn: *compromise*!

**COMPROMISE** means giving something up in order to get something.

And why do we need to know this when learning about decision-making? Because sometimes we are faced with a decision that goes against our values, oversteps our boundaries, and/or has too severe consequences, so we have to say "no" to it. ...But we really don't want to!

In that case, sometimes we can figure out a way to say "yes" to *part* of it or do it in a different way so that we are more comfortable with it. We compromise!

For example, what if you had a friend who wanted to go to the beach, ride the waves, and practice their backstroke with you? You want to go with them, but you hate to swim - you don't even like getting wet in the shower! - and salt water burns your eyes.

Is there a *compromise* you can make? Yes!

You can agree to go to the beach and sit on the sand, but not swim.

Or you can agree to go up to your ankles in the water (if you don't mind doing that).

Or you can explain that the beach isn't your "thing," but you'd love to see a movie when they return!

You are giving up doing the whole activity, but you are able to say "yes" to part of it!





It is important that we honor our VBC, but we don't have to give up everything to do it! Sometimes, it just takes a little creative thinking.

That said, you never *have* to make a compromise. Especially if it still feels bad or unappealing to you. You can always say "no" and that is that!

But if you feel like you have to say "no" but you also feel like you are missing out on something you might like, that's when it's good to review what you are ok to do instead (the compromise!).

Take out **WORKSHEETS 36a, 36b** and **36c, "Time to Decide."**

For Worksheets 36a and 36b: Read each situation and review the person's values, boundaries, and the potential consequences. Do all of these values, boundaries, and potential consequences affect their decision or do some of them have no effect on the decision? Do you think they should say "yes" to the activity? Why or why not? Is there a compromise you can think of that will allow them to do the activity without giving up too much? Discuss!



For Worksheet 36c: Set your kitchen timer or the timer on your phone to 3 minutes, and see if you can review your VBC and make a decision in that time! Let's face it, we can move nice and slowly with our worksheets, but in real life we sometimes have to make a quick decision. It's always good to practice... and to have your VBC at the front of your mind when you need them!

So, did you do the worksheets?

We usually don't do this here at Curriculum Headquarters, but we're going to review one of the examples in the worksheets with you - step by step - just to really explore the decision-making process. After all, the decisions in the examples may not be as easy as they seem...

And even though we always say, "there's no right answer, only the right answer for YOU," we are now going to see what the right answer is for the person in the example, based on her individual VBC!

Take out Worksheet 36a again. Let's talk about Alexis' story...





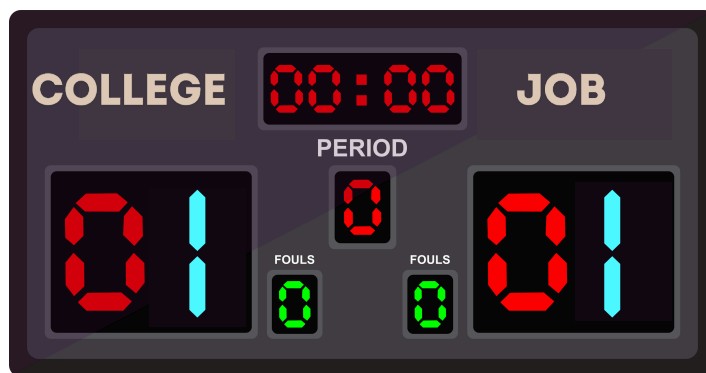
Like many people, Alexis is having trouble deciding what to do with her future. And that makes sense - it's a big decision! She is torn (can't easily decide) between two options: going to college after graduation or staying at her flower shop job she's had since she was 16.

Here is what we know: she is about to graduate from high school, she may want to go to college, she has a job at a flower shop, and she has been working there since she was 16 (it's been a few years!). We are going to check out her VBC to figure out what we think she should do!

Remember: Even though VBC is always about what is best for US, we are going to think about what is best for Alexis in this exercise. That's why we have her VBC, not our own!

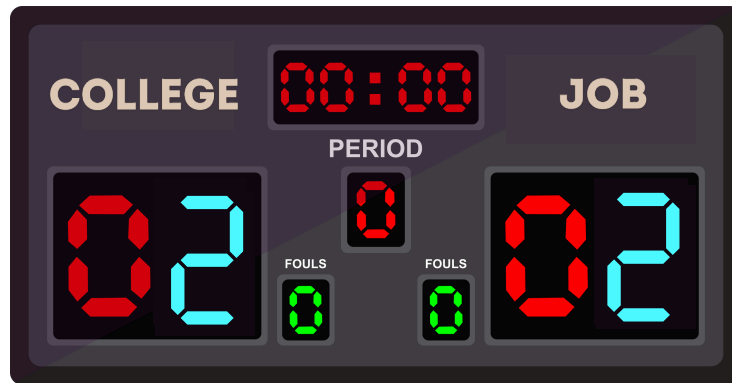
## VALUES

Her first value is Learning Every Day. Do you think going to college will help her learn every day? Of course! That's what college is for, learning. But staying at her job could also help her learn something every day. Maybe she'd see new kinds of flowers, find out how to care for them, or talk to the other florists and learn about their lives. Learning can happen anywhere. So, both options would satisfy this value. This would make the score, so far:



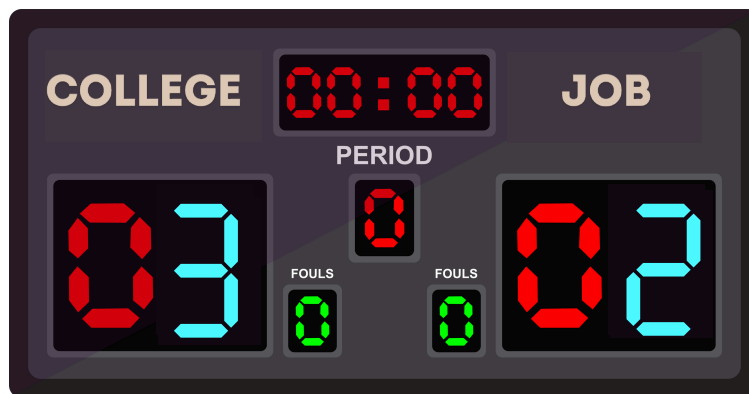
Alexis' second value is Meeting New People. Do you think going to college would help her meet new people? Definitely. A new school brings with it all new people to meet, like other students, professors, and the people who work there! So, going to college would help Alexis meet new people. But what about staying at her job at the flower shop? She definitely meets new customers every day, she sees new people walking from her bus or car to the store, and sometimes new people come to work! Again, both options are good for this value.

So, if we add a point to each side the score is:



Now, let's look at Alexis' third value, Not Being Bored.

Starting a new adventure, like going to college, is a great way to avoid being bored! If she decides to stay at her job, she will likely find herself doing the same thing day after day - the same thing that she has been for the past few years. It seems like going to college is a better way to honor her value of never being bored, so let's give a point to the "college" score!



Finally, a tie breaker! We are getting closer to figuring out what she should do, and we're getting so good at VBC! And speaking of "B..."

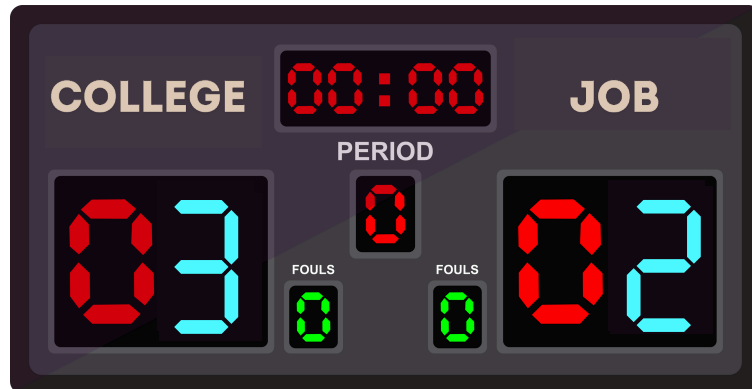
## BOUNDARIES

Alexis' first boundary is Spending More Than 10 Minutes Listening to Someone Talk. Let's face it, it can get frustrating to hear someone's voice for too long. But how could that affect her decision?

In college, professors (another name for teachers) sometimes talk a lot. After all, they are there to teach you! So that might not be ideal for Alexis' boundary. Then again, sometimes bosses or customers can talk a lot, or, once in a while, we may have to talk on the phone at work for a pretty long time. If she has a boundary around listening for that long, neither of these options sound too great.

Then again...

She has been at this job for a few years now, and she seems happy - maybe happy enough to stay at that job! So, we can assume it hasn't overstepped her boundaries too badly. Perhaps staying at her job is a good option as far as this boundary goes. Since the boundary doesn't affect any of the options, the score will stay the same:



What about her second boundary, Doesn't Like the Feel of Wet Hands? College doesn't deal much with water, but working with flowers would definitely get her hands wet. They live in water! Then again, like listening to others, she has been working there for a long time and she seems to be doing fine, so we can assume this boundary won't affect her final decision. The score can remain the same.

How are you doing with VBC? Getting used to this way of thinking? Let's keep going...

The third boundary is Won't Sleep in an Unfamiliar Bed. Alexis wouldn't sleep at the flower shop, so that boundary won't keep her from staying at her job. Many people go away to live at college, so that might overstep her boundary. However...

This is where compromise comes in!

Alexis can choose to *commute* to college, meaning she could go to her classes but still live at her house. Or she could take classes on the internet (most colleges have that option). Either way, someone who wants to stay home but go to college can absolutely do that.

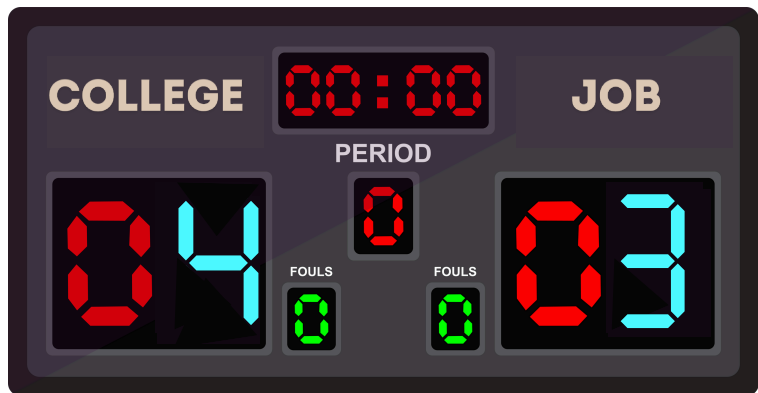
It's a great compromise to make! (It also saves money - remember her value of having money?)

Because these last two boundaries do not affect anything, the score remains the same.

## CONSEQUENCES

Remember, consequences are the things that happen because something else happened first. In this case, we want to figure out what could happen if Alexis quits her job and goes to college.

The first consequence we thought of is Not Liking the School. There is, of course, a chance that Alexis would not like the college, and would regret quitting her job to go to school. That is a definite reason to want to stay at the job she knows she likes. Then again, if we really think about it, if she didn't like the school, she could always take time away from it and try to get her old job back. Or, again, *compromise* and try going to school part-time while staying at her job part-time! (We love options!) So, let's add a point to "college" and a point to "job."



The second potential consequence is Not Having Enough Money. This one is interesting. We know that working is the way we earn money, so staying at her job is a great way to satisfy this value. College costs money - and doesn't pay anything - so she won't be getting money by going to college. However...

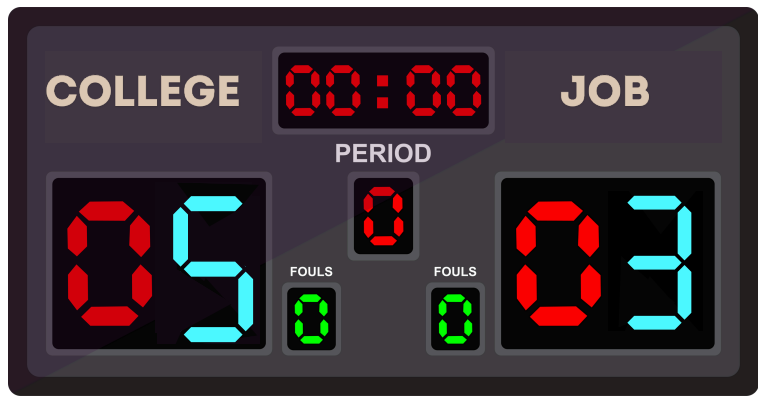
We know that Alexis has been working since she was 16, so she may have lots of money saved up. Enough to go to college and help her pay for other things! Then again, maybe she doesn't...

Here's where that awesome word "compromise" comes in again.

How can Alexis compromise in order to go to college but also honor her value of having money? Well, what if she goes to school part-time (taking fewer classes, but taking more years to finish) in the mornings, and works the afternoons? That's a great way for her to get what she wants (making money) without giving up too much (the opportunity to go to college).

Because of compromise, we can leave the score the same.

Alexis' final potential consequence is Loving What She Studies. That's a great consequence to going to school - we all want to love what we do! And while Alexis may love her job, that has nothing to do with loving her *studies* (learning new information about new topics), so we can't give a point to the "job" side. That leaves us with a score of:



Seems like our decision is made! College!  
...But not so fast!

Making good decisions isn't as easy as looking at a list - if it were, no decisions would be difficult to make! So, once we have made our list, we have to think about what factors mean more to us than others. Is the desire to be true to your values more important than protecting your boundaries? And, if so, which values and which boundaries?

Maybe the feeling of wet hands is so strong that you will do anything to avoid it. If so, college is a better choice than working in a flower shop.

Then again, maybe avoiding listening to people talk for a long time is so important that you are willing to risk not enjoying studying new subjects! In that case, staying at your job may be a better choice.

It is so important for each of us to get to know what matters in our individual lives - our personal values and boundaries, and the consequences we will and won't risk - before we make the decision to agree to do an activity. We also want to know which of them are *most* important to us!

We get to know these things about ourselves by practicing VBC! Remember, *repetition (repeating things) helps us remember things!* So practice your VBC whenever you can, and making decisions will become easier and easier, the more you get to know yourself.



Take out **WORKSHEET 37, "Decide for Yourself!"** Here's where you get your chance to think of your own VBC and how it affects a decision you are facing!

Fill in your own values and boundaries, then make decisions about whether or not to say "yes" to the activities and their potential consequences below.

Is your decision easy to make? Discuss your thought process and your choice.

(Remember, there are no right or wrong answers - just what's right or wrong for YOU!)

**BONUS:** Think of a compromise (something you could give up in order to participate in some way) for each activity. Discuss!



Singer **Susan Boyle** grew up in Scotland and rose to fame with her beautiful voice on Britain's Got Talent. Older than most contestants, not very flashy, and a person with Asperger's Syndrome, she ignored the people who told her she didn't belong in the competition and managed to capture the love of audiences with her talent and her sincerity. Boyle is an excellent example of honoring her values and making the best decisions for herself!

## Section 6: Consent ★

We have spent a lot of time talking about values, boundaries, consequences, and making good decisions! So, why are we now talking about something called *consent*?

**CONSENT** is the agreement to do an activity.

An important thing to notice is the word "agreement" - that means that *everybody* feels the same way about it. When people agree to do something, it means they all say "yes." If anybody says "no" or "I don't know" or "I'm not sure" or "I don't think so" (or shrugs... or stays silent... you get the picture), then it is not agreement, and it is not consent. There are rules for what makes something consent!

Why do we need to know about consent?

Because we should never, ever do something we haven't consented to! We have the right to say "no" to anything we don't want to do (although there are some things we do have to do, even if we don't want to, like going to the doctor or dentist, or attending school or work). For everything else, we are allowed to honor our values and boundaries (and avoid consequences!) by not consenting.

And others are allowed the same thing! We should never try to make someone do something they don't want to do. It is not nice, it is not fair, and it could get us into trouble if we try!



Take out **WORKSHEETS 38a, "Consent is..."** and **38b, "Consent is Not..."** Read over each rule that makes consent and that does not make consent. Discuss! Then, hang both sheets where you can see it clearly and often, so you can review consent whenever you like!



Before we continue, let's take a mini-quiz to make sure we understand what makes consent!

Is it consent if:

1. We ask someone nicely to do something and they say "yes?"
2. We ask someone to do something and they say "no?"
3. We beg someone to do something over and over again until they say "yes?"
4. We point out that they are our friend and they should do things they don't want to do because we want them to?
5. We offer to buy them lunch if they do it?
6. They don't actually say the word "no," so we grab their hand and make them do it?
7. We gave them a present beforehand?
8. We pout after they say "no" so they go along with it, after all?
9. They shrug and moan and finally say "ok?"
10. They happily say "yes" but then later decide "no, I changed my mind?"
11. They don't say "yes" with words, but they smile and give a big thumbs-up?

Answers:

Only #1 and #11 (the first and the last examples) are consent!

The rest are NOT consent, and so we accept it as a "no!"

And remember, we **HAVE** to consent (clearly stated, enthusiastic (excited and happy), and freely given) before we do anything (or else we simply don't do it... and too bad on them if they don't like it!), and they **HAVE** to consent if we do anything with other people! Otherwise, it's a "no!"

And why do we have to consent and have others' consent?

- It is very upsetting to be forced to do something you don't want to do (unless, again, you *have* to do it, like go to the doctor or dentist or school/work).
- Making someone do something or being made to do something can hurt a relationship - friends might stop hanging out, family members might get angry at each other - and people who care about each other stop spending time together!
- We can get in trouble - with bosses, teachers, caregivers, and sometimes the police.
- We all have the right to say "no" (or give non-consent)!





Take turns asking the other person to do something (like go swimming, play checkers, eat a bug...) and having the other person answer. Figure out if they gave consent or didn't give consent. Try to make it hard to figure out if consent was given!

HINT: If you can't tell if consent was given, consider it a "no"... always!

Take out **WORKSHEETS 39a, 39b, 39c, 39d, 39e, 39f, and 39g, "The 'Mother, May I?' Card Game."**

Remember that childhood game called "Mother, May I?" That's the one where one person plays "Mother" and the other person/people are "Babies." Mother tells them to do something like take giant steps forward or spin in a circle, and the little ones have to ask, "Mother, May I?" This is when Mother decides to say "yes, you may" (and the babies do it) or "no, you may not" (and the babies don't). It's a great way to practice asking and accepting an answer. In this game, we use cards to play!

Make a "Mother" card pile and a "Baby" card pile.

Before each turn, Mother will pick a card from their pile and Baby will pick a card from theirs. Mother will tell Baby to do something (whatever you want to make up!) and Baby will ask for consent the way it is written on their card. Mother will then answer the way their card tells them to! That's how we can learn new ways to ask for and give/not give consent! (Feel free to play the classic, cardless way, too!)

BONUS: Play the game where Mother does not tell Baby to do something first. Baby should ask for permission (as is written on the card) for something they come up with themselves. For instance, if the card reads, "Can I do that?," Baby would ask Mother, "Can I have a second dessert?" Then Mother answers the way her card instructs her to!

**On**  
your own

Practice consent throughout your day! Knock on doors and wait for a "come in," ask before you put your hand on someone's shoulder, and make sure others are asking for consent from you!

Remember, *repetition helps us remember things!*

## Section 7: How to communicate consent/non-consent ★

Now that we know absolutely everything we could ever need to know about consent, let's practice how to ask for it and how to say "no" (two pretty hard things for people to do!).

But first, let's review *communication*...

**COMMUNICATION** is letting others know your thoughts and feelings. There are a number of ways to communicate - you can use "verbal communication" with words, like saying "yes" or "no," or writing or texting those words; or you can use "non-verbal communication" with body language (using your body and face to communicate) by nodding your head "yes" or shaking your head "no," giving a thumbs-up or thumbs-down, smiling or frowning, or folding your arms across your chest or opening your arms out wide!

Words and body language are both excellent ways to communicate!

But because we communicate in order to let others know what we are thinking and feeling, it is important that we are clear and that we present it in a way that others can really hear us.



Take out **WORKSHEETS 14, "Types of 'Voices' in Verbal Communication"** and **18, "What Does My Body Language Say?"** again. Review the best ways to let others know how you feel!

**BONUS:** Practice communicating your feelings with each other. See if you can guess what someone is trying to tell you with words or body language and discuss why certain attempts were successful or less successful!



Take out **WORKSHEETS 40, "Communicate Effectively!"** and **41, "Communicate Appropriately!"** On Worksheet 40, circle the best way to get yourself heard. Discuss your answers!

**BONUS:** Practice assertive communication! On Worksheet 41, underline the appropriate way to communicate (sometimes it depends on who you're talking to!).

**BONUS:** Take turns communicating appropriately, according to whom you are talking to!



Making sure that the other person understands us is the most important part of communication. And communication is the most important part of consent! (After all, if they don't hear/understand us, how will they know if we give consent or not?)



Take out **WORKSHEET 42, "Communicating Consent and Non-Consent."** Draw a line from the phrases to their meaning, whether "yes" or "no!"

After learning all of these facts and skills and definitions and VBC, we have to ask...

WHAT IN THE WORLD DOES DECISION-MAKING HAVE TO DO WITH CONSENT?

The answer is: EVERYTHING!

Before you *consent* to any activity, you need to know your values, your boundaries, and the potential consequences so you can make a good decision for you!

We often give an answer based on what we immediately think we want ("Great, let's cover our boss' house in toilet paper!" "Yeah, that bug looks tasty!") without stopping to think about what matters to us in our lives, whether it will overstep one of our boundaries, or what could happen if we choose to participate in an activity.

Practicing VBC helps us think about whether consenting is something that will be good for us or something we will later wish we hadn't done.

And the more we practice VBC, the less we have to really think about things before we consent or don't consent - we'll start to recognize what we think is worthwhile and what is not!

Do we now know what consent is? (YES!)

Do we know that we can take away our consent (and so can they!) at any time? (YES!)

Do we know why we need to go through our decision-making thought process before deciding whether or not to consent to an activity? (WE DO!)

And do we know how to communicate and recognize when others communicate consent or non-consent? (YES!)

We are brilliant! We know everything! Nothing can stop us!

**On**  
your own

Remember how we decided to practice consent (asking for it and accepting it) throughout the day? (If not, see page 16.) Let's add VBC to the process! Try to use your decision-making thought process before giving consent or non-consent. Practice as often as you can! (The dinner table is a great place to start. The next time someone asks you to pass the pepper, go through your VBC process out loud and discuss why you do or do not consent!)

Take out **WORKSHEETS 43a, 43b, and 43c, “Play it Forward (A Game of Consent).”**

Tape together Worksheets 68b and 68c to create a game board with a continuous path from start to finish.

Find household items to use as game pieces – it can be coins, erasers, Monopoly pieces, mini pretzels, etc. – and get your dice (one makes the game last longer)!

Place all players’ pieces on the “Start” box.

The first player rolls the dice and moves their piece forward that number of spaces.

If something is written on that box, follow its directions.

The boxes showing consent will send you forward; no consent will send you back.

Player continues to play until they land on a blank box.

When nothing is written on the box, it is the next player’s turn.

The first player to the “End” box wins.

Play often...when you practice consent, everybody wins!!



## Section 8: Accepting non-consent ★

As difficult as it can sometimes feel to say “no” to someone (we know they may feel disappointed or we may not be used to choosing what we want over what others want), it is so important. We have the right to our values! We have the right to our boundaries! And we have the right to say “no, thank you” to anything we don’t want to do! (Unless we kind of have to do it, like doctor, dentist, work...)

It is just as difficult to be told “no” by someone else. *Rejection* can leave us feeling sad or embarrassed.

**REJECTION** is saying “no” to an idea or suggestion.

We have to remember to remind ourselves that we were not rejected because we are not good enough, but because what we are suggesting does not align with the other person’s VBC! And everyone has the right to their VBC.

Take out **WORKSHEET 19, “The Rejection Files!”** again.

Review the list of right and wrong things to say and do when you reject another person or they reject you. Hang this worksheet on your wall to remind yourself of how to respond in these situations! (And celebrate everyone’s great decision-making!)



**End of Lesson Three! Great job! ★**

**BOUNDARIES** are limits, almost like a fence or a bubble that no one else can see but that you can feel.

**COMMUNICATION** is letting others know your thoughts and feelings.

**COMPROMISE** means giving something up in order to get something.

**CONSENT** is the agreement to do an activity.

**CONSEQUENCES** are the things that happen because something else happened first. Some call it "results," some call it "effects," but all know that they don't happen on their own - they are caused!

**REJECTION** is saying "no" to an idea or suggestion.

**VALUES** are the things we care about. They are what matter most to us. And they can affect our decisions!