

Teaching the *Progressive Boundary Setting System*TM



The following series of slides provide an conceptual outline of:

- How to make a *Progressive Boundary Setting Presentation* (PBSP).
- Why the PBSP is different and more engaging than other types of presentations.
- Common Questions and Answers.

Teaching Progressive Boundary Setting

- *Progressive Boundary Setting* can be taught to all types of audiences. But it has been specifically designed to reach young people.
- The most effective method to reach out to youth is by using “captive audiences” through classrooms and school organized assemblies. In these instances, the audience has no choice but to attend the presentation.
- A captive audience can be thought of as “hostile” since they have not voluntarily chosen to listen to you. Despite its importance, the subject of the presentation is not a high priority for most young people. Therefore, you use strategy to get your message across.

The members of a captive audience can be described as cups 90% filled.

- In a standard talk, you have a jug of information to pour into each cup. Unfortunately, your information quickly overfills the cup and the majority spills to the floor. Each student retains a small and different aspect of your information. Upon leaving your class, the retained information becomes watered down, distorted, and ends up having little lasting value.
- *Progressive Boundary Setting Presentations* (PBSP) are not jugs of information. The excessive information has been distilled out and what remains is highly concentrated and colorful knowledge. The knowledge transferred actually can be retained in the student's cup. It is powerful enough to change the color of the entire cup. Students leave a PBSP with the through *understanding Progressive Boundary Setting*. As a result, they are able to transfer this understanding to others accurately and without distortion.

- The hope of typical personal safety talks is to either stop existing behavior (risk reduction) or start new behavior (risk avoidance). The reality is that the students don't want to stop because the risky behavior is fun. They don't start new behaviors due to the power of inertia. PBSP focuses on improving the students existing behavior and strengthen their existing knowledge. Passive subconscious actions are highlighted to become purposeful and effective.
- For the most part the average high school student does not understand the concept of assertive communication. They believe that "assertiveness" is actually a form of "aggressiveness". Therefore, they are unable to communicate assertively without feeling either angry or annoyed. Especially among girls, direct communication is seen as an angry confrontation. As a result, the most used form of communication is passive body language.

- Youth culture has dictated that communication begins with body language. Therefore, PBSS incorporates this fact. It does not try to change it. The core of *Progressive Boundary Setting* is the *Progressive Fence*. The *Progressive Fence* begins with the *Visual Fence*. The *Visual Fence* is communicated through body language.
- Every student, both male and female, knows how recognize and employ the *Visual Fence*. Descriptions, examples, and the role playing of the *Visual Fence* are critical to highlighting the *respecting behavioral limits* aspect of *Progressive Boundary Setting*. Since students already understand the concept, they can confidently talk about it. They become actively engaged in the teaching process.

- The *Visual Fence* is the next logical step. Failure of the *Visual Fence* requires a *Progressive Response* in the form of the *Verbal Fence*. Many women's self-defense classes attempt to teach the *Verbal Fence* by having the students yell forceful "No!" or "Back Off!" Frequently, the instructors are only able to elicit giggling or half-hearted shouts. The reason is the "lack of aggressive emotion". The students need to feel aggressive or angry to be vocally assertive.
- The PBSS takes this reality into account. The *Verbal Fence* is taught as an emotional continuation of the *Visual Fence*. The dominant emotion of the *Visual Fence* is "disinterest". Therefore, the *Verbal Fence* is first taught using the phrase "Not interested!" as higher level response to the *Visual Fence* conveying the body language of "Not interested."

- Once the students understand the *Verbal Fence*, the next step is to get them to recognize that the Progressive Response (higher level response) is a physical action in the form of the *Physical Fence*. Disengaging and moving away is a form of the *Physical Fence*. Pushing someone back or knocking off a wrist grab is a form of the *Physical Fence*. Putting your arms up as a barrier is a form of the *Physical Fence*.
- The main point is not the action it's self, but the message of the action. The *Physical Fence* communicates and enforces behavioral limits just like the *Visual Fence* and the *Verbal Fence*. Once again, the most effective method is to use emotional continuation. The *Physical Fence* illustrates a higher level of the "Not interested!" emotion and message.

- Students should now understand the following:

Progressive Responses

The Progressive Fence

The Visual Fence

The Verbal Fence

The Physical Fence

- The next step is to illustrate how these concepts are used by the Police to maintain order in society. And how they can and are used as bystanders and onlookers to limit behaviors.
- Students should now see how *Progressive Boundary Setting* relates to bullying, harassment, youth violence, dating violence, violent crime, and more from the viewpoint of being directly involved, or as a bystander, or the Police.

The final process is to show how *Progressive Boundary Setting* creates the *Just Right Response* for confrontation and conflict.

- Now that the students understand that limiting behaviors involves a series of pre-determined escalating responses, the idea is to show how ineffective responses make the situation worse.
- Ineffective responses come in the form of being either too passive or too aggressive for the situation.
- Ineffective responses are singular responses to dynamic and changing situations. Therefore, the Just Right Response is determined via the process of elimination. Determining what response is too little and what response is too much will determine what response is *Just Right*.
- Discussing and role playing ineffective responses will keep the presentation lively and engaging.

Questions and Answers

- *“I already teach assertiveness in my women’s self-defense class. How is Progressive Boundary Setting different?”*
- PBS is not another name for assertiveness. It would be assertive to walk down the sidewalk and verbally tell each man you pass to “stay away”. But it would not be practical or efficient. PBS is designed to determine the Just Right Response in any given situation. In the situation described, the use of the Visual Fence would be the most efficient method to limit the behavior of the men passing by.

Questions and Answers

- ***“My group consists of a bully, gang banger, high school cheerleader, scholar, nerd, dating violence victim, boy with a disability, baby sitter, martial artist, ROTC candidate, and the captain of the football team. Is the Progressive Boundary Setting presentation suitable?”***
- Progressive Boundary Setting is the one presentation that is suitable for such a diverse group. The concept of PBS applies to all of the above individuals in their varied roles as subjects, bystanders, and enforcers. It has the flexibility to handle a diverse group or it can be made to a completely homogeneous group.

Questions and Answers

- ***“Typically when I give a presentation on good citizenship or bullying, the students appear bored or disinterested. Why will a PBSP be better?”***
- Your students are bored and disinterested. Most likely they are bored because you are providing a list of behavioral do’s and don’ts or too much information. Presentations need to be engaging and involve constant student participation and feedback. The students will forget the majority of what you say. Therefore, you must stick to emphasizing the critical aspects as outlined.

Questions and Answers

- *“I have tried to role play before. The students became silly and I lost control of the class. How do I make sure it doesn’t happen again?”*
- The secret to role playing is letting the students decide what situation they want to role play. The concept of Progressive Boundary Setting is so universal that its use can be found in almost every situation of human conflict.

Progressive Boundary Setting



Email info@not-me.org for more information

www.progressiveboundarysetting.org

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