



COMMON BOUNDARY *Violations* CHECKLIST

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Welcome to this common boundaries checklist.

How to get the most out of this:

I recommend going through the checklist slowly and think about any times you've experienced these things. Not all boundary violations are signs of toxic behavior. Your in-laws are human and make mistakes. What you're looking for are cycles or patterns of behavior that puts your husband, your children or you on edge. Generally, a cycle is something you've observed at least 3 times with noticeable similarities. For example, if your FIL offers to let your kids watch an inappropriate movie once, that's just life. Twice, it might be a coincidence. If he's done it 3 or more times AND you've said something previously, it's a pattern.



MEET THE AUTHOR

Miriam Susan
(Wife, Mother and Coach)

Miriam Susan has spent nearly 3 decades shielding her husband, 6 children, and herself from unwanted behavior from her in-laws. She now uses her experience to help other Catholic wives compassionately use her signature framework to create a more harmonious marriage and family life.



Common Boundary Violations Checklist

Go through this list to see how much your in-laws may be resisting your family's boundaries. If something is an ongoing issue, circle it. The ongoing violations should be discussed to see how you and your husband plan to address them IF they are important to your family's values.

- ☐ Brings up past issues you've already apologized for and haven't repeated.
- ☐ Buys books, toys, clothes, furniture, etc. you asked them not to buy, sometimes in excess. Or brings over any items to your home after asking them not to.
- ☐ Must stay in your home for visits or you must stay in their home when visiting, even if you've made other arrangements.
- ☐ Pouts or gets angry or annoyed when you decline an invitation.
- ☐ Requests time alone with child(ren) after being told "no" previously.
- ☐ Cancels visits if you don't spend enough time with them.
- ☐ Ignores food or environmental allergies/sensitivities of your family.
- ☐ Buys gifts/experiences you planned to buy for your children for birthdays/holidays.
- ☐ Plans trips, books hotels, buys event tickets for your family after declining or without asking if you're interested...and then gets mad when you won't go.
- ☐ Shows signs of jealousy regarding time spent with your family.
- ☐ Makes comments like "Mommy says you can't have this" or "Don't tell Mommy".
- ☐ Belittles or demeans you (even if acting like it's a joke) when husband is or isn't around.
- ☐ Tries to comfort your child when he/she is upset and you're present and child is asking for you OR is an infant and won't return the baby when you ask.
- ☐ Insists on hugs or other forms of affection when you or your child aren't willing.





Common Boundary Violations Checklist

Score each question from the checklist using the points below:

- 1 point for "Yes"
- 0 points for "No"

Scoring:

0-4 points: Caution Zone

- While your in-laws display some concerning behaviors, it's at a level where caution is advised. It might be beneficial to communicate about these issues and observe if there are patterns or if they escalate over time. But at this stage, the situation may not require immediate drastic measures.

5-9 points: Alert Stage

- Your in-laws exhibit a noticeable amount of toxic behaviors. This isn't just occasional discord; there are clear patterns that should not be overlooked. It's important to address these behaviors, set boundaries, and possibly seek guidance on how to navigate this relationship to ensure the well-being of yourself and your family.

10-14 points: High Toxicity Alert

- The behaviors displayed by your in-laws are highly toxic and potentially damaging to you and your family's well-being. This is a critical situation that requires immediate attention, boundary-setting, and possibly distancing. Seeking guidance or counseling might be beneficial to ensure you're taking the right steps and protecting your family's mental and emotional health.

