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Staying In the Zone

**Establishing and Maintaining
Professional Boundaries in School
Nursing**

Learning Objectives



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- Identify 3 Elements of the Continuum of Professional Behavior
- Recognize Over and Under Involvement
- Analyze Common Red Flag Situations
- List 3 Appropriate Means to Therapeutic Relationships
- Safeguards to Social Media



Code of Ethics for Nurses



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“When acting within one’s role as a professional, the nurse recognizes and maintains boundaries that establish appropriate limits to relationships.”



Definitions

Therapeutic Relationship

- Relationship that allows nurses to apply professional knowledge, skills and abilities towards meeting health needs of the patient.
- Relationship is dynamic, goal oriented and patient centered.



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Definitions

Professional Boundaries

-Limits between the professionals power and the clients vulnerability.

Power Differentials

-Inequalities that exists between the professional and the client

-Professional has knowledge, experience, and authority that the client seeks or needs.

-In healthcare, the client is more vulnerable due to illness or emergency, so differential is bigger.



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Definitions

Boundary Crossing (Caution)

-Intentional or unintentional excursion across boundaries with a return to established limits of the professional relationship.

Boundary Violation (Danger)

-Occur when therapeutic boundaries are crossed, characterized by role reversal, secrecy, double binds, or nurse's needs being met rather than the patients'.

-Can occur when the nurse builds, social, economic or personal relationships



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Nurse Practice Act



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- Boundary violation-Unprofessional Conduct
- Some categories of Boundary Violations that require reporting to the BON include:
 - Physical
 - Sexual
 - Emotional
 - Financial



Professional Behavior



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Risk Factors for Violations

1. Inexperienced nurses
2. New Practice Setting (acute care to community care)
3. Circumstances that make the nurse more vulnerable (past experiences, personal issues, care fatigue)
4. Extended and prolonged interactions
5. Non-clinical practice settings (home health, schools, community) with less supervision and less defined roles



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Most Common Violations

1. Dual relationships/role reversal
2. Gifts and money
3. Excessive self-disclosure
4. Secretive behavior
5. Excessive attention/over involvement
6. Sexual behavior
7. Social media



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Red Flags-Literature Review

- ✓ Engaging in behaviors that could reasonably be interpreted as flirting
- ✓ Keeping secrets with a patient or for a patient
- ✓ Believing that you are the only one who truly understands or can help the patient
- ✓ Spending more time with a particular patient
- ✓ Speaking poorly about colleagues or your employment setting with the patient and/or family
- ✓ Showing favoritism
- ✓ Meeting a patient in areas besides those used to provide direct patient care and when you are out of uniform and not at work
- ✓ Discussing intimate or personal issues with a patient



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Red Flags-School Nursing

- ❖ Providing parents/students with personal cell number or email address
- ❖ Babysitting for students
- ❖ Interacting with students/parents socially
- ❖ Assuming parental role/responsibilities- (Transportation, Clothing, Medication, etc.)
- ❖ Becoming involved with family issues that do not directly relate to the plan of care
- ❖ Accepting gifts with significant value or that might be misunderstood



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Social Media



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- FaceBook
- Twitter
- InstaGram
- GoFundMe
- Email



Texas Board of Nursing

Position Statement-Boundaries and Social Media

- Ethical and Legal Obligation to maintain privacy and confidentiality
- Maintain Professional Boundaries when utilizing social media
- Nurses provide services without discrimination....
- Nurses must comply with all laws, rules, including employer policies



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Social Media Benefits

- Fosters professional connections
- Promotes timely communication
- Assists with educating and informing consumers and healthcare professionals
- Promotes rapid knowledge exchange



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Social Media Risks

- Speed of interaction
- Creates context collapse by allowing multiple contexts
- Power balances are less clear
- Can erode professional boundaries
- Once in the public space...it is out there for all to see and can't be taken back
- It is "real", just like telephones, printing presses, Morse code, and television.



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Scenarios-Social Media

1. Nurse sent home health records to finish up documentation
 - a. Sent to personal email account
 - b. Against policy
 - c. Not encrypted

2. Nurse posted picture of patient and comments on FB page. The child was recognized by community members and health information was shared.



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Potential Issue

Continuous Glucose Monitoring

1. What phone or device to utilize?
2. Health Information on a non-secure device
3. Parents expectation that you are always available to monitor
4. Awaiting guidance from the BON to draft a document for this one.



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Thank you

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