

## Healthy Boundaries in Electronic Communications

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### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

**At the end of this activity, participants will be able:**

- 1) To establish personal boundaries for various forms of electronic communications**
- 2) To identify risky or even illegal behaviors in various forms of electronic communication**
- 3) To identify behavior that is inappropriate or “out of bounds” in various forms of electronic communication**

**In the *Called to Protect™* video, you learned about three types of boundaries. What were they?**

**What about when you are communicating with someone, but not face-to-face? How do we understand our boundaries in those situations? What kind of boundaries should you have when communicating in these ways?**

### ACTIVITY

**“Out Of Bounds!”**

**Divide the youths into small groups of 3-4. Assign each group a form of communication:**

- **Social networking sites (Facebook, MySpace, etc.)**
- **Texting**
- **Chat rooms**
- **File sharing**
- **Gaming (Xbox Live, etc.)**
- **Other forms that the group identifies as relevant.**

**For each form of communication, have the youths discuss boundaries for and how they can stay safe. Each group should take notes and add boundaries on a picture of a basketball court.**

**Have each group present their findings to the larger group.**

### **WRAP-UP**

**In today's world, there are so many ways to communicate with others. It is easy to reach people anytime and anywhere, but we need to remain mindful of boundaries in any form of communication.**

### **RESOURCES**

**(See Internet Tips for Teens – attached)**

## Activity Sheet: Out Of Bounds!

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**Type of Communication:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Definition:** \_\_\_\_\_

**With whom do you communicate this way?**

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**How often do you communicate this way?**

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**What kinds of things do you share this way?**

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**What is “out of bounds” in this type of communication?**

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**How can you use this form of communication safely and legally?**

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## Resource: Internet Tips for Teens<sup>1</sup>

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- 1) Be smart about what you post on the Web and what you say to others. The Web is a lot more public and permanent than it seems.
- 2) Provocative and sexy names and pictures can draw attention from people you don't want in your life.
- 3) Sexy pictures can get you into trouble with the law. If you are underage, they may be considered child pornography, a serious crime.
- 4) Be careful what you download or look at, even for a laugh. Some of the images on the Internet are extreme, and you can't "unsee" something.
- 5) Going to sex chat rooms and other sex sites may connect you with people who can harass you in ways you don't anticipate.
- 6) Free downloads and file-sharing can put pornography on your computer that you may not want and can be hard to get rid of. Any pornography that shows children or teens under 18 is illegal child pornography and can get you in big trouble.
- 7) Adults who talk to you about sex online are committing a crime. So are adults who meet underage teens for sex. Some teens think it might be fun, harmless or romantic, but it means serious trouble for everyone. It's best to report it.
- 8) Don't play along with people on the Web who are acting badly, taking risks and being weird. Even if you think it's harmless and feel like you can handle it, it only encourages them and may endanger other young people.
- 9) Report it when other people are acting weird and inappropriately or harassing you or others. It's less trouble just to log off, but these people may be dangerous. Save

the communication. Contact the site management, your service provider, the CyberTipline or even the police.

- 10) Don't let friends influence your better judgment. If you are surfing with other kids, don't let them pressure you to do things you ordinarily wouldn't.
- 11) Be careful if you ever go to meet someone you have gotten to know through the Internet. You may think you know them well, but they may fool you. Go with a friend. Tell your parents. Meet in a public place. Make sure you have your cell phone and an exit plan.
- 12) Don't harass others. People may retaliate in ways you don't expect.
- 13) You can overestimate your ability to handle things. It may feel like you are careful, savvy, aware of dangers, and able to manage the risks you take, but there are always unknowns. Don't risk disasters.

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<sup>1</sup> SOURCE:

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