DiGii
SOCIAL

Lesson Plan

Setting Digital Social & Emotional Boundaries

Overview

Learning to establish social and emotional boundaries is essential for mental health and wellbeing. The digital lives of children often expose them to a lot of people over extended periods of time, this having a far greater impact and influence than the smaller number of people and demands in real time. Understanding, and having guidance and permission to set healthy boundaries gives a child agency and empowerment to create limits and 'lines in the sand' that are vital protective factors as they learn to navigate complex online (and offline) relationships.

This lesson helps children to understand what boundaries are, why we need to have them, and how they can protect us and others.

The five dimensions of learning about online safety are:
- *Values, rights and responsibilities*
- *Wellbeing*
- *Respectful relationships*
- *Digital media literacy*
- *Informed and safe use of information and devices.*

Learning Intention

To understand what boundaries are.
To know why it is important to have boundaries and how they can protect us.

Curriculum Links

ACPPS053
ACPPS056
ACTDIP022

Resources

- Hula hoops (enough for 1 between 2)
- Court with marked lines or use cones to mark an area
- Lesson Display Resource
- Lesson Activity Resource 1 – Protective Boundaries Poster (download and print)
- Lesson Activity Resource 2 -Scenario cards (download and print)
- Whiteboard/Paper, Pens

1) **Ask:** What are boundaries?
   - Are there physical boundaries at school that you can't go past? (Outside the gates, areas of the oval/playground that you can/can't use)
   - Would it be ok for cars to drive anywhere they want? (No, we have boundaries with the lines of the road, direction of where cars can drive, etc. Why? To keep all road users and pedestrians safe.)
   - Would you expect a stranger to open the gate and walk through the boundary for your house?

2) **Game**- Show the children the boundaries for the game (you may want to use a netball court with marked lines or alternatively create a boundary with cones).
   - Call out instructions for the class to move around the designated area- run, skip, hop etc. Remind them that they must stay within the boundaries otherwise they are out of the game. Stop the children and ask if anyone bumped into anyone else or had any close calls?
   - Talk to the children about personal boundaries and how we may be uncomfortable getting too close to another person. Everyone is entitled to have their personal space.
   - Tell children we are going to play the game again but this time you should imagine (you could do this if you have enough hula hoops) that you have a hula hoop around your waist creating a personal space bubble. You must imagine everyone else has this too and so you need to move around in a way that shows you are aware and respectful of your own and other people's personal space.
   - Does this change how we move? (We may need to slow down at points, we need to look out for other people, we need to be aware of our surroundings etc.)

3) **Identify:** the difference in physical boundaries (as in the game) and social and emotional boundaries.

   - What boundaries do we have that you aren't able to see?
   - Give different examples like not wanting someone to touch your hair (physical), not wanting someone to be your only friend (social), not wanting someone to tease you because they think it's funny but it winds you up (emotional).
   - Ask children to think up some limits they have that they ask their friends or family to respect and identify whether these are the same or different for everyone.

4) **Show** Lesson Display Resource, Slide 2 'Why boundaries are important' and discuss each point. Encourage children to give their own examples.

- Boundaries set the basic guidelines of how you want to be treated by other people.
- They can protect us from harm
- Give us permission to say no to things that we don't want to see/do/hear/watch

5) **Discuss** social and emotional boundaries and how these relate to digital life.

- Social and emotional boundaries are not always clear to people online because they can't see your face or body language to give them clues.
- When we're online, sometimes friends can have high or unreasonable expectations of us
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        o Needing us to be online when they want us even if it's not allowed by your parents at that time.
        o Wanting a response to messages straight away.
        o Always playing the game that they want to play
        o Wanting to be able to post images and videos of you.
- Boundaries are important to protect ourselves from emotional harm, as well as physical harm. We have the right to say no to anything that makes us feel uncomfortable, unsafe, or unhappy.

Remind children that everyone has different boundaries. It is our responsibility to communicate our boundaries clearly to other people- don't expect them to guess.

6) **Brainstorm** together: How can we manage our boundaries in the digital world?

- Turn notifications off
- Practice saying no
- Set time limits on devices or apps
- Have downtime away from screens
- Remember not everything needs to be shared
- Choose carefully what you look at online- don't access things that don't make you feel good
- Ask for help when you need it

7) **Show** Lesson Resource 1 'Protective Boundaries' poster.

- Discuss the parts of the poster and how they could use it to guide setting their own boundaries with friends.
- Provide children with their own copy of Lesson Resource 1 Poster (download and print) to take home and discuss with their grownups.

8) **Activity:** Using Lesson Display Resource, Slide 3 (content below) and Lesson Activity Resource 2, explain to children that they will work in pairs and use a hula hoop to create a boundary while they respond to a given scenario.

- Display Lesson Display Resource, Slide 3 and explain to children that they can firmly and politely tell someone that their boundary has been crossed as shown. Read through some of the responses and remind children that they are able to look at the examples when they're responding to their own scenario during the activity.
- One child stands inside the hoop while their partner reads a scenario card (Lesson Activity Resource 2) and passes it over the boundary.
- The child inside the hoop responds to the scenario in a firm and polite way.

The aim of the activity is to practice saying no or responding when they feel a boundary has been crossed.

- Thanks for asking but I don't want to play at the moment.
- I am only allowed to spend 30 minutes online.
- I'll catch up with you at school tomorrow, I can't chat at the moment.
- Please don't talk to me that way, I don't like it.
- I don't want to see pictures like that, don't send them to me.
- I'll report you if you keep doing that.
- Please could you take that picture of me down? I prefer not to post pictures of myself online.
- I need to be able to decide what pictures and videos are online of me.
- I need a bit of time to think about that, I'll let you know.
- I'm having a bit of a break from screens at the moment.
- I'm not comfortable with talking about that, can we change the subject?

9) **Choose** some of the children to share their scenario and response with the class.
   - Discuss any problems or misconceptions, but with an awareness that people have different personal boundaries.
   - Extend thinking with practical reflections like; although they may not mind someone messaging them late at night for example, it might be crossing a parental boundary so they also need to consider that and be respectful of rules parents have in place.

10) **Review** (using lesson resource slide 4) the learning intention from the lesson using thumbs up (yes)/thumbs down (no) in response to the following questions:
   - Who understands why boundaries are important?
   - Who understands that their boundaries might be different to someone else's?
   - Would you know how to tell someone that you don't feel comfortable with something?