Online Social Networking in the Workplace

Practical Applications

Please consider the following questions.

1. Is it ok to “friend” a current or former client? Why or why not?

2. Is an online relationship different from a real life relationship? If yes, how so?

3. Is it ethical to search for information on a client through the internet?

4. Have you ever received a “friend” request from a client? If so, how did you handle it? Were there alternative ways that the situation could have been handled?

5. Please take a moment to consider the following vignette:

Gwen is a recently graduated MSW student who has been with DCYF for 5 months now. She regularly uses Facebook as a way to communicate with family and friends. Since starting her job, she has “friended” a few of her peers at work. One day in looking at her co-worker Vanessa’s Facebook page, she notices that one of Vanessa’s young clients Wendy posted a comment on her wall about how she appreciates her advice that Vanessa had given her. Gwen knows that Vanessa’s Facebook page only allows for friends to post on her wall. Gwen tries to discuss the situation with Vanessa, but she insists that is no big deal and that she and Wendy barely even talk through Facebook. What boundary issues are at work here?