

Digital Citizenship and Online Safety

What is Digital Citizenship?

Digital citizenship is the ability to navigate digital environments safely, responsibly, and respectfully. It involves making informed choices, protecting personal information, and engaging positively in online communities.

“Although we live and interact in the digital world similarly to the offline world, we're not always as mindful of our online actions. We can sometimes act without realizing how it could affect our reputation, safety and growth as digital citizens. In the meantime, everything we do online affects and defines our digital world and selves.

Digital media also provide unique opportunities for everyone to get involved, speak out, and make changes online and offline. Our actions in our online world can have a real impact, and we all have a role to play as active digital citizens ([Media Smarts](#)).”

The Why and How of Digital Citizenship

Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life. Proverbs 4:23

We encourage our students to become discerning digital learners—able to explore online safely while maintaining healthy boundaries. Here are some key guidelines to help new online learners:

- **Discuss online responsibility:** Talk with students about screen time, appropriate websites, and the importance of digital discernment. Stay informed about the websites and apps they use.
- **Set clear family rules:** Establish guidelines for screen time, safe browsing, and online behavior.
- **Keep devices in common areas:** Placing computers in open spaces, such as the living room, promotes supervision and accountability.
- **Encourage balance:** Set tech-free times and promote physical activity to balance screen time.

- **Teach critical thinking:** Help students evaluate online content for credibility and accuracy.

Students who are new to using technology can learn more through these [BrainPOP videos](#).

Online Safety

Tips for Privacy and Data Security

In today's digital world, protecting personal information is more important than ever. Practicing smart online habits helps ensure privacy, security, and a safer experience for everyone.

- **Research before you use:** Investigate apps, websites, and online services before signing up.
- **Think before posting:** Be mindful of the long-term impact of sharing personal information online.
- **Educate students on online risks:** Teach them to avoid sharing personal details and to recognize potential dangers.

Resources

For Parents and Educators

- Read more at [ProtectKidsOnline.ca](#)
- [Online Parenting Book](#) by The White Hatter
- [MediaSmarts](#)
- [Common Sense Media](#)
- [Raising Digitally Responsible Youth: A Parent's Guide](#)

For Students

- [HCOS Digital Literacy Unit Study Kit](#)
- [Be Internet Awesome](#): Helping kids be safe, confident explorers of the online world.
- [Digital Literacy & Well-Being Curriculum](#) by Common Sense Media: K-8 lessons to prepare students for life in the digital world.
- [AI Literacy Lessons for Grades 6-12](#)
- [Security Awareness Lessons](#) for students ages 8-11.
- Videos on Internet Safety: [Being Safe on the Internet](#); [Internet Safety by BrainPOP Jr](#)
- [RightNow Media - Bullying Videos \(McGee and Me! Series\)](#) - Please email [Margaret Basaraba](#) for an invitation.

Sora eBook Curations

- [Grades K - 4](#)
- [Grades 5 - 9](#)
- [Grades 10 - 12](#)
- [Digital Wellness for Educators](#)

Digital Citizenship and Online Safety for Young Learners

Before your students begin exploring social media, it's important to introduce them to the basics of online privacy. Help them understand that personal information—such as their full name, address, and school—should not be shared online. Encourage open conversations about what is safe to post and who they can trust online.

"*Safety Smart with Timon and Pumbaa*" is a fun and engaging educational video created by Disney in collaboration with Underwriters Laboratories (UL) to teach children about online safety. In this video, Timon and Pumbaa explore key topics such as:

- **Keeping personal information private** (not sharing names, addresses, or school details online).
- **Recognizing safe and unsafe online interactions** (understanding who to trust).
- **Thinking before clicking** (avoiding suspicious links or downloads).
- **Being kind and respectful online** (digital etiquette and cyberbullying awareness).

With humour and relatable storytelling, the video helps children understand how to navigate the digital world responsibly while making safe choices. It's a great resource for introducing Kindergarten to Grade 2 students to the basics of digital citizenship.

Revision #25

Created 28 November 2023 23:09:26 by Pippa Davies

Updated 8 October 2025 20:53:21 by Cynthia Duncalfe