



Internet Safety: Let's Start A Conversation



Grade 7 Discussion Guide

Managing Your Digital Footprint to
Stay Safe Online

How to Use This Guide

Together, watch the video *Managing Your Digital Footprint to Stay Safe Online* and then use the Conversation Starter Questions and Themes to Reinforce the Learning to facilitate your conversation. You can also use the Conversation Starter Questions and Themes to Reinforce the Learning to spark a conversation without watching the video.



Video Description

A young person is alone in their bedroom on social media, chatting with someone they don't know. This stranger is sending them messages, trying to flatter them. The young person has been chatting with this stranger online for a while and the stranger now wants to meet in person. The young person tells their friend of their plans. The friend is uneasy and tries to convince them to tell someone and not go alone. The friend eventually persuades them not to go and to talk to an adult about the situation.

Conversation Starter Questions

Technology has its benefits, but there are also dangers associated with the use of computers and digital technologies, such as being targeted for harmful online interactions or encountering online violence and hate. It is important to know how to protect oneself from these dangers and to respond if encountering them online.

- How do our digital devices benefit us? What are some of the risks we might encounter?
- How is digital technology used to lure young people into dangerous situations?
- Why might it be difficult for young people to keep themselves safe from being lured into dangerous situations?
- What should you remember when you are using a computer or mobile device?
- What are some ways that we can all manage our digital footprint to stay safe when online?
- What should you do to respond to dangerous situations you might encounter online?

Themes to Reinforce the Learning

Your child will have discussed some of these Internet safety topics and strategies as part of their learning at school. As technology evolves, it is important to continue to be aware of how technology impacts their life and the dangers of using technology. Consider working the following topics and strategies into your conversations with your child to support their learning and encourage them to apply these strategies in all online situations.

Benefits and Dangers of Technologies

- Information is easy to access, to share and it saves time. It helps people stay connected to others and work together.
- Information may not be accurate or credible and the information provided may expose someone to unwanted solicitation.
- Too much time spent on technology can lead to a reduction in physical activity and social isolation.
- Too much personal data can be shared which exposes people to the risk of cyber theft and identity theft.
- Individuals can also be targets for harmful online interactions or encounter online violence and hate.
- Digital technology can expose young people to online predators such as those involved with human trafficking.
- Young people could be at risk for coercion into human trafficking through online communication platforms.

Human Trafficking

- Human traffickers use gaming, chat rooms, dating sites and other social media platforms to find and groom their victims. These are places where young people might share personal details that are easy for traffickers to find.
- People share their interests and concerns on social media so it is easy for traffickers to identify individuals who might be more vulnerable and seeking friendship and a relationship.
- Young people may get lured into trafficking when they are looking for belonging and have low self-esteem or self-image or because they need a place to go for food and shelter.
- Traffickers may offer young people experiences that seem fun and adventurous or offer what they may want or need, to lure them into human trafficking.
- People who are victims of human trafficking may fear their trafficker or the police too much to risk getting help.
- People may be manipulated to believe that the trafficker is the only person who cares about them and that they are best off staying with their trafficker.

- People may face threats from their trafficker which makes them too frightened to seek help.

Strategies to Stay Safe from Online Dangers

- Avoid sharing any personal information with someone you have only interacted with online.
- Don't share usernames, passwords, or where you live with anyone, including friends.
- Check and set privacy settings on all the applications you use.
- Block or report people who make you feel unsafe or uncomfortable.
- Avoid uploading pictures, videos, or posts with backgrounds that make it easy to identify your location.
- Don't create posts that may show that you have problems at home or at school.
- Reach out to a trusted adult who can help.

Additional Resources

For additional information about the dangers of technology and strategies to stay safe online, consult:

- [Cybertips.ca](https://www.cybertips.ca)
- [Public Health Agency of Canada, Resources to keep children safe online](#)
- [Public Safety Canada, Human Trafficking](#)

For more information on Ophea, visit www.ophea.net