



Our K-12 Digital Citizenship Curriculum

Kids and teens today are using the immense power of digital media to explore, connect, create, and learn in ways never before imagined. With this power, young people have extraordinary opportunities, and yet they face potential pitfalls, too. Meanwhile, schools are dealing with the associated ramifications — like cyberbullying, digital cheating, and safety and security concerns. These issues underscore the need for students to learn — and for teachers to teach — digital literacy and citizenship skills.

Common Sense Education's **FREE Digital Citizenship Curriculum** empowers students to think critically, behave safely, and participate responsibly in our digital world. These 21st-century skills are essential for students to harness the full potential of technology for learning. Taught by classroom teachers, librarians, technology specialists, health educators, and guidance counselors around the world, our K-12 curriculum:

- Introduces reliable, research-based information to students about digital media and their impact
- Offers a comprehensive yet balanced approach in addressing safety and security concerns, including ethics and behavior issues, as well as digital literacy skills
- Includes research-based lessons based on the work of Howard Gardner and the GoodPlay Project at the Harvard Graduate School of Education
- Provides student-centered, media-rich lesson materials that emphasize skill building, critical thinking, ethical discussion, media creation, and decision making to students of all ages
- Addresses the whole community by providing materials to educate parents and families about digital citizenship
- Satisfies criteria for CIPA E-rate compliance
- Aligns to the Common Core State Standards, the International Society for Technology in Education's National Education Technology Standards (ISTE's NET•S), and the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) Standards
- Includes rich professional development resources such as tutorials, videos, and webinars

There are 80 lessons in the full K-12 curriculum, with supporting materials such as student handouts, assessments, educational videos, family tip sheets, and professional development resources. We suggest starting with our Scope & Sequence to determine which approach is right for your students.

Our Scope & Sequence consists of three units for grade bands K-2, 3-5, and 6-8 and four units for Grades 9-12. Each unit is comprised of five lessons, which spiral to address a cross-curricular approach. The units build on each other by reinforcing developmentally appropriate topics. You can use the units either sequentially by grade or at any grade level within this band.

Our curriculum is made available to educators and schools FREE thanks to the generous support of our funders. Browse our educator site to find a plethora of curricular materials. Our education program brings students, families, and educators together to create world-class digital citizens for the 21st-century.

Cross-Curricular Framework



Privacy & Security

Students learn strategies for managing their online information and keeping it secure from online risks such as identity thieves and phishing. They learn how to create strong passwords, how to avoid scams and schemes, and how to analyze privacy policies.



Digital Footprint & Reputation

Students learn to protect their own privacy and respect others' privacy. Our digital world is permanent, and with each post, students are building a digital footprint. By encouraging students to self-reflect before they self-reveal, they will consider how what they share online can impact themselves and others.



Self-Image & Identity

These lessons are designed to help students explore their own digital lives, focusing on their online versus their offline identity. Students learn the benefits and risks of presenting themselves through different personas and the effects on their sense of self, their reputation, and their relationships.



Creative Credit & Copyright

Living in a “copy/paste” culture, students need to reflect on their responsibilities and rights as creators in the online spaces where they consume, create, and share information. From addressing plagiarism to piracy, students learn about copyright and fair use.



Relationships & Communication

Students reflect on how they can use intra-personal and interpersonal skills to build and strengthen positive online communication and communities. They delve into the concept of digital citizenship and digital ethics, and they reflect on their online interactions.



Information Literacy

Information literacy includes the ability to identify, find, evaluate, and use information effectively. From effective search strategies to evaluation techniques, students learn how to evaluate the quality, credibility, and validity of websites, and give proper credit.



Cyberbullying & Digital Drama

Students learn what to do if they are involved in a cyberbullying situation. They explore the roles people play and how individual actions — both negative and positive — can impact their friends and broader communities. Students are encouraged to take the active role of upstander and build positive, supportive online communities.











Internet Safety

Students explore how the Internet offers an amazing way to collaborate with others worldwide, while staying safe through employing strategies such as distinguishing between inappropriate contact and positive connections. These foundational skills are just the beginning!

GRADES K - 2

Scope & Sequence Digital Citizenship Curriculum







Our Scope & Sequence consists of three units for grade bands K-2, 3-5, and 6-8 and four units for grades 9-12. Each unit is composed of five lessons, which spiral to address a cross-curricular approach. The units build on each other by reinforcing developmentally appropriate topics. You can use the units either sequentially by grade or at any grade level within a grade band. *Our cross-curricular approach covers:*

 Internet Safety	 Privacy & Security	 Relationships & Communication	 Cyberbullying & Digital Drama
 Digital Footprint & Reputation	 Self-image & Identity	 Information Literacy	 Creative Credit & Copyright

> **GET TRAINED:** Use our [Digital Citizenship Tutorial](#) and professional development resources to learn best practices for teaching digital citizenship to your students.








> **TEACH LESSONS: UNIT 1**

Completed

- 1 - **GOING PLACES SAFELY** How do you go places safely on the computer? 
- 2 - **A-B-C SEARCHING** How can you use the alphabet to find things online? 
- 3 - **KEEP IT PRIVATE** What kinds of information should you keep to yourself when you use the Internet? 
- 4 - **MY CREATIVE WORK** How can you give credit to your own creative work?  
- 5 - **SENDING EMAIL** How do you connect with others through email? 






> **GIVE ASSESMENT***

> **TEACH LESSONS: UNIT 2**

- 1 - **STAYING SAFE ONLINE** How do you stay safe when you visit a website? 
- 2 - **FOLLOW THE DIGITAL TRAIL** What information is OK to have in your digital footprint?  
- 3 - **SCREEN OUT THE MEAN** What can you do when someone is mean to you online?  
- 4 - **USING KEYWORDS** Which keywords will give you the best search results? 
- 5 - **SITES I LIKE** What makes a website the right site for you? 

> **GIVE ASSESMENT***

> **TEACH LESSONS: UNIT 3**

- 1 - **POWERFUL PASSWORDS** How do you create a secure password? 
- 2 - **MY ONLINE COMMUNITY** How does the Internet connect you to others? 
- 3 - **THINGS FOR SALE** How do some websites try to get you to buy things? 
- 4 - **SHOW RESPECT ONLINE** How can you make sure your emails are clear and respectful? 
- 5 - **WRITING GOOD EMAILS** How is writing an email similar to or different from writing a letter? 









> ***GIVE ASSESSMENT:** Assess your students' learning of lesson objectives and gauge their understanding and attitudes through [Interactive Unit-Level Assessments](#).

> **ENGAGE FAMILIES:** Invite parents into the conversation with our [Connecting Families](#) program and resources.

GRADES 3 - 5

Scope & Sequence Digital Citizenship Curriculum

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 Internet Safety	 Privacy & Security	 Relationships & Communication	 Cyberbullying & Digital Drama
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> **GET TRAINED:** Use our *Digital Citizenship Tutorial* and professional development resources to learn best practices for teaching digital citizenship to your students.

> **ONBOARD STUDENTS:** Introduce students to *Digital Passport*, our award-winning suite of games that help onboard students to the foundational skills of digital citizenship and internet safety.










> **TEACH LESSONS: UNIT 1**

Completed

- 1 - **RINGS OF RESPONSIBILITY:** What kinds of responsibilities does a good digital citizen have?  
- 2 - **PRIVATE AND PERSONAL INFORMATION:** How can you protect yourself from online identity theft?  
- 3 - **THE POWER OF WORDS:** What should you do when someone uses mean or scary language on the Internet?   
- 4 - **THE KEY TO KEYWORDS:** Which keywords will give you the best search results? 
- 5 - **WHOSE IS IT, ANYWAY?:** How can you show respect for other people's work?  











> **GIVE ASSESSMENT***

> **TEACH LESSONS: UNIT 2**

- 1 - **STRONG PASSWORDS:** How can a secure password help you protect your private information? 
- 2 - **DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP PLEDGE:** How do you create a positive online community?   
- 3 - **YOU'VE WON A PRIZE!:** What is spam, and what can you do about it? 
- 4 - **HOW TO CITE A SITE:** How do you cite different types of online sources? 
- 5 - **PICTURE PERFECT:** How can photos be changed on the computer, and how can that affect your feelings about the way you look?   

> **GIVE ASSESSMENT***

> **TEACH LESSONS: UNIT 3**

- 1 - **TALKING SAFELY ONLINE:** What's the difference between Internet friends and in-person friends?  
- 2 - **SUPER DIGITAL CITIZEN:** How can people help others be good digital citizens?   
- 3 - **PRIVACY RULES:** How do you know if a website protects your private information? 
- 4 - **WHAT'S CYBERBULLYING?:** What is cyberbullying, and how do you deal with it?  
- 5 - **SELLING STEREOTYPES:** How do we learn stereotypes of boys and girls from media messages?  









> ***GIVE ASSESSMENT:** Assess your students' learning of lesson objectives and gauge their understanding and attitudes through *Interactive Unit-Level Assessments*.

> **ENGAGE FAMILIES:** Invite parents into the conversation with our *Connecting Families* program and resources.

GRADES 6 - 8

Scope & Sequence **Digital Citizenship Curriculum**








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 Internet Safety	 Privacy & Security	 Relationships & Communication	 Cyberbullying & Digital Drama
 Digital Footprint & Reputation	 Self-image & Identity	 Information Literacy	 Creative Credit & Copyright

- > **GET TRAINED:** Use our *Digital Citizenship Tutorial* and professional development resources to learn best practices for teaching digital citizenship to your students.
- > **ONBOARD STUDENTS:** Introduce students to *Digital Compass*, our award-winning suite of games that help onboard students to the foundational skills of digital citizenship and internet safety.










> **TEACH LESSONS: UNIT 1**

Completed

- 1 - **DIGITAL LIFE 101:** What is the place of digital media in our lives? 
- 2 - **STRATEGIC SEARCHING:** What steps can help you find what you're looking for when you search online? 
- 3 - **SCAMS AND SCHEMES:** What is identity theft, and how can protect yourself from it? 
- 4 - **CYBERBULLYING: BE UPSTANDING:** How do you judge the intentions and impact of people's words and actions online?  
- 5 - **A CREATOR'S RIGHTS:** What rights do you have as a creator?  











> **GIVE ASSESMENT***

> **TEACH LESSONS: UNIT 2**

- 1 - **MY MEDIA:** What are your personal media habits, and how much time do you spend with different forms of media? 
- 2 - **A CREATOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES:** What responsibilities do you have to respect others' creative work?  
- 3 - **SAFE ONLINE TALK:** How should you handle inappropriate online talk?  
- 4 - **WHICH ME SHOULD I BE?:** What are the outcomes of presenting yourself in different ways online?  
- 5 - **GENDER STEREOTYPES ONLINE:** What are gender stereotypes, and can they shape our experiences online?  

> **GIVE ASSESMENT***

> **TEACH LESSONS: UNIT 3**









- 1 - **TRILLION-DOLLAR FOOTPRINT:** What is a digital footprint, and what does yours convey?  
- 2 - **IDENTIFYING HIGH-QUALITY SITES:** When can you trust what you find on the Internet? 
- 3 - **THE REALITY OF DIGITAL DRAMA:** Does the way we think about digital drama have anything to do with gender?   
- 4 - **CYBERBULLYING: CROSSING THE LINE:** When does inappropriate online behavior cross the line into cyberbullying, and what can you do about it?  
- 5 - **REWORK, REUSE, REMIX:** What rights do you have as a creator?  

- > **EXTEND LEARNING:** Challenge teens to take a real-world look at digital citizenship through student-directed, media-rich activities in *Digital Bytes*.
- > ***GIVE ASSESSMENT:** Assess your students' learning of lesson objectives and gauge their understanding and attitudes through *Interactive Unit-Level Assessments*.
- > **ENGAGE FAMILIES:** Invite parents into the conversation with our *Connecting Families* program and resources.

GRADES 9 - 12

Scope & Sequence **Digital Citizenship Curriculum**

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 Internet Safety	 Privacy & Security	 Relationships & Communication	 Cyberbullying & Digital Drama
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> **GET TRAINED:** Use our *Digital Citizenship Tutorial* and professional development resources to learn best practices for teaching digital citizenship to your students.

> **ONBOARD STUDENTS:** Invite students to explore digital dilemmas and practice decision-making — all without risking their real-world reputations — in the stories and mini-games of award winning *Digital Compass*.









> **TEACH LESSONS: UNIT 1**

Completed

- 1 - **DIGITAL LIFE 102:** What is the place of digital media in our lives? 
- 2 - **OOPS! I BROADCAST IT ON THE INTERNET:** What are the consequences of oversharing online? 
- 3 - **COPYRIGHTS AND WRONGS:** How can I make responsible choices when I use other people's creative work?  
- 4 - **FEELING ON DISPLAY:** Are girls and guys judged differently when they post photos online?  
- 5 - **TURN DOWN THE DIAL ON CYBERBULLYING AND ONLINE CRUELTY:** Which factors intensify cyberbullying and online cruelty, and what can you do to lessen them?  










> **GIVE ASSESMENT***

> **TEACH LESSONS: UNIT 2**

- 1 - **MY ONLINE CODE:** What does it mean to do the right thing online?  
- 2 - **WHO ARE YOU ONLINE?:** How do you present yourself to the world online and offline? 
- 3 - **BUILDING COMMUNITY ONLINE:** How can websites foster community online? 
- 4 - **OVEREXPOSED: SEXTING AND RELATIONSHIPS:** What are the risks and responsibilities when you share online in a relationship?  
- 5 - **RISKY ONLINE RELATIONSHIPS:** How can you tell when an online relationship is risky?  

> **GIVE ASSESMENT***

> **TEACH LESSONS: UNIT 3**

- 1 - **RIGHTS, REMIXES, AND RESPECT:** What should you consider when you use other people's creative work?  
- 2 - **TAKING PERSPECTIVES ON CYBERBULLYING:** How does online cruelty affect the people involved?  
- 3 - **WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL ABOUT INTERNET PRIVACY?:** How do websites collect your personal information, and what can you do about it? 
- 4 - **BECOMING A WEB CELEB:** What does it mean to become an Internet celebrity?   
- 5 - **COLLEGE BOUND:** How can information you post on the Internet affect your future opportunities? 









> **GIVE ASSESMENT***

Continued >

GRADES 9 - 12

Scope & Sequence **Digital Citizenship Curriculum**

> **TEACH LESSONS: UNIT 4**

1 - PRIVATE TODAY, PUBLIC TOMORROW: How can you respect the privacy of others online?		<input type="checkbox"/>
2 - DOES IT MATTER WHO HAS YOUR DATA?: What are the upsides and downsides of companies collecting your data online?		<input type="checkbox"/>
3 - BREAKING DOWN HATE SPEECH: How can you create a community culture in which hate speech is unacceptable, both online and offline?	 	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 - RETOUCHING REALITY: What are the creative and ethical aspects of digital-photo manipulation?	 	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 - COLLECTIVE INTELLIGENCE: What are the benefits and drawbacks of people working together to create information online?	 	<input type="checkbox"/>

> **GIVE ASSESMENT***

- > **EXTEND LEARNING:** Challenge teens to take a real-world look at digital citizenship through student-directed, media-rich activities in *Digital Bytes*.
- > **GIVE ASSESMENT:** Assess your students' learning of lesson objectives and gauge their understanding and attitudes through *Interactive Unit-Level Assessments*.
- > **ENGAGE FAMILIES:** Invite parents into the conversation with our *Connecting Families* program and resources.