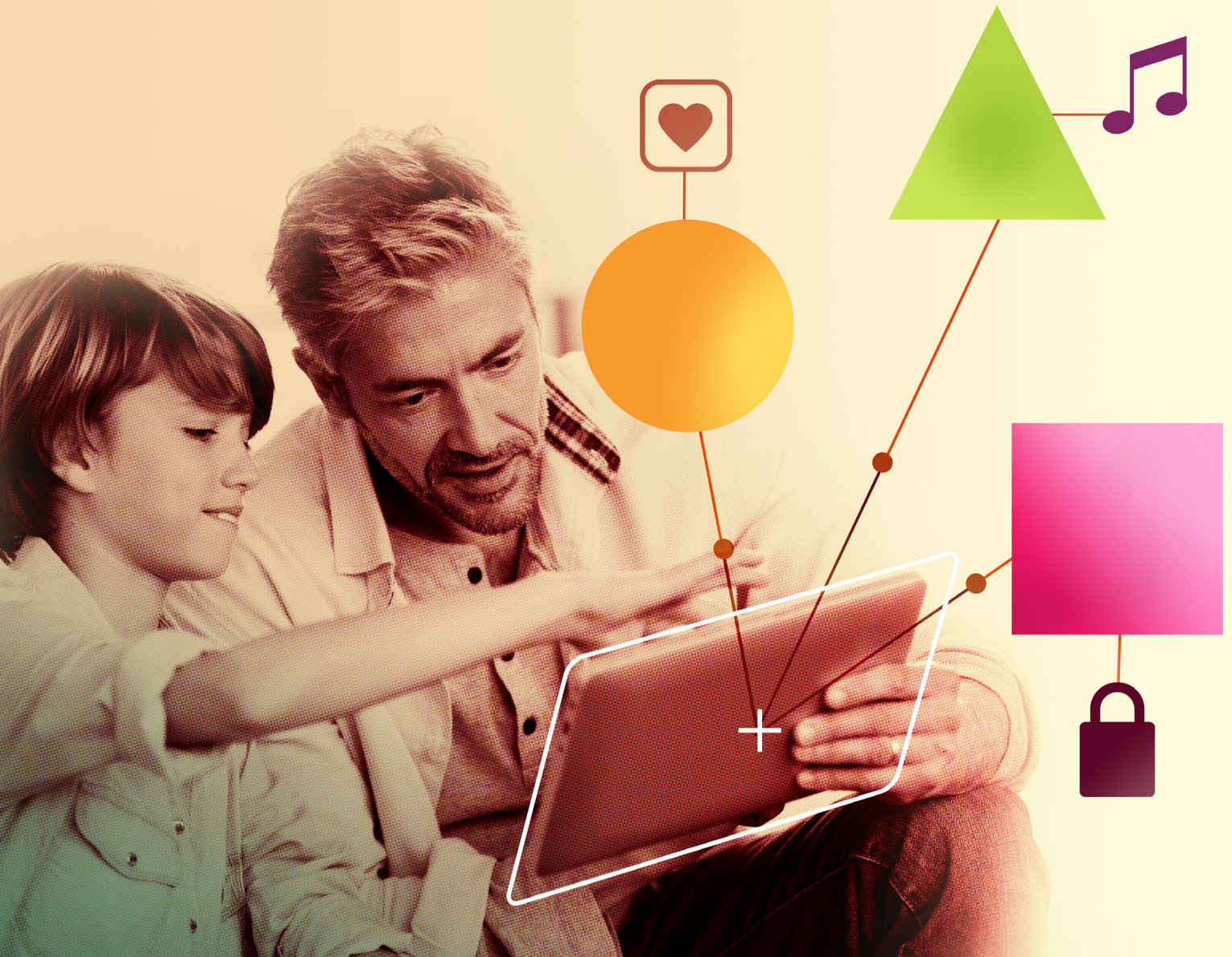


# DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

## Guide for Parents



Government  
of Canada

Gouvernement  
du Canada

Canada

## **Acknowledgements**

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# DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

## Guide for Parents

Being a parent has never been easy, but it can be even more challenging once your kids are using the internet. Even if you're not up on the latest technologies and platforms, though, you have an important role – maybe the **most** important – in your kids' online lives. This guide will prepare you for the conversations you need to have with kids when they first start using digital devices, as they grow and their online activities change, and when things go wrong.

The guide is divided into three sections that each deal with a different aspect of digital citizenship, to teach your kids to Respect People's Feelings, to Respect Privacy and to Respect Property online.



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# Five Key Tips for Digital Parenting

Before you get started, here are five key tips to guiding your kids to safe and responsible digital lives:

## Don't be scared!

You hear a lot of scary stuff about kids and the internet, but the fact is that most kids do just fine. Think of the internet as being like a swimming pool: the best way to keep your kids safe there is to teach them how to stay safe.

## Talk to your kids.

Don't wait until things have already gone wrong to talk to your kids about online issues, and don't just have one "big talk." What your kids need from you is *guidance*, so they're prepared to deal with problems before they happen, *support* from you when things do go wrong, and for you to *reinforce* these messages by continuing to talk to them as they get older and are more able to make decisions for themselves. The three main sections of this guide have lots of tips on how to talk about all of the major online issues. If you have older kids and haven't talked to them about the internet yet, don't worry: it's never too late to start!

## Be a part of your kids' media lives.

What your kids are watching, playing, reading and listening to is a big part of the person they're turning into, and their online lives can be just as important to them as the "real world." Younger kids are usually glad when their parents show an interest in the things they like, so get them to show you how their new favourite game works or why they're so excited about joining a new social network. You can also use media to talk about sensitive issues: kids may be more comfortable talking about sexting or bullying when you're discussing a character in a TV show than someone they know.

## Be the person your kids come to when they have problems online.

A lot of the time, kids don't want to go to their parents when things go wrong because they're afraid they'll get in trouble. When your kids start going online make sure they know clear **procedures** on what to do if things go wrong, like if they can't figure out a game or they accidentally access something unpleasant. (Check out the "How do I talk about..." and "How do I ..." sections below for some of these procedures.) If they're in the habit of coming to you about the little things, they'll be a lot more likely to talk to you about the big ones.

## Set rules and communicate values.

The internet may seem like the Wild West sometimes, but the rules you set still affect how kids behave online. What's most important is that your rules are a way of getting across the **values** you want your kids to live by, that way they'll keep living by them even when they're grown up and out on their own.

# Respect People's Feelings



## How do I talk about...

### Drama?

“Drama” is a term that is used to describe when young people get into fights or arguments with friends or other people they know. It can get pretty serious online, and can sometimes turn into cyberbullying. To help your kids avoid getting into drama and deal with it when it happens, teach them to:

- take a few minutes to “cool down” before replying to something that makes them mad;
- remind them that it’s easy to misunderstand what people mean online because we don’t see or hear a lot of the things that tell us how someone is feeling, like their facial expression or tone of voice;
- start by assuming the best about people, instead of thinking right away that they meant to be mean to you, and then talk to them face-to-face.

**YOU CAN ASK:** *What would you do if somebody posted something that made you mad, scared or sad?*





## Cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is when a person or a group of people are being intentionally mean to someone online. Like drama, cyberbullying usually happens with people kids know in real life, though it can also happen in online games and other places where kids only know the bully online.

**YOU CAN SAY:** *If someone is being mean to you online, come and talk to me about it right away and we'll find a solution.*

It's also important to teach your kids not to be mean or cruel to anyone online. Sometimes we don't realize how other people will be affected by what we say and do online, and cruel behaviour is part of the culture of some online spaces. One effective way to keep your kids from being mean is to make it one of your **household rules for internet use** (see the last section of this guide for more information on those.) A lot of the things you say about not getting into drama can also apply to cyberbullying, but you can also help kids develop **empathy** and **ethical thinking** by getting them to imagine how other people might feel:

**For kids under age 10**, ask simple questions like:

- How would you feel if someone was mean to you online?
- How would it feel if someone you thought was a friend was suddenly mean to you online? How do you think one of your friends would feel if they thought you were being mean to them?
- Do you sometimes get sad or mad when you're losing a game? How would it feel if someone was making fun of you for losing, too? How do you think someone would feel if you did that to them?

**For tweens and teens**, you can explore more complicated situations. For example, if your child plays any multiplayer games, ask them what they'd do in this situation:

Imagine you're playing an online game with a friend you know well online. Your friend has been playing the game longer than you and has taught you a lot about it, but isn't very nice to other new players. One time when you log in you see your friend "killing" a new player's character, waiting for it to come back to the game, and then "killing" it again. Your friend says he's just having fun and that it doesn't really matter because it's just a game.

- Do you think it's ever okay to do something that you know will probably hurt someone's feelings?
- Do you think it's more important to make your friend happy than to worry about how someone you don't know well will feel?
- Who could you ask for advice in this situation?
- What do you think you should do?



## Healthy relationships?

Like the rest of their lives, kids' romantic relationships happen online as well as offline. As younger kids start to get interested in relationships make sure you're aware of what they're watching, playing and listening to and be ready to talk about the ways that they depict romantic relationships: TV shows, music, video games and advertising can all reflect unhealthy attitudes. It's also important to tell older kids and teens to talk to you or another adult they trust if they're being pressured or sexually harassed by anyone.

### YOU CAN SAY:

- *Someone who respects you won't pressure you to do something you don't want to do.*
- *Don't blame yourself for things that you may have done, like giving someone your password or letting them have intimate photos of you. **Nothing you do gives someone the right to abuse you.***

## Being a positive influence online?

It's not enough to teach kids to protect themselves and avoid hurting other people. One of the great things about the internet is that kids' voices can be just as loud as anyone else's, and we all have a duty to make sure that things like bullying, racism and sexism aren't acceptable anywhere. Tell your kids that their voices can make a difference: it can take just a few people speaking out against something to change people's minds about it.

**YOU CAN SAY:** *You can help if you see bullying, racism or sexism online. If you feel safe speaking out, you can say things like "That's not how we do things here" or "Stuff like that ruins the game for everyone." If you don't want to say something public, you can reach out to whoever's being targeted to help them feel better and find out if there's any way you can help. You can report it to the people who run the game or social network where it's happening, too.*

**REPORT**

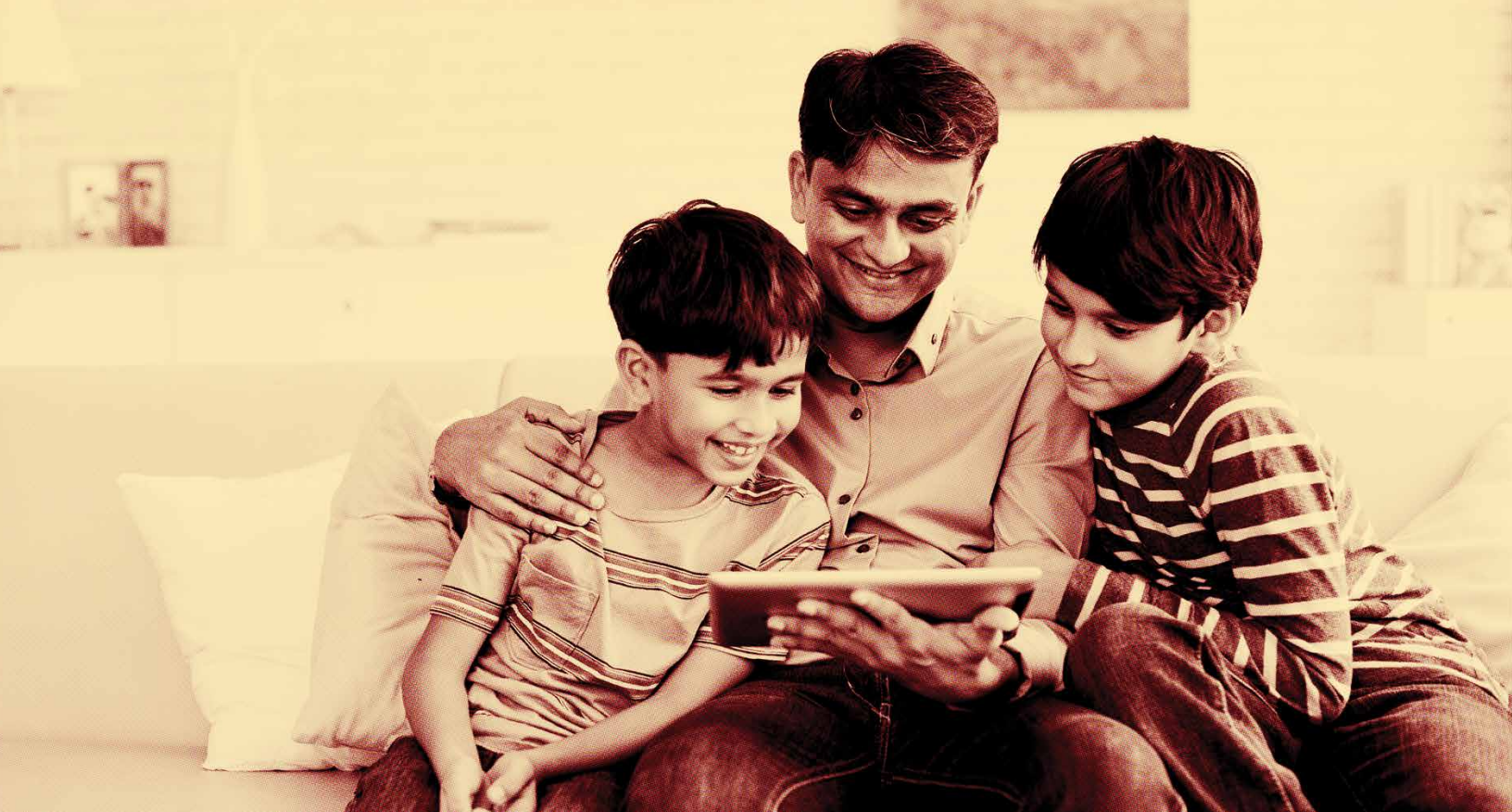


## How do I...

### Protect my child from cyberbullying?

Take these steps to protect your kids from cyberbullying:

- Talk **before** it happens. Make sure they know that you won't overreact and take away their devices or cut them off from the game or social network where it's happening.
- Ask them to tell you what they're doing online and to explore those places yourself, so you can spot possible problems before they happen.



You can also help your kids become more **resilient** so that if they are cyberbullied the hurt won't last as long. Here are some tips for building resilience in your kids:

- Teach them good “self-talk” habits. Get them in the habit of thinking “I can't control what happens to me, but I can control how I feel and what I do about it. Problems that look big now will get smaller and smaller as time goes on.”
- Make sure they take frequent breaks, eat well and are active. Everybody needs time to rest and recharge and it can be hard to do that when you're always online. Make sure **you** practice what you preach!
- Be a shoulder to lean on. Help them to fix problems that are solvable and to feel better about ones that aren't, and also encourage them to get help from other adults they trust if they can't come to you.

### **Encourage my child to stand up when they witness cyberbullying?**

The good news is that most kids **want** to help when they see someone being cyberbullied. They may not want to speak up, though, because they're afraid of making things worse for the victim or of becoming a target themselves. The best way to help is to tell them that it's important to always **do something**, even if you don't know the victim, and show them that they have a **range of options**:

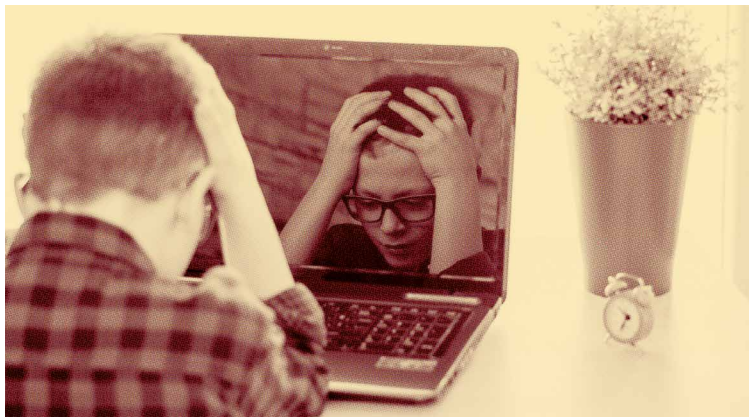
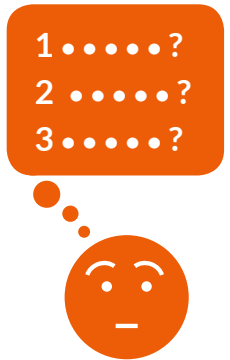
- Telling an adult they trust what's happening
- Talking to the victim and helping them feel better
- Recording evidence of what's happening so they can help the victim report it later
- Reporting it to the game or social network where it happened

## What should I do if...

### My child is in conflict with someone online?

Here are some steps they can follow when someone does something online to make them upset:

- Walk away from the situation. Log out, block or ignore the person so that they can't continue to make you upset.
- Take a minute and breathe. Pay attention to how you're feeling: is your heart racing? Are you feeling tense? It's a bad idea to make any decisions when you're mad or scared.
- Think of at least three ways to respond. Which one is most likely to make things *better*, rather than worse?
- If the conflict is with someone your child already knows offline, it can sometimes help to meet the person face-to-face to talk it out. (They should only do this if they feel it's safe.)
- If you're still having trouble, come talk to me or another adult you trust, and we'll figure out a solution.



### My child tells me they've been harassed or cyberbullied?

It's important to resist the urge to try to solve your kids' problems for them or to help them "get back" at whoever is bullying them. Instead, you can give them this advice:

- **Don't engage with the bully.** If you decide to report it later, fighting back can make it look like it was just an argument instead of bullying. Instead, get out of the situation and tell an adult you trust what happened.
- **Save the evidence.** Save text or instant messages and get copies of other things by taking a screenshot (see [www.take-a-screenshot.org](http://www.take-a-screenshot.org) for how to do this on different devices.)
- **Consider telling someone they trust,** like the police (if they've been threatened or frightened), to a teacher or principal (if they're being bullied by someone they know at school) or the game or social network where it happened.



## My child is cyberbullying someone?

If you've been clear that being mean or cruel online is against your family's internet rules, it makes sense to impose whatever consequence you set for breaking them. Make sure to be clear that cyberbullying is not just breaking a rule, but is a violation of your family's **values**. It's important to be clear that despite what kids might think, bullying is **not** normal or common: in fact, only **one in six** Canadian kids say they've bullied anyone online in the last month.

Some online spaces, including a lot of multiplayer games, do have cultures that make rudeness, bullying and even sexism and racism seem normal. If your kids play online games, make sure they know that these behaviours are never acceptable, even if "everybody does it."

If your kid says that they were "just joking", help them see that what might seem like "just a joke" to them can have a powerful effect on someone else. Encourage them to reach out to reassure the other person that they didn't mean to hurt their feelings and remind them to think twice before making a "joke" like that again.

## I think my child is involved in an unhealthy online relationship?

Some signs of an unhealthy relationship are jealousy, possessiveness and constantly wanting to keep tabs on someone. If you think your child is the victim of an unhealthy relationship, be clear why you think the relationship is unhealthy. Try not to push them into leaving it, instead, encourage your child to spend more time with family and friends. You can also talk to your child's friends to see if they have similar concerns. If your child is reluctant to talk to you about their relationship, make sure they know about anonymous counselling and information services like Kids Help Phone (1-800-668-6868; website [www.kidshelpphone.ca/](http://www.kidshelpphone.ca/)) that they can turn to for support.

If you think your child might be being abusive towards his or her partner, be clear that you think their behaviour is wrong and unhealthy. Talk to them about the characteristics of a healthy relationship and ask why they think it's appropriate to harass, embarrass, isolate or control their partner: make sure they know that these behaviours are **never** okay, and help them to find a counsellor who can help them learn ways to control their anger and have healthier relationships.

## When should I...

### Get involved in my kids' online relationships?

As soon as possible!

Think of your kids' online lives as being like their school or the playground. Most likely you know the names of their friends and ask your kids about what's happening in those places, and the same should be true of their online lives. The more often you talk about it, the less they'll feel like you're giving them the "third degree." If you start early, they'll be more willing to keep talking once they're in their teens.



### Take away my kids' cell phones or internet access?

You should only take away your child's digital devices or stop their online activities in very extreme cases. Games and social networks are a big part of kids' lives, so telling them to stop going online is like telling them to shut down their social lives. It will also make them feel like **they** are the ones who are being punished, so it is really only appropriate when they're the ones at fault, for example:

- If they've been seriously and repeatedly mean or cruel to someone online
- If they've shared an intimate image of someone without their consent
- If they've used a digital device to commit a crime, such as hacking or posting hate material.

### Contact my kids' school about online issues?

You should talk to your child's teacher or a school administrator if you know or suspect they're being cyberbullied by someone at the same school. A lot of the time, when kids are being bullied online they're being bullied offline, too, and when that happens it's usually at school.

### Contact the authorities?

You should contact the police if what's happening is making your child feel scared, making it hard for them to go to school or do things they enjoy, if they're being physically threatened, or if someone is threatening to publish something that would hurt or humiliate them. Make sure to talk to your child before you do this. For more information on your legal options, see the MediaSmarts tip sheet [Cyberbullying and the Law: http://mediasmarts.ca/digital-media-literacy/digital-issues/cyberbullying/cyberbullying-law](http://mediasmarts.ca/digital-media-literacy/digital-issues/cyberbullying/cyberbullying-law).

# Respect for Privacy



## How do I talk about...

### Protecting my child's privacy online?

As soon as they start using the internet, children need to learn to be careful about sharing personal information online because kids' apps and websites are **more** likely than general apps and websites to track or try to get information from you.

With this in mind, kids of all ages need to know that their personal information is **valuable**, so they shouldn't give it out freely. Even little things like their favourite kind of cereal helps to build a profile of them for advertisers. Tell your kids to check with you before filling out registration forms and profiles or entering online contests, and to tell you right away if anybody online asks them their name, how old they are, where they live, or any other personal info.

Tween and teens also need to understand that whatever they post online — photos, texts, videos, their phone number — can be **copied**, can be **around forever**, and might be seen by **people they didn't think would see it**. Have them ask themselves these questions before sharing anything online:

- Is this how I want people to see me?
- Could somebody use this to hurt me if they wanted to?
- What's the worst thing that could happen if I shared this?

**YOU CAN ASK:** *Do you know what your digital footprint says about you? How can you find out?*



**New #  
800-555-1212**

### **What's Your Digital Footprint?**

*"Digital footprint" means the traces that you leave with your online activity. It can include:*

- What you post to blogs or social networks
- What other people post about you on social networks
- Photos or videos by or of you posted to video or photo-sharing sites
- Comments that you leave on online forums, blogs, videos, et cetera
- News stories that mention your name

*These are just the things that are available to a casual searcher. Most search engines, social networks and websites that you use also keep a record of everything you do on them.*

### **Making good choices about other people's privacy online?**

Kids don't just share their own stuff: "liking," tagging and sharing things other people post, especially photos, are a big part of their online lives. They need to be careful what they share with others and learn to respect other people's privacy and not share things that will embarrass anyone.

Here are some good questions kids should ask themselves before they share anyone else's stuff:

- Do I have their permission?
- How widely did the person who sent this to me mean it to be shared?
- How can I make sure nothing goes wrong when I share other people's information?





You can also help your kids develop **empathy** and **ethical thinking** by getting them to imagine how other people might feel:

**For kids under age ten**, ask simple questions like:

- How might this person feel if I posted this? What if their parents, teachers or friends see it?
- Is it possible that something I think is just funny might hurt someone else's feelings?

**For tweens and teens**, ask them what they'd do in this situation:

You took a video of you and your friend out skating where you both fell down a bunch of times. When you see the video, you think it's super funny. You really want to post it for others to see, but you think it might embarrass your friend.

- Do you think it's ever okay to do something you know will probably hurt someone's feelings?
- Do you think it's more important that you do what you want with a photo you took, or that your friend might be made fun of?
- What would you want your friend to do if the positions were reversed?
- Who could you ask for advice in this situation?



## Sexting?

One of the most important thing to tell kids about sexting is that it's much **less common** than they probably think it is: fewer than **one in ten** Canadian students have sent one, and even fewer than that have ever shared one. Encourage tweens and teens to talk to you or another trusted adult if they are being pressured or sexually harassed by anyone. It's okay just to tell your kids not to send sexts, but **don't** tell them that their lives will be ruined if a sext gets made public: that kind of warning doesn't resonate with teens, and it'll make them less likely to come to you if something does go wrong.

**YOU CAN ASK:** *What would you do if somebody asked you for a photo that you didn't want to send, or asked you to share a photo that somebody else sent you?*

Talk to boys **and** girls about it: both send sexts at about the same rate, and because most sexting happens between people in a romantic relationship, the roles each of them play are a big part of whether things go bad or not. Teach them that it's **never okay** to pressure someone to do something they don't want to do.

**YOU CAN SAY:** *A lot of boys say they feel pressured to ask their girlfriends for sexual photos and share them with their friends. It can be hard to stand up to this pressure, but you have to think about how much giving in could hurt you and your partner.*

A lot of kids think that it's the sender's fault if a photo she or he sends gets shared with other people, so make sure your kids know it's **never okay** to share an intimate or embarrassing photo of somebody without their permission.

**YOU CAN SAY:** *If you get sent a picture that would hurt or embarrass the person in it if it got around, don't pass it on! Don't assume that "everybody's already seen it!"*

## How do I...

### Protect my child's privacy?

There are simple technical steps you can take to protect your child's online privacy, including:

- using browser plugins like Adblock Plus or Privacy Badger;
- turning off the Global Positioning System (GPS) and Bluetooth on any portable devices;
- disabling the microphone and camera on laptops (or just covering the camera with masking tape.)



## Help my child create a secure password?

Help your kids create a password that is at least seven characters long and is based on a word with no personal connection to them. Change some of the letters to numbers or punctuation marks and use a mix of upper- and lower-case letters. Then customize the password for each site by adding the first and last letters of the site (i.e. your baseline password “bananas” becomes **b@nAn2s** and then **fb@nAn2sk** becomes your Facebook password).

Once you have a good password, it is most important **not to share it!** Kids are a lot more likely to be “hacked” by friends they’ve shared their passwords with than by cyber criminals. They should also make sure to log out of all their accounts before they leave a computer, so the next person who uses it can’t pretend to be them.

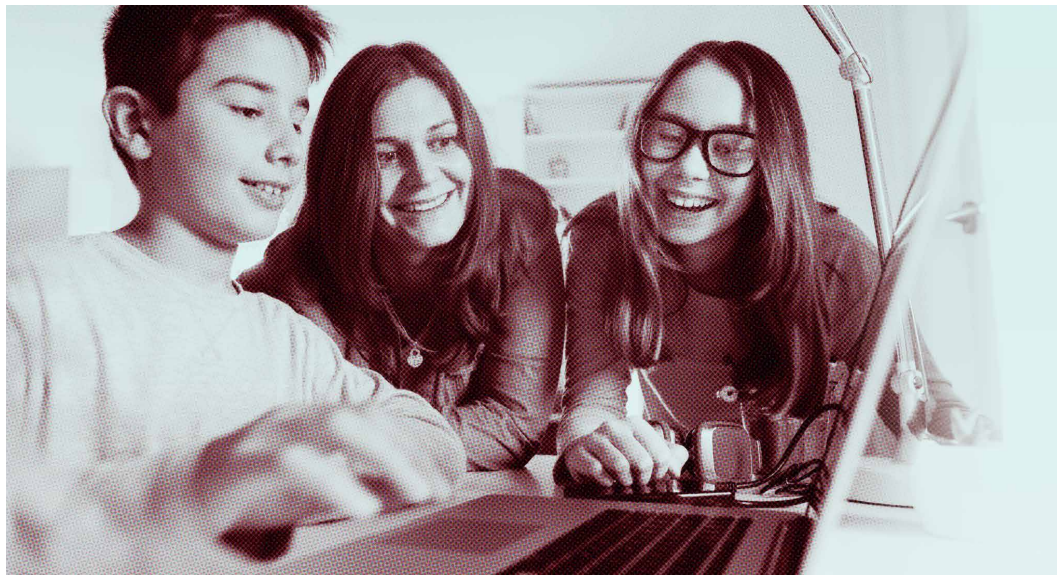
## Help my child use social network privacy settings?

Most kids know about the privacy settings on their social networks, but don’t always know all the different things they can do. When they first get their account, let them be the technical experts and show you that they can use them effectively to manage their privacy.

**Ask your tween or teen:** Show me how to...

- Create a strong password.
- Change my default privacy settings.
- Limit who can see a post or a photo.
- Tag and de-tag a post or a photo.
- Report someone else’s post or photo to the people who run the site.
- Block someone from contacting you.

For help in answering these questions, visit the safety centre of the social networking platform you are talking about – most sites have one.





### Help my child be aware of what they share online?

Once your kids have been online for a while, get them in the habit of checking out their “digital footprint” every now and then. A good place to start is to use a search engine to see what information about them is easily available: Try searching for their name — but don’t stop there, especially if it’s a fairly common one. Think about the search terms someone else might use if they were looking for information about your kids. Would they use: a nickname, a middle name, or initials? Also, try putting “their name”.com (or .ca) into the address bar and see if anyone else has registered that site. If not, it may be worth a few dollars each year to register it for your kids, even if they’re not going to use it right away.

Do the same thing with any social networks they’re on. Someone may have created a spoof account using their name, or there may be someone with a similar name that people might confuse them with. Make sure to do an image search, too!

You can also go through any photos they’ve posted online to see what “extra” information they give out, like addresses or landmarks in the background. With older kids, take a look at the Terms of Service of each social network they use to find out what the site is allowed to do with the photos and other things your kids post there.

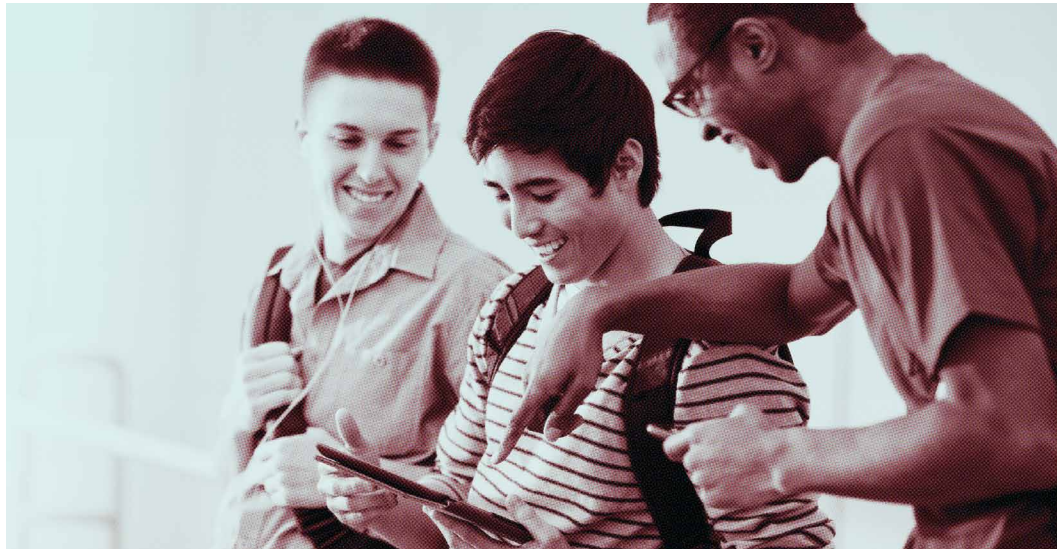
Don’t forget to set a good example, as well. Get into the habit of asking your kids before you post pictures of them so they get the idea that their privacy is valuable.

## What should I do if...

### My child made a bad choice about someone else's privacy?

Just like bullying, if your child made a bad choice with someone's privacy the most important thing is to make it right. Help them understand that we all make mistakes that need to be fixed sometime.

The first step is to limit the harm by deleting whatever it was that was shared and to have your child ask other friends to delete it too. You should also encourage your child to apologize to the person they hurt.



### A photo of my child was shared without their consent?

First of all, don't blame your kids for sending the photo in the first place: make sure they know they have your support; this will encourage your child to come to you if something like this happens again. Next, they can start by **asking the person who shared the photo to take it down or stop sharing it**. Kids report that this works more often than not!

If that doesn't work, ask the service or platform where it was shared to take it down. If your child is under 18, they may be required by law to take it down, but most have a policy of taking down any photos that were shared without the subject's permission. To make sure the picture hasn't spread, do a reverse image search with a service like TinEye ([www.tineye.com](http://www.tineye.com)) or Google (<https://support.google.com/websearch/answer/1325808?hl=en>). If it has spread, find out where else it's been posted and ask them to take it down.

If the picture that was shared was intimate (even if it didn't involve nudity) you may want to talk to a lawyer, report it to CyberTip ([www.cybertip.ca/app/en/report](http://www.cybertip.ca/app/en/report)) or contact the police: it's a criminal offense "to share intimate images without the consent of the person in the image." Besides charging the person who shared it, the police have the power to force someone to take down and stop spreading the image. If it is your child who sent the original sext, it's important to know that no youth in Canada have ever been charged for sending a sext of themselves, so it's very unlikely that your child will be charged.

## I want to keep a closer eye on what my child is doing online?

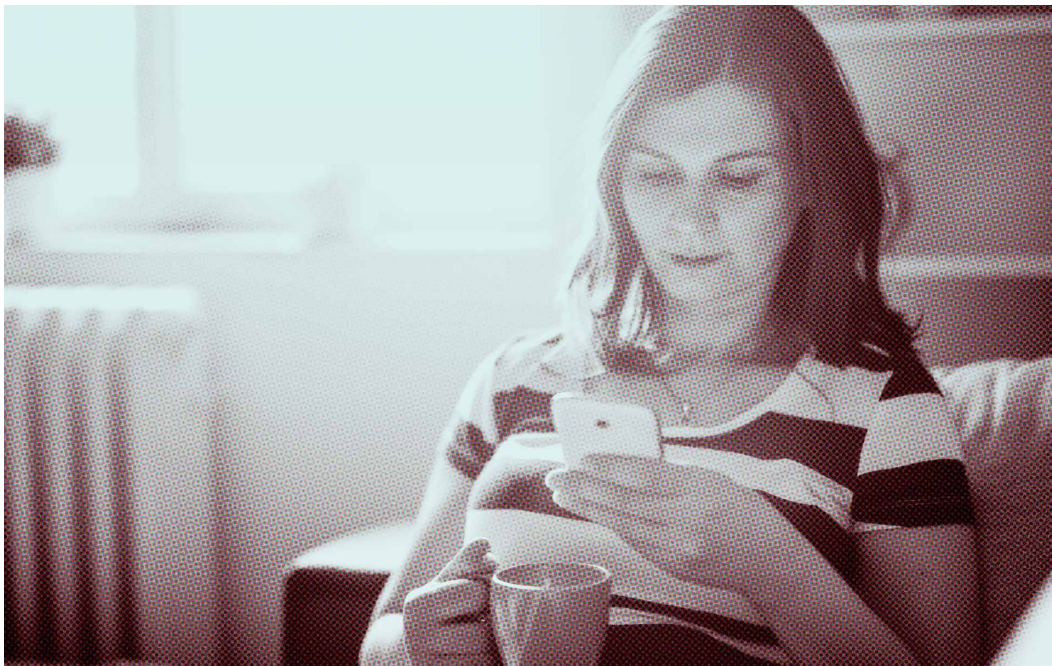
It's natural to want to know more about what your kids are doing online to protect their safety, but you should resist the urge to install "spy" or monitoring software for a number of reasons:

- it sends a bad message about privacy
- it may push kids to use the internet in unsupervised places
- and it makes them less likely to come to you if something goes wrong.

If you do decide to use software, be open about it: tell your child why you think it's important (for instance, if they have made some bad decisions) and how they can earn your trust. Instead of spying, you can use the **parental controls** on your browser, search engine, and the games your kids play to block out most inappropriate content.

The same is true for social networks. It may surprise you, but kids say they actually want their parents to interact with them more on social media! You can be a part of their online social lives by "liking" the cool, positive, creative things they post. Keep in mind, though, while it's okay to check in from time to time, your kids don't want you in the middle of their conversations with their friends.

While teens want privacy from their parents, they also generally agree that their parents should be able to access their online accounts in an emergency. When they first join a social network ask your kids to put their login info into a safe place like a piggy bank, so that you can see what's going on if you think you really need to.



## When should I...

### Let my child join a social network?

Most social networks require users to be at least 13 to have an account. If you let your kids join before that, be aware that you're **violating the terms of service** — which may be a problem if you ever have to make a complaint — and that if they lie about their age they may not get the protections that are there for users under 18.

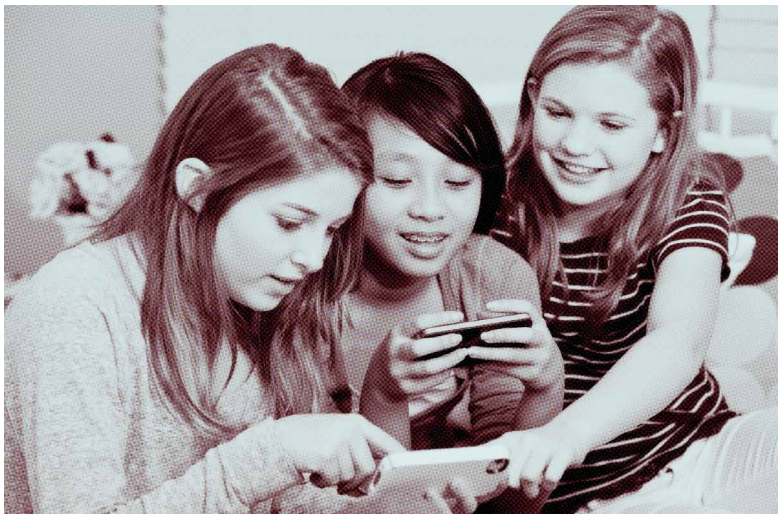
JOIN

Your kids probably won't want to join just **one** social network, though, so here are some good questions for when they ask you to let them join a new one:

- Why do you want to use it?
- What do you like about it?
- Who would you use it to connect with?
- Who do you know that's already on it?
- How can you control who can connect with you?
- How can you control who sees what you post on it?
- What can you do if somebody sees or shares something you didn't want them to?
- What can you do if someone is bothering you or being mean to you?

### Let my child have a smartphone?

There's no right or wrong answer to this question. What's important to remember is that it's much harder to supervise your children when they're accessing the internet on a mobile device, so you should only let them have a smartphone if you already feel that they know and are going to follow your family's online rules. If you do let them, you'll also want to set some new rules about where and when it can be used: for example, you can insist that phones be placed in their chargers in the kitchen at bedtime.



# Respect for Property



## How do I talk about...

### Illegal downloading?

So much stuff that's online is free, it's easy for kids to think that *everything* is free – or to make sure that the person who's offering it has permission from the owner. Remind your kids that artists own the work they create a work and have a right to earn money from it.

**YOU CAN SAY:** *If something looks "too good to be true", it probably is. No legitimate website will show recent TV shows or movies that are still in the theatre without charging for them.*



### Plagiarism?

Some people call today's kids the "cut and paste" generation because it's so easy for them to copy anything they find online. As soon as they start using the internet for research, make sure they know that copying anything, even a single sentence, can be plagiarism if they don't say where it came from. When they're doing projects, help them keep a record of all the sources they've used and to keep their different sources straight.

**For kids under age ten**, ask simple questions like:

- ▲ Do you know how to show when you are using someone else's words?
- ▲ What if someone took a picture you drew and copied it and started selling it? How would that make you feel? Would that be fair?

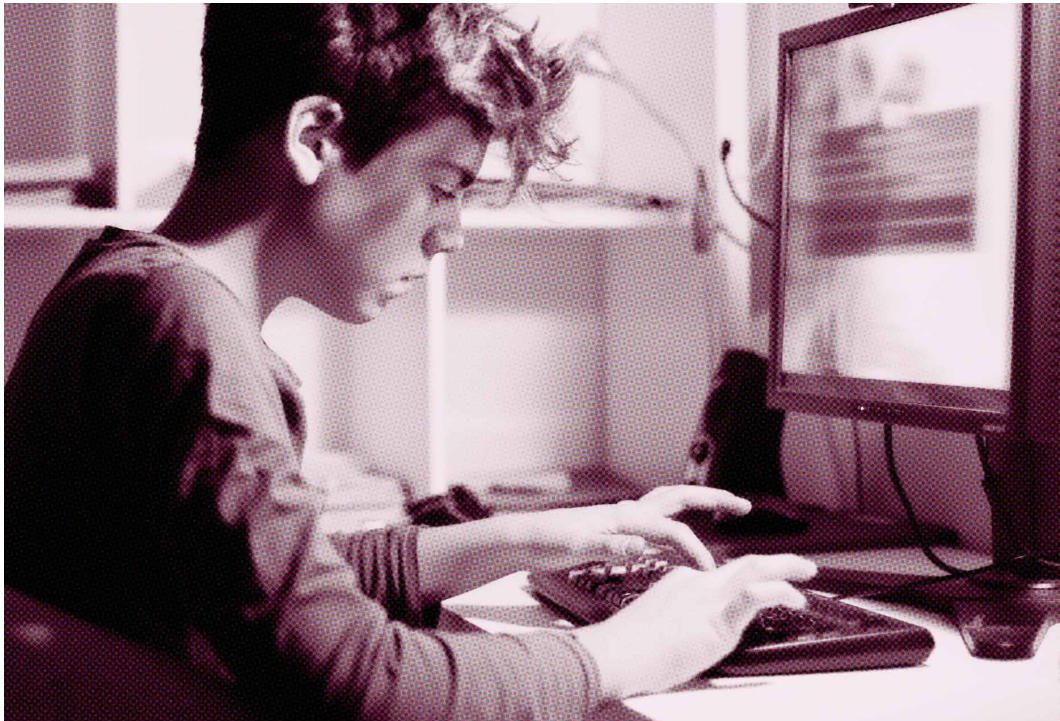
**For tweens and teens**, ask them what they would do in a situation like this:

You're finishing an essay due in the morning when you discover that you didn't record the source for one of your most important quotes. You'll have to use all the time you have left to try to find where it came from.

- ▲ Should you leave the quote out, even though it will weaken your argument and probably lower your grade, or give a fake source?
- ▲ What might happen if everybody did that?
- ▲ What right does the author of the quote have to be recognized for her work?

## Illegal hacking?

A child's talent for computer programming can take them a long way, but sometimes it's in the wrong direction. "Hacking" can range from finding ways to get past a school's internet filters all the way to breaking into government computer systems. There's nothing wrong with the skills they learn doing that, but kids need to know that **people — including them — can be hurt by hacking.**





Members of hacker groups often compete to do more and more extreme stunts. That can make kids forget that real people can be affected, and raise the risk that someone's privacy might be breached or that they might get in trouble. If you think your teen might be involved in hacking, or has shown skills in computer security, you can get them to positively channel this expertise through "white hat" hacking competitions like Hack the North (<https://hackthenorth.com/>) which can also teach them valuable skills for cyber-defence.

## How do I...

### Help my child access legitimate content?

Kids are a lot less likely to download from illegal sources if they're able to get what they want easily and legitimately. Follow these links to find Canadian sources of music, TV and movies online:

<http://musiccanada.com/digital-music/>

<http://pro-music.org/legal-music-services-north-america.php>

<http://www.wheretowatchincanada.ca/home/>

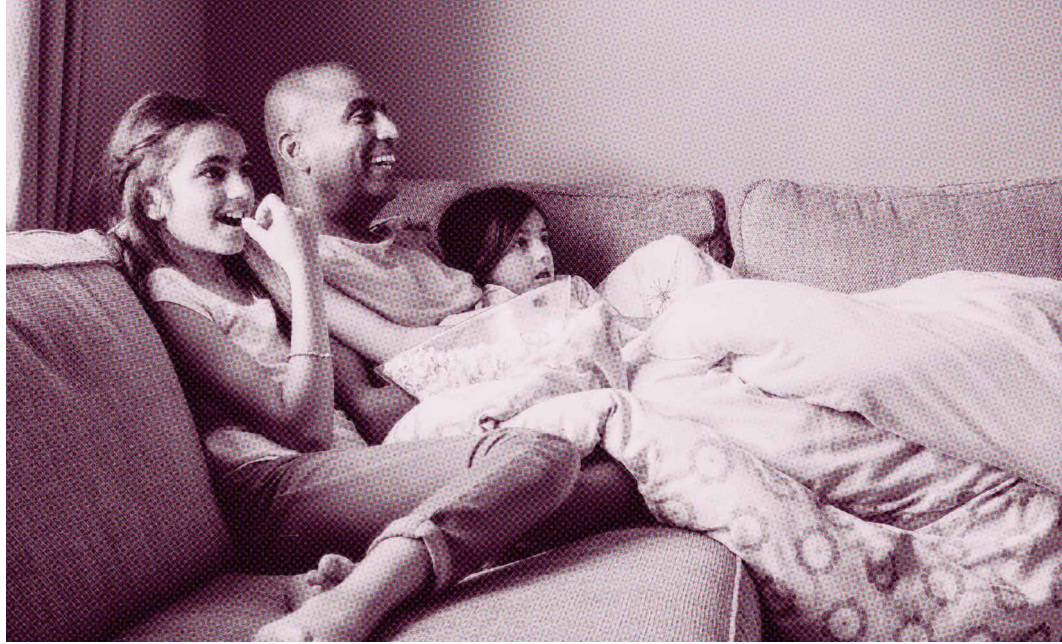
### Protect my family's digital devices?

Before anyone in your family uses a digital device, you should make sure that it has security software installed. Make sure to update the software every now and then, since it only works against threats it knows about: one way to help you remember is to do this every year when you set the clocks forward in the spring and back in the fall. You should update your internet browsers regularly as well, and of course, make sure that every device is protected with a password or personal identification number (PIN).

## What should I do if...

### We get a copyright infringement notice?

Under Canadian copyright law, your internet Service Provider has to let you know if a copyright owner believes you – or someone in your home – illegally downloaded content belonging to them. If that happens, you'll get an email from your ISP which includes an email from the copyright holder, or someone working for them. These emails sometimes include a demand that you pay a settlement, but the notice does not mean you **must** pay. Industry Canada has said that "receiving a notice does not necessarily mean that you have in fact infringed copyright or that you will be sued for copyright infringement" and "there is no obligation for Canadians to pay these settlements" when you receive the notice. You may want to consult a lawyer to consider your legal options.



If you get a notice because your kids have been illegally downloading online content, be clear with them that this **has to stop**. (This is one case where it may make sense to cut off their internet access for a time since that motivates kids to stop illegal downloading more than anything else.) If you haven't done so already, explain to them that they're putting the family at risk of fines up to \$5000 for illegal downloading and that they're hurting the creators of the media they enjoy, too.

### **My child's teacher says an assignment was plagiarized?**

It can be a shock to find out your child has plagiarized an assignment, but there are ways to make it into a "teachable moment":

1. Make sure that your child understands what they did wrong, and work with their teacher to write an **academic honesty plan**.
2. Think about the messages you're sending. Students are most likely to plagiarize when they don't feel like an assignment is fair, when they don't have enough time to do it, or if their teachers or parents send the message that grades are more important than hard work. When your kids start doing more difficult assignments for school, make sure that they understand what their task is and feel confident they can do it. Help them plan out a schedule to make sure they can get it done in time and tell them that it's more important to get a B honestly than to cheat your way to an A.

# Negotiating Household Internet Rules

With younger kids, it makes sense to just explain the rules you expect them to follow. Here are some examples of rules that might make sense in your home:

- I will not visit any websites that I think my parents would not approve of.
- I won't share my passwords with anyone (except my parents or a trusted adult) – not even my best friend.
- I will not be mean or cruel to anyone online, even if someone else is mean to me first.
- If I ever get mad while I'm online, I will let myself cool down before I say or do anything.
- I will not share anything online that belongs to someone else without their permission.
- I will not buy things online unless I have my parents' permission.
- I will never share any personal information about myself, such as my age, where I live, and where I go to school.

As kids get older, though, they're a lot more likely to follow rules if they've been involved in making them. Rules are also likely to change as they want more privacy (though even teenagers say their parents are a big part of their lives, both online and offline.)

Before you renegotiate rules, ask them some questions to find out which of the old rules have stuck in their mind:

- Do you feel like you know what things we expect you to do, and not do when you're online?
- Do you know what to do if things go really wrong?

It's also important to understand the new spaces they're exploring, and what's exciting about them.

**YOU CAN SAY:** *Show me some cool things you or your friends are doing online, or with social networks.*

Now you can ask your child to suggest things that they think you should definitely NOT do online. It's best if most of the rules come from them, but you can prompt them to think of areas they hadn't considered, like sharing passwords or downloading.

Make sure they understand that the result of these new rules is **trust**: if you know that they understand and will follow the rules you've negotiated together, you'll be able to trust them more.

# MediaSmarts Resources

For more information about the specific topics in this guide, check out these materials from MediaSmarts:

## For Parents

### Introduction

Co-Viewing With Your Kids

<http://mediasmarts.ca/teacher-resources/co-viewing-your-kids-tip-sheet>

### Respect Feelings

Online Sexual Exploitation: Who is at Risk?

<http://mediasmarts.ca/teacher-resources/online-sexual-exploitation-who-risk>

Parents' Guide to Cyberbullying

<http://mediasmarts.ca/teacher-resources/parents%E2%80%99-guide-cyberbullying>

Promoting Ethical Behaviours With Your Kids

<http://mediasmarts.ca/tipsheet/promoting-ethical-online-behaviours-your-kids>

### Respect Privacy

Protecting Your Privacy on Commercial Websites

<http://mediasmarts.ca/tipsheet/protecting-your-privacy-commercial-websites-tip-sheet>

Talking To Your Kids About Sexting

<http://mediasmarts.ca/tipsheet/talking-your-kids-about-sexting-%E2%80%94-tip-sheet>

### Respect Property

Cyber Security Consumer Tipsheet

<http://mediasmarts.ca/tipsheet/cyber-security-consumer-tip-sheet>

Getting the Goods Ethically

<http://mediasmarts.ca/tipsheet/getting-goods-ethically>

### Family Rules

Family Online Rules

<http://mediasmarts.ca/tipsheet/family-online-rules-tip-sheet>

Social Media Rules

<http://mediasmarts.ca/tipsheet/social-media-rules>

## For Kids

### Respect Feelings

Impact! How to Make a Difference When You Witness Bullying Online

<http://impact.mediasmarts.ca/en>

Be Respectful, Patient and Kind

<http://mediasmarts.ca/be-respectful-patient-kind-how-youth-are-building-better-world-online>

First, Do No Harm: How to be an Active Witness

<http://mediasmarts.ca/teacher-resources/first-do-no-harm-how-be-active-witness-tip-sheet>

What to Do if Someone is Mean to You Online

<http://mediasmarts.ca/teacher-resources/what-do-if-someone-mean-you-online-tip-sheet>

### Respect Privacy

Think Before You Share

<http://mediasmarts.ca/tipsheet/think-you-share>

Building Your Brand: Establishing a Positive Presence Online

<http://mediasmarts.ca/tipsheet/building-your-brand-establishing-positive-presence-online-tip-sheet>

### Respect Property

Do The Right Thing

<http://mediasmarts.ca/teacher-resources/do-right-thing-tip-sheet>

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