

PROTECTING YOUR ONLINE REP

SPEAKING NOTES FOR GRADES 9 TO 12 PRESENTATION/SECONDARY III TO V IN QUEBEC

SLIDE (1) Title Slide

SLIDE (2) Key Points

- This presentation deals with any kind of information you put on online. It relates to e-mails, texts, social networking and the sharing of pictures and videos.

SUBTITLE SLIDE (3) – WHAT WE’RE TALKING ABOUT TODAY

SLIDE (4) Key Points

- Canadian teens are communicating more online than ever before.
- It’s a great way to keep in touch and stay connected with your friends.
- But, for all the benefits, communicating online can also pose risks to your privacy.
- This presentation talks about the impact of some online activities on privacy, and how you can control the risk.

Note to presenter: The next two pictures demonstrate how the world has changed with the rapid advancement of technology.

SLIDE (5) Key Points

➡ 1. No time to think!

- Nowadays, it takes only seconds to snap a photo and post it to the Internet. It takes but a few seconds to post a comment.
- But it can be nearly impossible to permanently delete a photo or comment once it’s posted.
- **This is why it’s so important to think before you click. Think twice about every piece of information before you post it on the Internet, because once it’s up there it can be impossible to take down.**

Class discussion topic:

Sometimes a funny photo that you take on a Saturday night doesn't seem as funny on Monday. But since it can take just a couple of clicks to share that picture with hundreds of people, it's so much easier to post it than to think about it first.

If on Monday you think, "Oh, I shouldn't have put that there!" it's probably too late. The pictures may by then have been spread around to everybody.

SLIDE (6) Key Points

➔ 2. Shaping your online rep

- You spend a lot of time to shape your physical appearance and how you want people to see you and think of you. Let's call that your physical or real-world reputation.
- Once you have an online presence—a place to share photos or videos and post comments—you also have an *online* reputation.
- Unlike your physical reputation, your online rep precedes you and follows you wherever you go. Social networking allows people to check each other out before they ever meet them.
- Managing your online reputation is just as important as managing your physical reputation.

Class discussion topic:

Are you familiar with "creeping"?

This is when somebody who is not on your "friends" list looks at your online photos and comments. Of course, they can only do that if your online presence is fairly public. The trouble with creeping is that people can look at you and pass judgement, even if they don't know you. Worst of all, you have no idea they're doing it!

SUBTITLE SLIDE (7) – THERE ARE LOTS OF BENEFITS TO COMMUNICATING ONLINE

SLIDE (8) Key Points

- There are lots of benefits to communicating online, and we all do it. But the important thing is to understand what's going on, and to take the right steps to protect our privacy.

SLIDE (9) Key Points

➔ Putting your online rep to work for you

“When it comes down to it, your digital identity can either mean scoring an awesome job or heading for the hamburger stand.”

- Think about this quote. The point is not that the hamburger stand is a bad thing; a job is a job.
- The point is that you want to keep your options open.
- If you think about your online reputation and use social networking and other online tools in a thoughtful way, and if you post things that you are OK with anybody seeing, your choices and options will stay open.
- Your online identity is a reflection of how people see you. If you manage it right, you will be able to choose whether to work at the hamburger stand, the elementary school, the hospital or anywhere else. You won't be limiting yourself or closing doors.

SLIDE (10) Key Points

➔ Being part of the community

- Here's another example of how social networking can be used in a positive way.
- Let's say someone you know gets into an accident or some other type of trouble. Maybe they don't have insurance, or enough money.
- You put up a page on a site like Facebook and awareness can spread quickly. Substantial amounts of money can pour in. It's a great way to get an important message out.

Class discussion topic:

Remember, however, that an appeal like this can be a scam. You should never assume that everything you see online is true. Do your research before donating money online. Make sure the story is true. Make sure the mechanism used to collect the funds is legit. You can do this by phoning the organizers of the page.

SUBTITLE SLIDE (11) – ARE THERE RISKS IN COMMUNICATING ONLINE?

SLIDE (12) Key Points

- Yes, but not everyone sees the risks the same way.
- People of different ages, cultural backgrounds or social norms may see things in different ways. We will discuss this.

SLIDE (13) Key Points

- The point is that if you understand what's going on, YOU can be in the driver's seat. That's what privacy is, in a nutshell. It's about preserving your ability to control your own personal information.
- You can take steps to minimize the risks, control what people see about you and safeguard your privacy.

SLIDE (14) Key Points

➔ Topic #1: *What you post on the Internet is not private*

- Let's admit it: Not too many people read privacy policies. But if you did, you might be surprised to discover that the stuff you post on some of your favourite social networking sites is totally "unprivate".

SLIDE (15) Key Points

- For example, consider this line from the privacy policy of one of the most popular social networking sites out there right now:
- "We cannot guarantee that only authorized persons will view your information. We cannot ensure that information you share. . . will not become publicly available."
- This means that, even if you have restricted your privacy settings, this particular social networking site can't guarantee that only your "friends" will actually see your personal information.
- It's the same with e-mail or anything else you post anywhere on the Internet: just because you send an e-mail to one person doesn't mean it's going to stay with that one person.
- This is because sometimes things you post can be copied, pasted and transmitted anywhere else on the Internet. Sometimes they can also be saved onto hard drives, printed out, or e-mailed to anyone else.
- So if you decide, 15 minutes later, or next week, to take down an embarrassing picture or comment, it might be too late.

Class discussion topic: Two real-life examples

1. Last year, a teen at a Canadian high school e-mailed a personal photo of herself to her best friend. It was a highly personal photo and it was clear that she didn't want it shared. Later, the two girls got in a big fight. The second girl printed a bunch of copies of the photo and taped them all over the school the next day.
2. A few years ago, there was an American sports reporter, a woman in her 20s. She was in a hotel room, changing her clothes, and there was a creepy guy in a tree outside her room, taking photos. He posted naked photos of the woman on the Internet. She sued him, and the organizations that posted the pictures, and they had to be taken down. But, even after the lawsuit, she says the photos continue to circulate online. She was quoted as saying something to the effect of "This is my life now. I'm a sports reporter and that's a hard profession to make a name in when you're female. And when I Google my name, these are the pictures that come up."

SLIDE (16) Key Points

➔ So, what can you do?

- Remember that what you put on the Internet is not private. If you have an online presence, remember that people are looking at it. Those people may not be your friends. You may not even know they exist.
- If you post only things that you're OK with anyone seeing, then you can be confident that you are using online tools in a positive way.
- Think before you click! These next three slides illustrate what we mean by that:

SLIDE (17) Key Points

➔ Think before you click!

- Let's assume that the girls in this picture really like the photo. They feel they look good and had a great time that evening.
- Let's also assume that they are happy to show the picture to their real-life friends.
- But what happens when they post it online?
- Think of the words "public" and "permanent."
- Public means that once you post something online, it can be spread around to any number of people, without you knowing it.
- Permanent means that, even if you delete it, you can't be sure it's gone for good because it might have been posted elsewhere or printed out.

SLIDE (18) Key Points

➔ Think before you click!

- Here's another one to get you thinking.
- This is an example of a photo that might seem pretty funny on Saturday night. By Monday, it's probably not funny at all for the girl, and maybe not for the guy either. One or both of them will probably regret having posted it online.
- Unfortunately, by the time they realize their mistake, it's way too late.
- Again, it's important to think before you click. If you post pictures of friends, be responsible.
- Remember, everything you post is public and permanent.

SLIDE (19) Key Points

➔ Think before you click!

- Here's what you ought to think about when you look at this photo:
- Pretend that social networking sites existed 30 years ago, and you could go home tonight and find this photo online. Who are the people in it? Your mom and dad.

- Permanent means that the photos you are posting now will still be around for years in the future.

SLIDE (20) Key Points

➔ Restrict your privacy settings!

- There is something else you can do to better control who can see your personal information—at least initially.
- You can do this simply by restricting your privacy settings.
- Every social networking site has privacy settings and you can use them to control who sees what you post. It could be everyone, or you can restrict it to specific groups and individuals.
- You should also check your settings every so often. Some sites change them and you may not realize it.
- But always remember that whatever control you have, it's only at the front end. If a friend copies your picture and sends it around to other people, there's nothing you can do to stop it.

Class discussion topic:

Pretend there's a technical glitch and suddenly your privacy settings are wide open for a whole day. Anyone can see your online profile. How would you feel? What would you do?

SLIDE (21) Key Points

➔ Topic #2: It's important to know who your friends are

"A 'friend' of a 'friend' of a real-life friend is really just a stranger."

- Think about the word 'friend' and what it really means. So many people add just about anyone to their online friends list—even people they've never met.
- When you post something, you may be thinking of your closest circle of friends. You may forget about the wider group you might have given access to.
- But even those distant "friends" can access your online photo albums, read your personal comments, know what you're doing, where you are, and maybe even see your wider list of friends.
- That's a goldmine of information, and they can do what they want with it!
- Even if all your friends know somebody, as long as you've never met them, they're still a stranger to you!

SLIDE (22) Key Points

- This slide illustrates how the meaning of the word “friends” can be different in the online world.
- A few years ago, Burger King had this application on Facebook. The way it worked was if you “unfriended” 10 people you would get an e-mail for a free Whopper.
- Not only that, but those 10 people would get an e-mail from you saying “so-and-so has unfriended you for a hamburger”!
- Burger King was forced to take this app down.

Class discussion topic:

The meaning of the word “friends” can be different in the online world. In real life, would you go up to a friend and say, “I’m not your friend anymore so that I can get a free burger”?

SLIDE (23) Key Points

➔ So, what can you do?

- Know who your friends are and delete anyone on your friends list if you’ve never met or communicated with them in real life.

SLIDE (24) Key Points

➔ Topic #3: Sexting

- Sexting means sending sexually explicit photographs or messages online, typically by a mobile device.
- Depending on the image and the situation, sexting can even result in criminal charges.
- Also, think about the emotional or reputational damage that can come from having intimate photos of yourself go to a friend who can become an ex-friend and forward them to everyone you know.
- Remember that such photos can be widely shared and remain online forever.

SLIDE (25) Key Points

➔ So, what can you do?

- This one is easy – don’t do it. The risks and consequences are just too great. Don’t send sexual messages or images across the Internet!

SLIDE (26) Key Points

➔ Topic #4: Geo-location

- Most newer-model smartphones have an option, called geo-tagging. It can reveal your location. When you take a photo with your mobile device, your picture can also be tagged with the location.
- When you tweet or use certain applications, anybody you're communicating with can know where you are. When you post your geo-tagged photo, people will know where you were when you snapped it.
- Who can know your location? It could be friends and family. It could also be teachers, ex-boyfriends or girlfriends—and, of course, complete strangers.

SLIDE (27) Key Points

➔ So, what can you do?

- Geo-location applications can be fun and useful.
- But make sure you understand what is happening to this important piece of your personal information.
- Think carefully before you tell the world exactly where you are at all times.

SLIDE (28) Key Points

➔ Topic #5: Cyber-bullying

- The Internet magnifies and escalates bullying. If you have something to say to somebody, say it to their face; don't post nasty or anonymous comments online.

SLIDE (29) Key Points

- Here's an example: A woman had a 15-year-old daughter. They lived next to another teenager. The two girls got in a fight and the woman opened a fake account on a social networking site, using the face and name of a boy at the school.
- The woman used this phoney account to bully the girl next door. She sent her messages like "We hate you" and "No one wants you at this school."
- The victim of this bullying ended up committing suicide.

SLIDE (30) Key Points

➔ So, what can you do?

- Cyber-bullying is a very serious issue. Report it if it happens to you, or if you see it happening to someone else. And don't do it yourself.

SLIDE (31) Key Points

➔ Topic #6: Online impersonation

- People can, and sometimes do, pretend to be other people online.
- The case of the mother we just talked about is an example of this.
- Another example: there were two boys at a Canadian high school who were really good friends.
- One day one started sending mean e-mails to the other, and posting nasty messages on his social networking site.
- The second student finally called the other and asked what was going on.
- His friend told him he hadn't been on the computer all day.
- Someone had hacked into his accounts and was trying to cause trouble.

SLIDE (32) Key Points

➔ So, what can you do?

- Once again, know who your friends are. If you have people on your friends lists who really aren't your friends, how do you know they are who they say they are?
- Prevent people from hacking into your online accounts. Keep your passwords to yourself and use different ones for different accounts. And don't make them too easy.
- If a friend is acting strange online, pick up the phone and find out what's really going on.

SLIDE (33) Key Points

➔ Topic #7: Online snooping

- People sometimes use social networking sites to "snoop" on others. It can be a way for employers, institutions and others to do a little freelance investigative work. We're not saying it's right, but it does happen.

SLIDE (34) Key Points

- This article talks about how Oxford University was using students' Facebook pages to try to find out who was behind specific infractions on campus. Some students were sent fines on the basis of these investigations.
- We see examples of employers and educational institutions using social networking sites to monitor employees and students, both prospective and current.
- Regardless of how you might feel about this practice, it's important to recognize it is happening.

SLIDE (35) Key Points

➔ So, what can you do?

- Once again, only post things that anybody should be able to see.

SUBTITLE SLIDE (36): SOME EXAMPLES OF REAL-LIFE MISTAKES

- Many people—regardless of age—don't understand how fast a simple e-mail or post can become really public, really fast.

SLIDE (37) Key Points

➔ Lapse of judgement

- A principal in British Columbia, went on a beach holiday and e-mailed a naked photo of himself to the mom of one of the kids at his school. Bad idea. She shared it with others and he lost his job.
- He was ultimately reinstated.
- Still, it shows that people can forget just how different things are in the online world.

SLIDE (38) Key Points

➔ Lapse of judgement

- A 26-year-old man in an airport in London, England, pulled out his mobile device and tweeted: "If my plane is delayed I'm going to blow this place up!"
- He said he was kidding, but Twitter is public and people didn't know he was joking. He was arrested, banned from flying, and had to prove he wasn't a terrorist.
- What you say in real life can be taken in a totally different context when you write it online.

SLIDE (39) Key points

➔ Lapse of judgement

- Sites like Craigslist or Kijiji, where you can sell and buy things like used iPods and skateboards, can also be used to identify targets for theft.
- This is a story of a woman who put thousands of dollars of jewellery up for sale online—along with her address.
- The wrong people saw this, stole her jewellery and beat her up.
- You have to be careful about the information that you post.
- If you have something to sell, create a generic e-mail account and have people contact you that way.

SUBTITLE SLIDE (40) IN CONCLUSION...

SLIDE (41) Key points

- Think before you click!
- Know who your friends are
- Tighten your privacy settings
- Avoid disclosing your location
- Don't share your password and change it regularly
- Trust your instincts
- Understand new features such as geo-tagging before you try them
- Be aware of your online reputation
- Protect your privacy, as well as that of your friends
- Be discreet

SLIDE (42) Key Points

- This presentation was produced by the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada (OPC). The Office supports the Privacy Commissioner, who is an independent agent of Parliament.
- OPC's mission is to protect and promote the privacy rights of Canadians.
- The presentation is based on research and discussions with youth about online privacy.
- For more information about online privacy, visit the OPC's website for young people, youthprivacy.ca

RESOURCES

TEXTING

<http://www.texted.ca/app/en/>

SEXTING

<http://www.common sense media.org/talking-about-sexting>

CYBERBULLYING

<http://www.stopcyberbullying.org/>

<http://www.cyberbullying.ca>

<http://kidshelpphone.ca/Teens/InfoBooth/Bullying/Cyberbullying.aspx>

<http://deal.org/the-knowzone/internet-safety/cyberbullying/>

ONLINE SAFETY

<http://www.bewebaware.ca/>

<http://www.mediasmarts.ca/>