Cybersecurity & Digital Citizenship

Mineral Wells ISD's Stance on Cybersecurity & Digital Citizenship

Mineral Wells ISD seeks to bring awareness to our students, families, and community about internet safety. In 2022, the State Board of Education gave final approval to revised TEKS for technology applications grades K-8th, which are scheduled to be implemented beginning with the 2024–2025 school year. The revised TEKS consist of the following Digital Citizenship strands:

- Digital Citizenship- social interactions
- Digital Citizenship- ethics and laws
- Digital Citizenship- privacy, safety, and security

Cybersecurity is an umbrella term that relates closely to Digital Citizenship. Cybersecurity is the act of protecting networks, devices, and data from unauthorized access or criminal use, as well as the practice of ensuring confidentiality, integrity, and availability of information. Digital Citizenship refers to the responsible use of digital technology by anyone who uses the internet. Digital Citizenship covers topics such as privacy and security, property (including copyright law), media balance, and one's personal digital footprint.

Digital Citizenship

According to the 2019 Common Sense Census: Media Used by Tweens and Teens U.S. Survey, on average, tweens (ages 8-12) in this country use just under five hours' worth of entertainment screen-media per day (4:44), and teens (ages 13-18) use an average of just under seven and a half hours' worth (7:22)—not including time spent using screens for school or homework per day.

The percent of young people who say they watch online videos "every day" has more than doubled among both age groups, going from 24% to 56% among tweens, and from 34% to 69% among teens.

Smartphone ownership has also risen dramatically, even among the youngest tweens. In fact, nearly one in five 8-year olds (19%) now have their own smartphone, an increase from 11% in 2015. Smartphone ownership has grown substantially over the past four years among all ages, increasing from 24% of all tweens in 2015 to 41% in 2019, and from 67% to 84% among teens.

With these staggering numbers, it is more important than ever to teach our children what it means to be a good digital citizen.

Privacy & Security

How strong is your password? Are you using personally identifiable information (PII)? Keep your password safe using the tips below.

- A strong password should have 10 characters or more
- Include a combination of letters, numbers, and symbols
- Do not use Personally Identifiable Information for a password, e.g., family member's name, phone number, pet's name, etc.
- Do not save your password to the device

Digital Footprint & Identity

A digital footprint is a record or trail left by the things we do online. Your social media activity, the info on your personal website, browsing history, uploaded photos, and more can tell the world about you. Our digital footprint can impact our future. What we post or put out to the world allows others to view how they see or feel about us. A digital footprint stays with you and can never be deleted. Here are some tips to use while online:

- Communicate respectfully
- Think before you post a picture online while tagging your geolocation
- Do not post personal information (name, age, school, address, phone number)
- Know that sending is like publishing- forever
- Perform a search on yourself every so often to see what your digital footprint looks like

Intellectual Property

Do you know who owns the copyright to the work you find online? We live in a digital culture where access to written work, publications, and images are at our fingertips. The ease of being able to access this information, use it, and/or share it can lead us to not think about where it comes from or whom it belongs to. This can lead to problems of copyright infringement, plagiarism, and piracy. Be digitally responsible by following some of the tips below:

- Check who owns the material
- Get permission to use it
- Give credit to the creator by referencing the author, title of video, article, picture, and website
- Use it responsibly

Media Balance

How can we make sure to find the right balance of screen time? Here are some tips and tricks from Common Sense Media:

- Find balance. Instead of counting daily screen-time minutes, aim for a balance throughout the week. Create a plan that includes options for things they have to do on a device (schoolwork) and options for things without a device.
- Walk the walk. Put your device away while driving, at mealtimes, and during important conversations.
- Create tech-free zones. Set rules that fit your family, such as "no devices during dinner," "no social media during homework," or "all devices in the parent's room before bedtime."

What is Cybersecurity? | CISA." 14 Nov. 2019, https://us-cert.cisa.gov/ncas/tips/ST04-001. Accessed 22 Apr. 2021. "(2019). The Common Sense census: Media use by tweens and teens." https://www.commonsensemedia.org/sites/default/files/uploads/research/2019-census-8-to-18-full-report-updated.pdf. Accessed 23 Apr. 2021.

"5 Simple Steps to a Healthy Family Media Diet | Common Sense ...." https://www.commonsensemedia.org/blog/5-simple-steps-to-a-healthy-family-media-diet. Accessed 27 Apr. 2021.