

Nine elements of digital citizenship impact on today's students

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## NINE ELEMENTS OF DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP 2

The world of Generation X has changed (Rosenberg, 2018). That childhood was spent getting up at 7:00 so that cartoons could be viewed before school or breakfast at the table before racing outside to find someone to play with until mom called for a quick lunch and then back out until the street lights came on. On school days a little tv watching before homework. Brady Bunch, Gilligan's Island, the Munsters or the Addams Family had a lesson wrapped up in a half hour. Then family dinner at the dining room table conversation about the day. Bedtime was strict and really no big deal because what was there to do when the lights were out. Today, the lives of 5th and 6th graders are much different. Waking up in the morning is harder because watching YouTube videos or Netflix on the tablet hours into the night keeps them awake. Playing with others isn't outside, it's in the living room, but the living room is empty beside the player one. The others are in at their house with speakers and headsets. This change is not wrong, it is just different. Parents, teachers and community members need to adjust and meet the new generation where they are. Technology went from the office and work and landed in the laps of everyday life. Technology options exploded, the digital society needs rules and norms. The digital society need to develop and shared the rules and norms with the students and the public. Ribble broke the rule and norms for digital citizenship into nine elements (Ribble, 2018). Lessons learned from watching the Brady Bunch and the other afternoon sitcoms can be reused and updated when sorting out the nine elements. Mr. and Mrs. Brady, Alice, Morticia, Herman and Lily were kind to others and always keep a close eye on their children. Teaching kindness and values, the mantra for teaching the nine elements of digital citizenship should be Dude Be Nice!

### **Balancing individual empowerment with digital health**

## NINE ELEMENTS OF DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP 3

Each of the nine elements has an importance of their own, but none of stand-alone The elements intertwine and link to each other. Students are often told about the difference between school life and home life. Behaviors that are accepted at home and not ones that can be allowed at school. Chocolate milk in boxers on the couch, ok at home. Chocolate milk with a straw, sitting at the lunch table, ok at school. But in terms of digital citizenship, cyber security and responsible use of technology home, friend's house, work, and school there is only one way to behave. Students' cyber lives need character education that are proactive and aggressive (Ohler, 2012). The nine elements of digital citizenship have been broken down into themes that can be used to start teaching students the basic ideas (Ribble, 2015). Respect, Educate, and Protect (REPs). Starting the REPs as students start to use electronic devices and continuing through their lives, each digital citizen should understand the basic ideas of digital citizenship.

**Respect yourself/ respect others.** Digital etiquette, digital access and digital law and the elements that R in REPs. R stands for respect. Teaching students to respect themselves and others in the digital world. Digital etiquette is communicating clearly, respectfully and with empathy. If you can't say anything nice don't say anything at all. Do not type, video, share if the information going out with having a positive effect. The lesson of a digital tattoo must be realized with digital etiquette. What a student comments in the digital world, a post, a picture and comment will be around until the end of time. There is no way to erase it. Kevin Hart a comedian stepped down from hosting the Oscars after homophobic tweets surfaced (Holcombe & Sutton, 2018). The tweets from ten years ago haunt him now. This is just one example of so many in the news recently about the fate of a comment made coming to light years later. Digital collection makes this possible. Digital access is the next part of respect. Digital access is the accessibility for all citizens to become digital citizens. Can a student, a parent a community member gets

access to the world wide web? If internet is not available in a home, where can a student get service so that he has the same ability to get his homework done. This may be getting a list of places that has free wi-fi or getting hot spots for students to use at home, leveling the playing field for all. Access is also net neutrality. The same money can buy the same speed and access. One company should not be allowed to control what a person sees when using a certain internet service. The last part of the respect in REPs is digital law. Electronic responsibility for actions and deeds that deal with the issues in an online world. Cyberbullying takes place in the digital world, the world that a teenager or preteen rarely lets a parent or guardian in. This bully needs to be aware of digital laws. The cyber laws need be to clear and concise, just as they are in the non cyber world. Parents, community and law enforcement need to work together to create and share the laws and enforce them. As the world changes to include an online version etiquette, access and laws to adjust and promote positive uses for digital content. If the things we say and do in the digital world is permanent, permanent as a tattoo - we need to be make sure that the tattoo is a positive one.

**Educate yourself/ connect with others.** Digital communication, digital literacy, digital commerce are the elements that represent the E of REPs. E is for educate. Digital communication lets the quietest voice be heard with digital clicks. For this reason, teaching and advocating for the use of technology in a school district must continue. Students that are silent in a round table discussion, or never speak up in around the world math facts or get picked last in PE because they have made themselves as small as possible. This voice can still be heard loud and clear with a few clicks of the keyboard, sometimes anonymous or with a pseudonymous screen name. Technology gives a voice to all. Unfortunately, “the all” includes the good and the bad. The pathway that lets that small voice be heard also lets cyberbullies be heard.

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Communication needs to clear that this is not an acceptable. This can be done with Digital literacy. This is the process of teaching and learning about technology and the use of technology. Digitally literate students will be more likely they are to make good decisions online. The ideal school board would challenge the staff to balance digital opportunities with safety. Teaching empathy as an active digital citizen may be a more effective option than stopping bullying. Humanize the person on the other side of the screen to grow connections (Curran, 2012). Digital Commerce is the last part of education in REPs. Teaching students to buy, sell and use money in any way in the digital world. Developing best practices for keeping accounts, passwords and safeguards will help students through life. The very thing that makes technology a great human connection also brings out the worst in human emotions. If the thing we say and do in the digital world is permanent, permanent as a tattoo - we need to educate students to make good choices. But because of human nature, not all people out there are kind, educating for safeguarding against bad human nature is important.

**Protect yourself/protect others.** Digital rights and responsibilities, digital safety and digital health and wellness and the last of the nine elements. They make up the P of the REPs. These elements that are taught to protect digital citizens. Digital rights and responsibilities include lessons in the freedoms provided to all humans in the digital world. It is the responsibility of each user to use the vast information available with respect. Laws are written to protect authors and presenters so that things that belong to them stay theirs. Copyright laws have very clear rules of how original works may be used. "Technology, Education, and Copyright Harmonization Act (TEACH Act)", passed in 2002 (LSU Libraries, 2018). The act was not a change to the copyright laws is was more of an extension and an explanation for use of learning materials in a digital form. Distribution and collections needed a clear explanation. Using the

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TEACH toolkit, a clear path to face to face classroom use and distance learning classrooms can be used for teachers (LSU Libraries, 2018). The teacher can also learn how and if they can collect and distribute the works of their students. This gives teachers digital access to sources that might not have been available to them before. Fair Use - commonly used in education to explain why we can use a piece of information education. That is not the only use of fair use. Using a copyrighted piece of work is ok as long as a few guidelines are used. Use Fairly, not too Much and Have Reasons seven words that quickly let you check if it is ok to use another's work, (University of Virginia Library,2017). This is for any pieces of copyrighted material, in any situation. Teaching our students, best practices for education and in real life should be the goal of all teachers. Digital security means teaching practices keep computers and devices free from viruses and other attacks. Teaching internet safety, password protection, and location protection will help to keep students safe and aware of the dangers that hide behind a digital screen. The last element is digital health and wellness. This refers to the physical and psychological well-being in a digital world. The opportunities in the digital world are truly unlimited. Lessons from YouTube, virtual visits with grandparents, new friends in New Deli are all exciting digital world options but taking the time to view and learn and talk to the people right there in the room will help make the students safe and healthy.

Changes in society from generation X to today's youths seems like a huge shift. Firm bedtimes, playing outside watching tv have been exchanged for devices and videos until natural sleep occurs, playing with others isn't always in the same room but the things that have not changed is the lessons that young people need to learn to be good people in life. Generation x learned these lessons for sitcoms and family talks. Today's youth learn lessons for YouTube and school and others online. The lessons for your need to included respect for yourself and others,

## NINE ELEMENTS OF DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP 7

educate yourself and others and protecting yourself and others. In everything you do - DUDE BE NICE!

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