Ontario Health Curriculum K-8: Media and Digital Literacy Connections

Media and communications technology play an important role in a student's health and physical education, for better or for worse. The new Ontario Health and Physical Education curriculum provides a spring board to start discussions related to health and media literacy.

In the K-8 curriculum, most media and digital literacy resources connect best to the *Healthy Living* strand. See our *Digital and Media Literacy Outcomes* for Ontario to see how each lesson connects with overall and specific expectations for each grade.

Related Resources

Selected lessons:

Grades K-3

Can You Spot the Ad? Students learn about the concept of branded content and learn to tell the difference between branded images and videos and non-branded images and videos in online and offline contexts.

Finding Balance in Our Digital Lives Students look at the different ways in which we spend our free time and learn to find balance between active, learning and media activities.

Girls and Boys on Television Students discuss television programming aimed at children and how girls and boys are portrayed in it.

Healthy Food Web Students go on a tour of popular sites aimed at children, where they identify and classify the advertising encountered there and look at how the food products being advertised fit – or don't fit – in the food groups found in the *Canada Food Guide.*

Representing Ourselves Online Students talk about dressing up and taking on identities that are similar to or different from them, then consider the ways in which the technical, generic and aesthetic limitations on avatar creation in games and virtual worlds affect their choices and their ability to represent themselves online.

Rules of the Game Students consider the importance of the written and unwritten rules that make it possible to learn and play together, online and offline.

Grades 4-6

Avatars and Body Image Students explore body image issues in games and virtual worlds by creating online avatars.

Behaving Ethically Online: Ethics and Empathy Students are introduced to the idea that "hot" emotional states such as anger or excitement make it hard for them to control how they act and learn about the ways in which digital communication can make it harder to feel empathy for others.

Game Time Students are introduced to the idea of balancing game and screen time with other parts of their lives and learn about the reasons why they may be tempted to spend more time playing games or find it difficult to stop playing.

Girls and Boys on Television Students discuss television programming aimed at children and how girls and boys are portrayed in it.

Introduction to Ethics: Avatars and Identity Students are provided with opportunities to explore the concept of avatars and discuss the importance of using empathy and common sense when talking to others online.

Grades 7-8

Cyberbullying and Civic Participation Students explore the concepts of rules, values and ethics and learn how they influence our decision-making. Students are then invited to consider how they can contribute to create positive online cultures.

Cyberbullying and the Law Students learn about and discuss the legal aspects of cyberbullying.

Gender Messages in Alcohol Advertising Students think critically about culturally inherited gender stereotypes, and explore how stereotypes about men and women are promoted and reinforced through the images and messages in alcohol ads.

I heard it 'round the Internet: Sexual health education and authenticating online information Students consider the use of the Internet as a research tool and learn how to use search engines more effectively, then apply these new found skills to investigating popular myths about sexuality and contraception.

Promoting Ethical Behaviour Online: My Virtual Life Students explore how they are portrayed online through their own content and content posted or shared by others, and research tools for controlling access to their online content.

Put Your Best Face Forward Students reflect on social media and body image by discussing the phenomenon of "selfies" and the standards by which the "best" selfies are judged.

That's Not Cool: Healthy and Respectful Relationships Online Students consider why unhealthy behaviours such as pressuring others to share private content, cyberstalking, harassment and abuse of trust may be more common when we communicate through digital media and ways in which they can be avoided or mitigated.

Understanding Cyberbullying: Virtual vs. Physical Worlds Students explore the verbal and visual cues that we rely on to understand how other people are feeling. They then consider the differences between online and offline communication and discuss how these differences may make it difficult to understand the effect our words and actions have on others online.

Selected interactive resources:

Co-Co's AdverSmarts This interactive unit is designed to help kids between the ages of 5 and 8 recognize the marketing techniques used on commercial websites that target children.

CyberSense and Nonsense: The Second Adventure of the Three CyberPigs The three CyberPigs teach students ages 8-10 some important lessons about authenticating online information and observing rules of netiquette. They also learn how to distinguish between fact and opinion and how to recognize bias and harmful stereotyping in online content.

Privacy Pirates This tutorial introduces children aged 7-9 to the concept of online privacy and teaches them to distinguish between information that is appropriate to give out and information better kept private – and to recognize how this may change in different contexts.

Privacy Playground: The First Adventure of the Three CyberPigs In this game designed for ages 8-10, the CyberPigs play on their favourite website and encounter marketing ploys, spam and a close encounter with a not-too-friendly wolf.

Top Secret! This interactive narrated tutorial teaches students about the benefits and drawbacks of sharing information online. Students give their opinion about what the characters in the story should do about their privacy dilemmas, from posting photos to buying music online, and they receive feedback on their responses as the story unfolds.

The Target is You!: Alcohol Advertising Quiz This interactive quiz for grades 6 to 8 is designed to increase students' knowledge and understanding of alcohol marketing aimed at youth.