



CANADA'S CENTRE
FOR DIGITAL AND
MEDIA LITERACY

Resources for families and educators staying home during COVID-19

With all of us staying at home to help stop the spread of COVID-19, it can be tricky to maintain a balance with technology use (let's face it, we're all going to be on our devices more and watching more TV!). It's also a time when you want to be getting the most accurate information - and a good opportunity to show kids how to turn to trusted sources online.

We've put together some of our best resources to help you and your family manage during these uncertain times.

If you're an educator looking for resources to help with distance learning, check out the hundreds of free lesson plans and games available [here](#), as well as [a listing of digital and media literacy outcomes](#) by province and territory, with links to supporting MediaSmarts resources.

Educators are welcome and encouraged to share our resources with their colleagues and to include links on platforms like Google Classroom. Please contact info@mediasmarts.ca if you have any questions about using our resources.

Getting good information

- [Managing family tech](#)
- [Explaining news and media coverage to kids](#)
- [Online games](#)
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Getting good information

[Check First. Share After.](#)

Most of us probably can't manufacture protective equipment in our homes or develop a treatment for the virus, but there is something we can all do: help stop the spread of misinformation.

[Break the Fake: How to tell what's true online](#)

Help the whole family learn four easy fact-checking skills that can be done in under a minute with our Break the Fake tips, videos, quizzes and more.

[Getting the goods on science and health: How to get accurate information](#)

Some of most important kinds of information we look for online are about health and science – especially when it comes to something as serious as a pandemic. Here are three tips to help you find good health and science info.



Managing family tech

[Four tips for managing your kids' screen time](#)

The best ways to use screens mindfully and set limits in your household.

[Co-viewing with your kids](#)

Here are some things to think about while consuming media as a family.

Parent blog: [Social media and screen time during a pandemic](#)

Explaining news and media coverage to kids

[Dealing with fear in media](#)

[Helping kids cope with media coverage of war and traumatic events](#)

Online games

Parents and their kids can play these free MediaSmarts games to learn about digital literacy topics like online privacy and verifying online sources.

[Data Defenders](#) (Grades 4 to 6)

Data Defenders is an interactive game that teaches children and pre-teens the concept of personal information and its economic value, and introduces them to ways to manage and protect their personal information on the websites and apps they enjoy. (Comes with a parent guide)

[Privacy Pirates](#) (Ages 7 to 9)

This tutorial introduces children 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. (Comes with a parent guide)

[Reality Check](#) (Ages 13+)

On the internet, it can be hard to tell what's true and what's false—but we have to make a lot of decisions based on how reliable we think things are. In Reality Check, you'll learn how to find clues like finding where a story originally came from and comparing it to other sources, as well as how to use tools like fact-checking sites and reverse image searches.

Media literacy lessons

[Media Literacy 101](#) (Grades 4 to 8)

Are you doing some homeschooling with your kids? MediaSmarts' Media Literacy 101 lessons can be used easily in the home. These lessons run between 30-45 minutes, feature fun videos, and include simple activities like making a cereal box.



Suggested resources for educators

[Privacy Pirates: An interactive unit on online privacy](#) (ages 7-9)

With Canadians of all ages spending more time online, it's important for children to know that some information is better kept private. Privacy Pirates, an interactive game, introduces children to the concept of online privacy and comes with an overview of related issues and suggested extension activities for educators.

[Break the Fake: What's real online?](#) (Grades 3-5)

With a little help from the house hippo, students are introduced to the challenges of identifying what is real and what is fake online. After learning some simple steps to verify online information they create a media text that communicates the importance of questioning and double-checking online content.

Break the Fake lesson plans are available for grades K-12. [Click here for more.](#)

[Break the Fake workshop stream on YouTube](#)

Have your students follow our Director of Education, Matthew Johnson, as he conducts a [Break the Fake workshop on YouTube](#), previously live-streamed during Media Literacy Week. The stream takes students through the four ways to verify info they see online in just over an hour, and the workshop can be used in connection with this lesson plan for grades 6 to 9: [Break the Fake: Verifying information online.](#)

[Reality Check: Authentication 101](#) (Grades 9-12)

In this lesson, students consider the different factors that make online sources reliable or unreliable. They then learn quick steps they can take to gauge an online source's reliability and practice these steps by playing an interactive online game. Finally, students create a media product to teach other students how to do one of the tactics they've learned.

[Challenging hate online](#) (Grades 10-12)

In this lesson, students learn how digital media is used to promote or combat hatred and intolerance. After discussing the different ways that hate organizations get their messages out and how digital media have the potential to work against hatred, students visit and analyze anti-hate initiative websites.

