

## Appendix 3 — Student Profiles by Grade

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### › Profile of Kids in Grades 4 and 5

#### Going Online

In grades 4 to 5, kids are mainly going online through shared family computers. A minority, however, owns their own cell phone or smartphone (24%), while a third (31%) has regular access to someone else's phone. For these younger students, cell phones are primarily a way to communicate with family, although friends are a close second.

Even at this young age, a third of kids worry that they might be spending too much time online, with one in five reporting they sleep with their cell phones so that they won't miss any messages. On the plus side, most say they voluntarily go offline to spend more time with friends or family or to go outside to play.

#### Favourite Activities

The Internet is mainly a source of fun and entertainment for this age group, with YouTube as the top website for both boys and girls.

The most popular online activities are:

- playing games;
- downloading/streaming music, TV shows or movies; and
- socializing in virtual worlds (Club Penguin, Webkinz and MoshiMonsters are the most popular online communities).

#### Privacy Attitudes

Like their older peers, kids in grades 4 and 5 use the Internet to connect with others: just under one third of Grade 5 students have a Facebook account (even though you have to be 13 to legally join). A majority (61% and 74%) are comfortable with friends being able to read their social networking posts, while most (80% and 84%) agree that their parents should be able to see their posts.

These younger students are very comfortable having their parents involved in many other aspects of their online lives:

- 63 percent of kids in Grade 4 and 66 percent of kids in Grade 5 are willing to share passwords with their parents.
- The majority believe that parents can be trusted to help solve online problems.
- Most (79% and 63%) think that parents should keep track of their kids online all the time. (This is interesting given that an overwhelming majority of this age group (93% and 95%) also believe that their parents trust them to do the right thing online.)

Even at this age, kids are quite proactive when it comes to protecting their privacy:

- Most would turn to their parents if an unwanted photo of them is posted online or would ask the poster to remove it.
- Half have assumed other identities online to protect their privacy.

However, there is still much for them to learn about how companies collect and use personal information: three quarters mistakenly believe that if a website has a privacy policy it will not share their personal information with others. This could be because half of these students have never had an online privacy policy or terms of use explained to them or have learned about how companies collect and use personal information online.

### Online Meanness

Perhaps because they are still quite young, kids in grades 4 and 5 are the least likely of students who were surveyed to report being mean or cruel to someone online, being recipients of online meanness or cruelty or being threatened online. They also are the least likely to report helping someone who is being picked on online.

For those students who have faced online harassment, most say it wasn't a problem for them – although 17 percent of kids in Grade 4 said it was a serious problem.

For those who report being mean or cruel to someone else online, half say it generally involved name-calling. For one quarter of these students, the incident took place in an online game.

Once again, parents are a primary source of support with over two thirds of these children asking their parents for help if they encounter mean, cruel or threatening behaviour. Younger students are also the most likely group to ask teachers for help with cyberbullying (28%).

### Learning Skills for the Internet

While students in grades 4 and 5 understand that not everything online is true, whether or not they take steps to check the information depends on what they need it for. For example, a majority will try to make sure online information is correct if it's for homework, but the numbers are much lower if it's for friends or family or to post on social media.

When trying to decide if online information is correct, two thirds of Grade 4 students will ask their teacher. By Grade 5 students are just as likely to try to see if other sources say the same thing as they are to turn to a teacher for help.

When looking at what they are learning – and from whom – parents emerge as the most significant source for most Internet issues. This is especially true when it comes to being safe online with three quarters of students learning this at home and under half learning about this at school.

Interestingly, although three quarters of students in these grades believe that they could be hurt if they talk to someone they don't know online, most (77% and 88%) are confident that they know how to protect themselves.

When asked what Internet issues they want to learn more about in school, students say, in this order:

- how to tell if online information is true;
- how to be safe online; and
- cyberbullying.

All statistics are from MediaSmarts' 2014 study *Young Canadians in a Wired World*, Phase III: [www.mediasmarts.ca/ycww](http://www.mediasmarts.ca/ycww)