



# Digital Citizen News

## December 2020

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**This month we focus on Digital Respect**

In October, we looked at maintaining your physical **SECURITY** and the integrity of all of your data. Then in November, we focused on awareness regarding your use of online services and how that can shape an **IDENTITY** and how you are viewed by others.

This month, we look at **DIGITAL RESPECT** and the importance of showing respect to others online, as well as demanding that others treat you and your online interactions respectfully.

The Golden Rule says, “*Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.*” Is this old saying any less important today?

When we are spending a lot of time online in classrooms or video conferences or chats, let’s extend this courtesy to our teachers, to our classmates and colleagues, and to anyone else that we interact with.

**How would you phrase your own version of the Golden Rule for online activity?**

ARE THEY KIDDING?  
HOW CAN I POSSIBLY  
BE HAPPY  
THIS  
YEAR?

Happy  
Holidays

There is no doubt that the holidays will feel different this year but they don't have to feel bad . . .

Often we rely on the holidays to lift our spirits as we near the end of another year. We look forward to experiencing the joy we feel as we take part in our traditional parties, meals, and visits.

We know that restrictions from the pandemic will make it hard for many of us to share those traditions this year. We have lost much; travel to favorite places, closeness with friends and family, jobs and income, health and mobility, and some have even lost loved ones. This all adds to our collective feeling of sadness at this time of year.

But if we can't take part in our old traditions why don't we try to create some new traditions. **We challenge all of you digital citizens out there to invent a joyful new experience for your holiday gathering(s).**

One idea that we heard was to ask a family member who is known for cooking some holiday treat to hold a zoom session so that others in the family could learn the dish, and have it at their table.

We know that you will come up with lots of other suggestions that you can do to create new traditions. **Share them with us at [dc@gstbores.org](mailto:dc@gstbores.org).**



# Ask Techie Tom



**STEP #1  
SPEAK TO A  
TRUSTED  
ADULT**

Dear Techie Tom,

There is a kid at school who keeps saying things about me online that bother me. I asked that person to leave me alone, but it hasn't stopped. What can I do?

Worried in Cyberspace

Dear Worried in Cyberspace,

**CONGRATULATIONS**, you have taken the first step by telling someone! When you are in a situation where you feel bullied, talk to an adult you trust. Don't keep your feelings inside. Telling someone can help you feel less alone. An adult can help you make a plan to stop the bullying.

Did you know there is someone in your school who is responsible for helping you? This person is called a **DASA Coordinator**.

Each school has a DASA Coordinator and the district policies and procedures, including an incident report form, are **posted on the district website**. Ask a teacher, guidance counselor or principal to identify the DASA Coordinator in your school.

Be sure to keep talking about bullying and how to stop it from happening! Not saying anything could make it worse for everyone. The kid who is bullying will think it is ok to keep treating others that way.



**Now Hear This!  
It's The Law!**

**The Dignity for All Students Act** also called **The Dignity Act** was established to protect all students from harassment, bullying and discrimination. It became effective on July 1, 2012 and was amended to include cyberbullying effective July 1, 2013.

DASA is designed to protect public school students from bullying by employees or other students based on actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender, or sex.

For more tips on dealing with bullying, visit this site. This link goes directly to resources for kids. <http://go.gstric.org/404-no-bullies>

## RESPECT FOR OTHERS ONLINE

# Why You Should Cite Sources and Avoid Plagiarism

The Internet makes it very easy to grab content and paste it into another document, or to post it to another site. However, just because we can do it doesn't mean that we have a right to do it.

A lot of materials that are available to you on the Internet are also copyrighted and using them without giving credit to the original author is wrong. This article defines plagiarism and helps you avoid it.

<http://go.gstric.org/404-cite-sources>



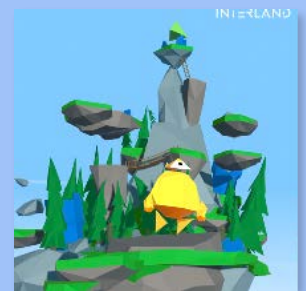
## Activity Time

**More Awesomeness  
and a Bit of Kindness Too**

The last few issues of this newsletter have featured interactive games from Google's "**Be Internet Awesome**" initiative. Now that you have dodged hackers and kept your secrets safe, it is time to jump over to the third level: **Kind Kingdom**.

You are welcomed by the message "Vibes of all kinds are contagious, for better or for worse."

Your goal in this level is to and report troublemakers to stop their take over of kind kingdom and to restore the peaceful nature of their land. You do this by spreading good vibes and getting rid of the bad.



You can join kind kingdom with no sign up by going to <http://go.gstric.org/404-kingdom>.

Once you've spread out your good vibes, check out Google's **Internet Awesome Tipsheet** and see what they say about kindness online.

<http://go.gstric.org/404-awesome-tips>

# Rules for Engagement in Online Learning

Learn 6 netiquette guidelines every student needs to know.

**#1**

## NO YELLING, PLEASE

There's a time and a place for everything - BUT IN MOST SITUATIONS TYPING IN ALL CAPS IS INAPPROPRIATE. Most readers tend to perceive it as shouting.

**#2**

## Don't abuse the chat box

Chat boxes are incorporated into many online classes as a place for students to share ideas and ask questions.

The class chat box isn't an instant messenger like you'd use with friends.

Treat it like the learning tool it's meant to be and try not to distract your classmates with off-topic discussions.

## Stop ... Grammar Time

**#3**

Always make an effort to use proper punctuation, spelling and grammar. Misspelled words with erratic punctuation frustrates the reader and distracts from the point of your message.

On the other hand, nobody likes the grammar police and scolding a classmate because he or she used "your" instead of "you're" - isn't practicing proper netiquette.

**#4**

## Set a respectful tone

Every day may feel like casual Friday in an online classroom where you don't see anyone in person, but a certain level of formality is still expected in your communication with teachers.

**#5**

## Think before you type

A passing comment spoken in class can be forgotten a few minutes later, but what you share in an online classroom is part of a permanent digital record. Whether or not privacy settings are in place, the internet has a tendency to save things forever, and what you say privately can easily become public.

**#6**

## Be kind and professional

Online communication comes with a level of anonymity that doesn't exist when you're talking to someone face-to-face. Make a point to be kind and respectful in your comments - even if you disagree with someone.

Adapted from an article on [rasmussen.edu](http://rasmussen.edu) - use our shortened link to read it <http://go.gstric.org/404-guidelines>.

## Respect Yourself Online - Limit Social Media Time What Some Studies Say About Teen Self-Esteem

Social media use is certainly very prevalent among teenagers today. Some research has shown that teens may use as many as seven different media sites each day, and some only use a single site but they may visit it many times a day. The nature of social media is to be very stimulating and intoxicating so that some users almost feel addicted to their social media.

Recent studies suggest that the amount of time that teens spend on social media can have a profound effect on their moods and moodiness. Social media notifications pull their attention from other things and can increase a teen's sense of anxiety. There is an expectation from many peers that texts and posts require that they be answered immediately, and many feel pressure to "like" or respond positively to messages from "popular" friends.

In addition to their moods, a teen's body image and self-esteem may be linked to likes and comments from other friends. Some teens feel a sense of isolation, and feelings of rejection and loneliness if their posts don't garner positive attention. Some even develop negative thoughts and feelings of depression from their interactions on social media. Communication on social media lacks the non-verbal cues like facial expressions or body language so the words may seem harsher than they would if spoken face to face. Some people take advantage of this to purposefully say things that they wouldn't say in person. We recommend the articles below for additional information about teens and social media.

"How Using Social Media Affects Teenagers" - <http://go.gstric.org/404-affect1>

"5 Ways Social Media Affects Teen Mental Health" - <http://go.gstric.org/404-affect2>

## 10 Things Parents Can Do to Keep Their Kids Safe on Social Media

1. Have kids share all of their screen names and passwords with you.
2. Friend their accounts and follow them to keep an eye on what they are posting, and what others post about them on their feeds.
3. Don't allow cookies to track them.
4. Turn off location settings that can be read by other sites.
5. Disable data sharing.
6. Use strict privacy settings. It is always easier to loosen up as they get older.
7. Don't use social media identities to login to other sites.
8. Set limits - when can they use social media? and for how long? Can they keep their phone in their bedroom? etc.
9. Talk about what should and shouldn't be kept private.
10. Talk about and model appropriate language and photo sharing.

**GIVE  
RESPECT**



**GET  
RESPECT**



**SHOW  
RESPECT**



**GROW  
RESPECT**



A Digital Citizen Grows Respect By Acting Respectfully Online



**GST BOCES** Digital Citizenship Initiative  
Digital Respect - December 2020

<http://dc.gstboces.org>

