



Digital Identity

December and January Digital Citizenship Focus for Middle and High School

Living in this digital age allows for many conveniences that would otherwise not be possible. From mobile food apps and ordering your groceries online, to managing a digital wallet to pay for purchases, businesses are using smart technology to deliver faster, smarter services to consumers. Social media allows individuals to connect and share their voice in conversations that matter to them. While all of this convenience and connecting can save us time and provide an outlet for expression, we must remember that ALL online activities become a part of our digital footprint and help to curate our digital identity. As our students continue to create their online identity, it is crucial for them to understand the positive and negative impact their actions can have on their lives as well as the lives of others. The majority of universities and businesses use social media in some way as a screener for student admissions and in the hiring process. By making conscious decisions about they want to be viewed online, students can protect their privacy, their reputation, and their future.

Vocabulary: Digital-Footprint, Invisible Audience, Privacy, Security, Two-step Verification, Password, Passcode

Resources related to protecting your digital identity:

This post from [Common Sense Media](#) gives tips on how to help students post, comment, and upload responsibly.

This article post from [Net Nanny](#) talks about the permanency of any online activity but provides information on cleaning up your online identity.

This link from [U.S. News & World Report](#) has information about universities using social media to screen possible admission candidates.

Essential Skills: Cleaning Up Your Digital Footprint

1. **Maintain Your Mobile Device:** Take time to understand your mobile device settings and create a password.
2. **Check Privacy Settings:** Take time to understand current privacy settings on your favorite apps and websites so you know just what you are sharing, and update them if their are things you do not want public.
3. **Use Strong Passwords:** Change the passwords across your various accounts to a combination of words, numbers, and symbols.
4. **Think Before You Post:** Your digital footprint is more than the information available about you on the Web; it's about your interactions too. Before you post anything online, ask yourself if it's really something you want people to know about you.
5. **Build a Positive Reputation:** Use your online presence to build a positive reputation for yourself and inspire others!