

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Today's students face a reality much different than those experienced by most of us, where life online can be just as important as what happens 'in real life.' From school to social time, computers, smartphones, tablets, the Internet and social media touch every aspect of their lives. The influence of the online world cannot be underestimated, nor can we underestimate its potential impact on a student's current well-being or their future. While there are tremendous advantages and opportunities available through technology, social media and the Internet, we do know there are also negatives. We only need look to the recent situations at Harvard and Dalhousie Universities to see how someone's online activity can impact on their future plans. As such, the education system has a role to play in helping students become good decision makers.

As it is everyone's responsibility to teach our young people how to navigate the Internet safely and responsibly, as well as to model good online behaviour, we are sharing these resources with you to encourage continued discussion of these topics at home.

With the goal of developing a strategy to help our teachers better inform students about the use of technology, an Internet and Social Media Safety (ISMS) Committee of Newfoundland and Labrador English School District personnel was established. The committee recommends compulsory resources which have been divided into three categories: Grade 1 to 3, Grade 4 to 6, and Grade 7 to 12. These categories are derived from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's *Safe and Caring Schools Policy, 2013* and the elements of 'Digital Citizenship.' Further information on the resources and topics is contained in **Appendix A**. An information note and opt-out form may be required for Grades 7 to 9 for the lesson covering Digital Health and Wellness/Security and can be found in **Appendix B**.

The District believes the more information we provide our students, the better prepared they are to face the challenges ahead. To ensure they are relevant to the latest in Internet and social media trends and issues, all lessons are updated annually. We encourage you to review the resources provided and help inform yourself on matters of Internet and social media safety and engage in discussions at home about how students can and do interact on the Internet. The District also has a [Social Media Use](#) policy and a [Student Terms and Conditions of Use](#) that all families are asked to be familiar with. Further, there is an [Acceptable Use of Technology](#) policy and an associated agreement to be signed by all authorized users of District technology. All these resources are available on the District's website - [www.nlesd.ca](http://www.nlesd.ca)

Should you have any questions, concerns or suggestions on this matter, please discuss them with your classroom teacher or school principal.

Thank you for your continued efforts as we strive to prepare our students for the ever-evolving world of the Internet, and social media in particular.

Regards,



Darryl Feener  
Assistant Director of Education-Programs (Acting)  
Eastern Region