



## Safety Corner

### Lesson Plan

Topic: Internet Safety

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#### Learning Objective:

Students will learn the new rules for communicating safely in cyberspace.

Time: 35 minutes

**Activity Note:** The room needs to be large enough for all the students to form a circle and see one another.

**21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills & Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness:** Information literacy, Collaboration, Communication Skills

**Materials:** Paper, pens/pencils, handouts

**Key Vocabulary:** cyberspace-the environment in which communication over computer networks occurs

**Connect with Students:** 5 minutes

**Instructor:** It might be hard to believe - but not that long ago - there was a time when there were no websites, laptops, tablets, or cell phones. In those days, people communicated face to face -or over the telephone, which was usually housed at your home or in centrally located public telephone booths.

People shopped for all their goods by going to the store and most transactions were by cash. You got cash from the bank by 3:00 p.m. or you had to wait until the next day when the bank would open at 9:00 a.m., and you could communicate with a bank teller what you needed. That sounds inconvenient now, but it didn't seem so to most people who experienced it at that time. People knew the rules for communicating and interacting safely and we practiced them regularly and easily.

(share how or where you communicated with friends and relatives when you were young.)



**Instructor:** How we communicate has changed over the years. Now much of our communication occurs over the airwaves - through the internet or cellular phones. It is important to remember when communication technology changed, the rules for communication changed, too. Unfortunately, we haven't all adapted our lives and practices to support safe communication for our advanced age of technology.

**Instructor:** Form a circle around the room with each of you facing inward. You have 30 seconds. (Countdown to 30)

**Instructor:** I am going to give the person to my right a whispered message. They will pass it on to the next person. That person, in turn, passes it on to the next person. Listen carefully. They are only going to state the message once and you need to pass on the message as accurately as possible. When the last person on my left gets the message, he/she will sit down, write it down and then as a class we'll review them together. There are six messages total. So, six of you will be writing them at the end. (Point to last six people on your left and assign them a message to write down.)

(Whisper)

Message #1: Guard your computer. Keep it safe by using strong passwords by using a combination of different letters, numbers and symbols that no one could guess.

(Whisper)

Message #2: If a site pops up that makes you feel uncomfortable, tell your parents so they can block it or do it yourself.

(Whisper)

Message #3: If a stranger sends you an instant message or email, do not respond. Tell an adult.

(Whisper)

Message #4: Never share personal information such as your name, address, birthdate, or phone number on the internet.



(Whisper)

Message #5: Do not share any pictures or texts that you wouldn't want your parents or neighbors to see.

(Whisper)

Message #6: Do not respond to or forward messages that are mean, harassing, or embarrassing about anyone.

(After you have sent all 6 messages, have the last 6 messengers write down the message they heard on their sheet of paper. You will call on them momentarily to share what they heard. Have the rest of the class return to their seats where you will discuss and debrief the messages.)

Messenger #1, what was the message you heard?

Message #1: Guard your computer. Keep it safe by using strong passwords by using a combination of different letters, numbers, and symbols that no one could guess.

The first message was our first Cyber safety communication rule. Do not let anyone or anything harm your computer. If you download something from a website that is not safe, you may get a computer virus. A virus may steal information from your computer, corrupt your files or render your computer un-usable. Only download files from reputable websites that your parents approve. Also, guard your email and social network information with safe passwords that only you could ever guess. Use a complex mix of letters, numbers and symbols. Then don't share your password with anyone - not even your best friend.



Messenger #2, what was the message you heard?

Message #2: If a site pops up that makes you feel uncomfortable, tell your parents so they can block it or do it yourself.

This is the true second message. Sometimes when you are surfing the web, a message pops up that may make you uncomfortable. Or you may even be directed to a website that was unintended and has messages, graphics or film that makes you uncomfortable. If that happens to you - get out of there quick! Then tell your parents so they can block that website or do it yourself. It may be a trap to lure you to content that is neither safe nor appropriate for you.

Messenger #3, what was the message you heard?

Message #3: If a stranger sends you an instant message, do not respond. Tell an adult. Do not open emails from people or companies you do not know. If someone sends you an email claiming that you have won a free prize - delete it. It is likely a trick to confirm your email and send you endless advertisements, or it may contain a virus to corrupt your computer. There is also no reason at all that a stranger should be contacting you by email or instant message. You wouldn't stop and speak with some random stranger on the street, would you? Don't do it online either! It's not safe. This includes all chat rooms. Only speak online to people you know.



Messenger #4, what was the message you heard?

Message #4: Never share personal information such as your name, address, birthdate, or phone number on the internet.

Certain information such as your name, address, phone number, or birthdate should not be shared online. People can get this information and use it to contact you when you do not want to be contacted or stalk you. The people who know you can talk to you about this information in person.

Messenger #5, what was the message you heard?

Message #5: Do not share any pictures or text that you wouldn't want your parents or neighbors to see. Once a message or a picture goes into cyberspace, it could go anywhere, and you have no control to where it travels. Someone might send it to your BFF or someone might send it to their parents or someone might send it to England! You never know. And have you noticed that some of the messages I sent to you today did not come back to me the same way I stated them? It happens online too. Messages can become distorted through cyber-translation so use your words wisely. Only post messages and pictures that you would be proud to show your parents. In this way, nothing comes back to you that might be embarrassing - even years later.



Messenger #6, what was the message you heard?

Message #6: Do not respond to or forward messages that are mean, harassing, or embarrassing about anyone.

One of the absolute worst things about communicating in cyberspace is the phenomenon of a new kind of crime - cyberbullying. This is when people post mean, harassing, or embarrassing things about people - usually without their knowledge. They send it to their friends, neighbors, relatives or post it on social media. Most of the time, they are lies or rumors meant to hurt another person. And sometimes it can be difficult to trace the origin of the messages. If you receive something about someone that you believe constitutes online bullying behavior, tell an adult, tell the person who is the target and assure them you do not agree with it. Do not forward the message to anyone else. This is not a victimless crime. Children have been very hurt due to this kind of behavior.

There are criminal penalties for this kind of behavior of cyberbullying.

**Instructor:** If you feel that you or someone you know has been the victim of Cyberbullying, you can contact the resources below:

- [www.safealliance.org](http://www.safealliance.org)
- [www.safe2Tell.org](http://www.safe2Tell.org)
- [www.stopbullying.gov](http://www.stopbullying.gov)
- [www.kidsagainstbullying.org](http://www.kidsagainstbullying.org)
- <http://www.cyberbullying.us/>
- <https://www.glsen.org/>
- <https://www.girlshealth.gov/bullying/>



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**Instructor:** The old rules of communication were simple. People talked often and face to face. The new rules of communication in cyberspace are a bit more complex. But if you follow the new rules we discussed today, you should be successful in all your cyberspace conversations in the future.

**Evaluation:** Let's see if we met our learning objectives today. Name the six rules you should use when communicating in cyberspace.

#### Sources:

<http://www.netsmartz.org/internetsafety>  
<http://fox21news.com/2015/07/02/cyberbully-law-goes-into-effectacross-colorado/>  
Colorado Revised Statutes §18-9-111  
<http://www.cde.state.co.us/mtss/bullying>  
<http://cyberbullying.org/>  
<http://kidshealth.org/en/parents/cyberbullying.html>  
<https://www.gcflearnfree.org/internetsafety/>  
<https://archives.fbi.gov>  
<https://internetsafety101.org/>  
<http://www.ncpc.org/topics/internet-safety>