

Possible Project Areas

1. Cyber safety (e.g. care with cyber contacts)

With the connectivity provided by the Internet, youth are able to chat with their peers and connect with people they have never met. As people can remain anonymous on the Internet, it is difficult to know their true identities and purposes. Youth may also not be aware of the dangers of disclosing their personal information on the Internet.

There is a need to educate our youth about the consequences and dangers they might face when they disclose personal information online.

2. Moderate Gaming/Internet use

Youth who spend excessive time on computer games and online activities (e.g. chatting through social networking sites) may do so to the detriment of other aspects of their lives. Addictive gaming and Internet use can result in compulsive behaviour that interferes with their daily activities or which may lead to stress on themselves and their family members. Our youth need to strike a balance between the virtual and real world.

Strategies to moderate gaming and Internet use include getting youth to maintain a balance between playing games and involvement in other activities. They should be encouraged to look for interactive activities that empower them through participation and learning. Educational games can also be promoted as an alternative to non-educational computer games.

3. Inappropriate content

Inappropriate content is defined as content that is illegal and/or harmful, or which is beyond the youth's ability to understand and process at their level of development.

Examples of "inappropriate content" include materials that:

- are pornographic;
- are hateful or violent;
- encourage illegal activities;
- encourage participation in dangerous activities
- encourage harm to self and/or others; and
- are biased.

Due to the universality of the Internet and other forms of technologies, the risk of youth encountering inappropriate content is high. It is therefore important to teach youth to discern the appropriateness of content, and how to deal with inappropriate content.

4. Cyber-bullying

Cyber-bullying is a form of bullying which uses electronic medium of communication (such as through Internet and mobile phones) to deliberately harm others emotionally.

Victims of cyber-bullying are often fearful of telling their parents/teachers about being bullied because they worry about being stigmatised. They also fear that adults will over-react and prohibit them from using their mobile phones and computers.

Efforts are needed to identify and help victims deal with the problem of cyber-bullying. It is also important to counsel the bullies by adopting corrective strategies such as getting them to reflect on the effects of their actions and make a commitment to respect self and others and use the Internet in a responsible manner.

5. Positive Netiquette and Responsible Use of Mobile Technologies

The principles for netiquette and responsible use of mobile technologies are similar to those that govern our everyday courtesy norms. However users must be aware of certain limitations of communicating using the Internet and mobile technologies (e.g. extended lag-time for response, limited expression) compared to face-to-face communication. While the rules of courtesy continue to apply, negative behaviours are what we should learn to avoid.

Mobile technology allows information, photographs and videos to be disseminated quickly and easily, often beyond the control of the originator. With easy and convenient wireless access, mobile platforms provide a direct link to cyberspace. The popularity of mobile technologies calls for greater awareness of positive netiquette and their responsible use. Youth need to be mindful about the impact of disseminating such materials to others and learn to be responsible for what is posted or sent.