

Literacy Strands – I-Safe Curriculum – “Cyber Safety” – By: Traci Mahone

Monday – Cyber Community – I-Safe defines a community as a “physical area where we live and is comprised of places we know and in which we interact with real people”. Community can also be used to define a group of people who share a location or even a common interest, goal or activity as with a club, team or school. Given that people visit “places” (websites, blogs, chatrooms, wikis, social networks, etc.) on the Internet, many of which allow for interaction with other users, it too can be thought of as a community: the cyber community. Many locations in our physical community have locations in cyberspace as well. In fact, many of these cyber locations are visited and used more frequently than their physical counterparts.

In one sentence, explain why the Internet can be thought of as a community.

Tuesday – Dangers in the Cyber Community -- Since the cyber community is “made up of real people and real places, it’s important to think about the safety issues it presents”. So, just as there are dangers in the physical community, there are dangers in the cyber community. It is important to take measures to protect ourselves while online in the cyber community just as we would in a physical community. Just because we access the Internet from the safety of our own homes, schools, or libraries behind the screens of our devices doesn’t mean we should dismiss online dangers like: bullies, predators, and thieves. We must protect ourselves in the cyber community by establishing and maintaining barriers between ourselves and other users with secure user ids/screen names, passwords, and personal settings.

In one sentence, explain why it is essential to protect yourself in the cyber community.

Wednesday – Personal Identifiable Information -- In order to protect yourself in the cyber community, it is necessary for you to safeguard personally identifiable information including: your first and last name, any part of your physical address, your location, telephone number, any parts of your Social Security Number, date of birth or email address. Doing so is especially difficult given the popularity of social networks where users delight in posting and consequently sharing highly identifiable information. To protect yourself, adjust personal settings to limit access to personally identifiable information always keeping in mind that any person met exclusively online is in fact a stranger. Users always should be mindful of what they are directly and indirectly sharing about themselves when active in the cyber community.

In one sentence, define personally identifiable information.

Thursday – Safeguard Online Identity - When creating a user id, username or nickname to identify yourself online, do not include personally identifiable information so that you can remain as anonymous as possible (i.e. FredSmith14). Also, do not use any suggestive or inappropriate descriptions in user ids/screennames (i.e hotbabygirl). In order to strengthen security, do not include your scrennname or user id in any kind of directory. Don't register for contests or fill out information to download software. Password protect all accounts using lengthy combinations of letters and numbers that aren't easily guessable. Always keep passwords private. Compromised passwords should be changed. I-Safe recommends using a phrase that you like and transforming that phrase into a secure password. For example, the password 3bmshttr was inspired by a line from a classic nursery rhyme: "Three blind mice, see how they run".

In one sentence, explain how you can protect your personally identifiable information in the cyber community.
