

[Print Article](#)[Close](#)

T · H · E
Journal ONLINE
TECHNOLOGICAL HORIZONS IN EDUCATION

Monitoring Technology Misuse & Abuse

By Mike S. Ribble and Gerald D. Bailey, Kansas State University

August 2004 - Feature



A Five-Step Plan for Creating a Digital Citizenship Program in Your School.

Over the last two years, it has become evident that a behavior pattern of misuse and abuse with respect to technology is beginning to emerge in our society. This outbreak of technology misuse and abuse is documented in continual news coverage on TV, in newspapers and on the Internet – both inside and outside of schools. The endless list of misuse and abuse includes hacking into school servers, using e-mail to intimidate or threaten students, illegally downloading music, plagiarizing information from the Internet, using cellular phones during class time, accessing pornographic Web sites, and playing video games during class. Therefore, if you are using technology in your district, you must begin to deal with digital citizenship in a significant way.

Five-Step Program

One of the first steps in dealing with digital citizenship is awareness – determining whether digital citizenship is a significant issue within your school district. Digital citizenship can be defined as the norms of behavior with regard to technology use. Therefore, the Digital Citizenship Audit is a quick way for your administrators and teachers to determine if their technology is being properly used, misused or abused. Start creating your own program by following these five steps:

Step 1: Complete the Digital Citizenship Audit (see chart below).

Step 2: Analyze your results using the scoring guides (see Page 25).

Step 3: Have your technology leadership team discuss the following questions after they have completed the audit:

- Is there a significant problem?
- If there is a significant problem, how aware are teachers, students, board members and community members?

Step 4: Engage stakeholders in a discussion of your audit findings and extend the discussion to include the following questions:

- How do I use technology?
- How does my technology behavior impact others?
- What courtesy do I extend to others when I am using technology?
- When using technology, does my behavior infringe on others' rights?
- How do I/we use technology to learn new ideas?
- Do I act responsible when using technology?
- Do I act in a way to keep myself safe when using technology?

Step 5: Design a digital citizenship program in your school (or district) that deals with the appropriate technology behavior. Have your technology leadership team focus on the following questions as they design the program:

- With regard to technology use, how does our emphasis on "rules and regulations" compare with our emphasis on "education of our stakeholders"?
- Where should digital citizenship be taught in our curriculum?
- Who should teach digital citizenship?
- What kinds of staff development opportunities do we need to

provide administrators, teachers, staff and stakeholders as a prerequisite to effectively implement a digital citizenship program?

Digital Citizenship Audit						
Instructions: Consider the following school-related incidences that deal with digital citizenship. Rank each item from 5 (Extremely Important) to 1 (Extremely Unimportant).						
Digital Citizenship: "norms of behavior with regard to technology use"	Extremely Important	Somewhat Important	Neither Important or Unimportant	Somewhat Unimportant	Extremely Unimportant	Individual (Horizontal) Score
Hacking into school servers	5	4	3	2	1	
Using e-mail or Web sites to intimidate students	5	4	3	2	1	
Downloading illegal music files from the Internet	5	4	3	2	1	
Using instant messaging during class	5	4	3	2	1	
Using a computer in an awkward position	5	4	3	2	1	
Plagiarizing information by using the Internet	5	4	3	2	1	
Using cellular phones during class time	5	4	3	2	1	
Accessing pornographic Web sites on campus	5	4	3	2	1	
Playing games on laptops or PDAs during class	5	4	3	2	1	
Failing to find information on the Internet for class projects	5	4	3	2	1	
Holistic (Vertical) Score						

Technology-infused teaching and learning has become a necessary part of the educational environment. However, that digital landscape is being littered with examples of poor and unacceptable forms of digital citizenship. Digital citizenship programs require awareness, critical analysis and well-conceived strategies in order to help eliminate this waste. Technology leaders must raise their expectations for technology-infused teaching and learning. It is time to focus equally on the effective use of technology as well as the appropriate use of technology. We cannot afford one without the other if we expect to produce productive citizens in the 21st century.

Scoring Guide: Individual (Horizontal) Score

Total the points for each individual category horizontally. This score provides a general picture of the relevancy of the specific digital citizenship issue.

4-5: Somewhat Important or Extremely Important – You have concerns about digital citizenship issues and are either working

on solutions or would like to begin.

2-3: Neither Important nor Unimportant – You are not aware of digital citizenship issues or your school is not using technology.

1: Extremely Unimportant – Digital citizenship is either unimportant or you have already solved problems of technology misuse and abuse in your school.

Scoring Guide: Holistic (Vertical) Score

For the holistic score, total points in each of the vertical columns, then add up the number of points in the bottom right square. This score provides a picture of the general level of problems that you are experiencing with digital citizenship. Remember, a high score is not completely bad news; it just means that you have a high level of technology use in your school. It also means that digital citizenship is not being practiced by students.

40-50: This score shows that use of technology is high in your district. Unfortunately, technology misuse and abuse are also very high.

30-39: This shows that technology use is fairly high. It also shows that technology misuse and abuse is relatively high.

20-29: You are in the middle of the road. Either your school is not using a great deal of technology or you are unaware of the issues related to digital citizenship.

10-19: If you have minimal problems with technology misuse and abuse, you are either not a technology-infused school or your digital citizenship problems are negligible.

References

Greenspan, R. 2003. "Cell Phone Courtesy Lacking." ClickZ Network, 11 November. Online: www.clickz.com/stats/markets/wireless/article.php/10094_3101231.

Kay, M. 2003. "Cyber Bullies Prey on Girl." The Dominion Post, 20 November.

Manjoo, F. 2001. "Carpel Study Stress Syndrome?" Wired News,

11 June. Online: www.wired.com/news/politics/0,1283,44400,00.html (retrieved Oct. 15, 2003).

Marklein, M. 2003. "Students Aren't Using Info Technology Responsibly." USA TODAY (Life Section), 9 November. Online: www.usatoday.com/news/education/2003-11-09-students-it_x.htm.

Simmons, R. 2003. "Cliques, Clicks, Bullies and Blogs." The Washington Post (Outlook Section), 28 September. Online: www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn/A8020-2003Sep26.

Urbina, I. 2003. "For Techies, School Bells Mean 'Let the Games Begin'." The New York Times (Metropolitan Desk), 15 October.

Bibliography

Batista, E. 2003. "New Privacy Menace: Cell Phones?" Wired News, 17 February. Online: www.wired.com/news/business/0,1367,57692,00.html.

"Cyber Bullies Target Girl." 2003. BBC News, 24 May. Online: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/nottinghamshire/2933894.stm>.

Dean, K. 2003. "Gesture Your Mouse Goodbye." Wired News, 28 May. Online: www.wired.com/news/gizmos/0,1452,58978,00.html.

Dean, K. 2003. "Upload a File, Go To Prison." Wired News, 17 July. Online: www.wired.com/news/digiwood/0,1412,59654,00.html.

Ermann, M., M. Williams and M. Shauf. 1997. *Computers, Ethics and Society*, 2nd ed. New York: Oxford University Press.

Foderaro, L. 2003. "Man Charged With Raping Girl He Met on Internet." The New York Times, 5 September.

Fryer, W. 2003. "A Beginner's Guide to School Security." *Technology & Learning*, 24 (2): 9.

Guernsey, L. 2003. "In the Lecture Hall, a Geek Chorus." The New York Times, 24 July.

Guernsey, L. 2003. "A Young Writers' Round Table, Via the Web." The New York Times, 14 August.

Hafner, K. 2003. "Eluding the Web's Snare." The New York Times, 17 April.

Harmon, A. 2003. "Digital Vandalism Spurs a Call for Oversight." The New York Times, 1 September.

Harmon, A. 2003. "New Parent-to-Child Chat: Do You Download Music?" The New York Times, 10 September.

Jackson, M. 2003. "Turn Off That Cellphone. It's Meeting Time." The New York Times, 2 March.

Kahney, L. 2003. "Gag Rules? Bloggers Report Anyway." Wired News, Retrieved 06/05, 2003 from the Online: www.wired.com/news/culture/0,1284,59116,00.html.

Lessig, L. 1999. Code and Other Laws of Cyberspace. New York, N.Y.: Basic Books.

Mackenzie, H. 2003. "Stay Home, Highland Laddie." Wired News, 6 August. Online: www.wired.com/news/culture/0,1284,59678,00.html.

Male, M. 2003. Technology for Inclusion: Meeting the Special Needs of All Students, 4th ed. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

McCain, T. and I. Jukes. 2001. Windows on the Future: Education in the Age of Technology. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Corwin Press.

Play It Cyber Safe. 2003. Retrieved 10 September. Online: www.playitcybersafe.com.

"Rights and Responsibilities of Computing Users." 1993. Virtual School Distributed Learning Community. Retrieved 10 September. Online: www.virtualschool.edu/mon/Academia/RightsComputerUsers.html.

Rimer, S. 2003. "A Campus Fad That's Being Copied: Internet Plagiarism." The New York Times, 3 September.

Toppo, G. 2003. "Who's Watching the Class? Webcams in Schools Raise Privacy Issue." USA TODAY, 11 August: 1D. Online: www.usatoday.com/usatoday/20030811/5396054s.htm.

T.H.E. Journal offers a FREE one-year subscription to qualified individuals in educational institutions. Go to www.thejournal.com/freesub for more information.

[About Us](#) | [Privacy Statement](#) | [Contests](#)

If you have comments or questions about our Magazine features or stories, please email the editorial staff at editorial@thejournal.com. If you have any comments or questions about subscriptions, please email subscriptions@thejournal.com. If you have comments or questions about this website, contact us at webmaster@thejournal.com.

Copyright © 2004 ETC Group LLC. All rights reserved.