

The DCP

TIPS AND STRATEGIES FOR GETTING YOUR SCHOOL'S DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP PROJECT STARTED



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Why the DCP is so important

Imagine we were living in the wild wild west, back in the 18th and 19th centuries before their laws and rules were properly enforced. Some people chose to do as they pleased, without any regard for their fellow citizens. These people were known as outlaws and while the concept may sound romantic for a while, the idea begins to run thin after you have been repeatedly bullied, robbed, intimidated, and made to feel unsafe. Without

digital citizenship, the internet can be looked at as the wild wild west. Citizenship is not necessarily something that people know instinctively. It is something that we learn, something that needs to be taught. Technology, the internet, the digital era, none of this is going away. As educators we need to examine how we can teach ourselves and our students to become educated digital citizens.

Using mobile devices in the classroom

As a teacher, I am always looking for the most exciting and innovative ways to teach my students so that I keep their interest and motivation in my class. Over the last few years I have constantly wrestled with my students to put away their mobile devices. It is always a sore subject in the staff room and the frustration of teachers is clear.

What if we took a different approach with the technology? What if we allowed our students to use their devices in class (for pedagogical purposes of course) and we created activities and projects that allowed them to use the technology (which many already own) in a productive educational way? This approach is becoming the norm in many school centers. When used in an educated, informed manner, it is possible to have success with the technology.

Studies have shown that students in the digital age are not learning the same way older generations did in the past. Students today are used to multitasking, they chat on Facebook, while watching a video on YouTube and talk on the phone all at the same time and they manage to do it all. A comprehensive study of the multi-tasking habits of digital natives, conducted by the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation (Foehr, 2006) found that four-fifths of young



people age 8 – 18 multitasked while using media. It is evident that we need to adapt to these digital natives if we want to keep up with them, capture their attention, and engage them in the classroom.

With the Lester B. Pearson School Board Digital Citizenship Project (DCP), we hope teachers and students will begin to see the importance of using technology in a productive and efficient way so that learning with such devices becomes less of struggle and more rewarding for all parties (teachers, students and parents).

The idea of using mobile devices is really not so far-fetched. If we look at what some of our own schools here at the Lester B. Pearson School Board are currently doing to promote the use of mobile technology in the classroom, this idea is fast becoming a reality.

Tanya Avrith



Examples of LBPSB iPod/iPad initiatives

iPod touches - iPads in Kindergarten!

Ann Tellier from Dorset Elementary has been using iPod Touches with her kindergarten students since last year. Students use them in centers to help with their literacy and numeracy skills. After visiting Ann's class for an afternoon it was incredible to see how motivated and interested the children were to learn with the devices. She has been so successful with the technology that she has parents asking for lists of the applications so that they can continue the learning with their children at home.

iPod touches and Literacy

There is currently a study being conducted at Springdale, Wilder Penfield, Clearpoint, Riverview, Verdun, and Orchard entitled iLiteracy: Using iPods/iPads in the Classroom.. It involves the study of how iPod's may improve literacy. To get more info on the project please email Sam Bruzzese (sbruzzese@lbpsb.qc.ca) or visit the project website <http://literacy.ning.com>.

iPilot Project at Riverdale High School - Springdale Elementary

There are three grade eleven Riverdale students working on an integrative project with iPod Touches. The three students are documenting the use of different types of technology in a blog and examining how the various programs and hardware (iPod Touches, Macbooks, PC's and web 2.0 tools) can help them become more self-regulated learners using the technology. The students are also creating

and implementing lesson plans for younger children (k4 students) to use iTechnology (iPod Touches and iPads) in the classroom. The students have been actively involved in Mrs. Motter's pre-kindergarten class at Springdale Elementary and are currently working with the class to produce their first set of ebooks.

DCP School Snapshot - Springdale Elementary

Kindergarten at Springdale is using a whole new approach to making early literacy a lot of fun. With a Smart Board, computers, iPods and an Ipad, we are learning in a new way!

Most Kindergarten morning routines involve a calendar and morning message. We start our day with an online calendar from starfall.com. The students follow the online teacher who says the days of the week with them. They place the day and number in the correct square on the calendar. The students knew their days of the week within the first two weeks of the school year and now know their numbers up to 31! The morning message is typed with fun fonts and colours to help the children recognize words easily. They can come up and underline or circle words they know, or even draw pictures to help them remember.

"Free Play" in Kindergarten used to be about playing in the little kitchen, having fun with blocks and Lego or colouring pictures. In our classroom, we still have "Free Play" but what the children choose to do is much different. Children choose to use the computers, the Smart Board and the iPods. On the computers and Smart Board, they go on sites like pbskids.org or starfall.com to mention a few. From literacy to

numeracy, using animation, music and exciting, familiar characters, these sites are highly educational and tricking kids into learning! The iPods have many educational "apps" to add to the wide variety. They love having a small hand held device, all to themselves. While being plugged in is fun and educational, we still keep a balance by ensuring social play is practiced everyday outside at recess and in the classroom, when technology is turned off.

It is important to remember to teach children how to read actual books and write on paper. We do a lot of this. My students write daily in journals and read many leveled books a week. We also continue to do many fine motor activities and arts and crafts. We still provide home reading and have parent volunteers reading with our children in the hall. It is important to note that all of this is made so much easier with the quick grasp the students have had on letter and sound acquisition. It has complemented their reading and writing so well! In the morning if you were to walk into my classroom, you would see students involved in shared reading with books that they choose. In the afternoon, you would see them on iPods, computers and the Smart Board, chanting letters, sounds, numbers along with reading leveled online books! How magical technology can be.

Tami Zuckerman

What teachers need to know about Digital Footsteps

Google your name.....

Have you ever googled your name? If you have not, it can be quite an eye-opening experience, especially the first time you do it with "quotations" around your full name. As a teacher, I highly recommend that we google our names on a regular basis, as changes on the internet are quick and frequent. We need to be fully conscious of what is being said or posted about us on the internet. Sites like ratemyteacher.ca are open for students to write anonymous comments about teachers. We want to remain professional both in and out of the school setting and especially vigilant about what our students can see about us on the internet.

Digital footprints are traces that you leave wherever you go on the internet. Sometimes you can erase the tracks you leave but the nature of being digital makes the information almost impossible to fully remove. It is important that we check these footprints and also educate our students about the ramifications that their traces can have on them as they grow older and more responsible for their actions.

Here are a few tips and strategies that you can use both for yourself and to help your students monitor their digital footprints:

Tip 1: Search for your name on Google. www.123people.com is also a very good resource to see what is associated with your name on the internet.

Tip 2: When searching on ratemyteacher.ca, comments can be positive and negative. However it is probably a good idea to monitor what is being written and to report any vicious or erroneous comments to the site administrators.

Tip 3: If you are one of the 500 million users on Facebook then it is probably a good idea to make sure that your privacy settings are set high so that only the people that you want to share information with can see it. Remember however, that even though your privacy settings may be set so that only your friends can see your profile, it does not mean that they can not copy and paste your information to share it with others. The nature of digital information is that it is easy to share and transfer leaving very little room for "real privacy."

Tip 4: If you are creating or commenting on websites, blogs, wiki's, emails, or chat rooms always be vigilant of what you are writing. Remember, your digital footprint will follow you wherever you go and can one day come back to haunt you.



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