
BPSD Technology Publication

Teaching the Ethical & Responsible Use of ICT

Compiled by Ron Nordstrom, Technology Coordinator ph. 476-3305 rnordstrom@bpsd.mb.ca

Students as Digital Natives

Today's students are digital natives. They grew up with computers and cell phones, and do not know a world before these tools existed. They are comfortable in the world of text messaging, blogging, wikis, and social networking sites like Facebook, Piczo, and MySpace.

Many teachers are digital immigrants. We were not born into today's ICT, but some of us have learned what we need to know along the way. As teachers, we need to understand that we don't really need to teach our students how to use the technology. We just need to allow ways for students to use their skills in our classrooms.

Ethical Use

Just because a student knows how to use a piece of technology, we cannot assume that student will use it ethically or responsibly. With the right of using an ICT device, comes responsibility. Most high school students carry cell phones. They have a right to use them, but not anywhere, anytime. There are appropriate places and times to use a cell phone. Use it responsibly or accept the consequences. The same goes for other ICT devices.

Whose Responsibility is it to Teach Ethics?

Where should students learn to use ICT ethically or responsibly? Have you noticed the number of adults who answer their cell phone anywhere, anytime including carrying on loud conversations in line-ups, restaurants, stores, or movie theatres. I have been in meetings where participants suddenly get up and answer their phone. The message those people give is that the phone call is more important than the meeting. There are many poor role models for students to see every day. Schools are one place where we can and should see good models of responsible use of ICT including cell phones, computers, mp3 players, and other technologies.

Teachers need to talk about and model ethical and responsible use of ICT.

What is Responsible Use of ICT?

Responsible use of ICT means **caring for the equipment** and using it **safely**.

Caring for equipment

Caring for the equipment should be stressed with all grades, even early years. The examples below are not meant as an exhaustive list, but as examples of responsible caring for ICT.

1. Keep the computer area free from clutter. Do not store books on the keyboard or monitor.
2. Clean your hands before using the keyboard or mouse.
3. Keep your hands on your own keyboard and mouse.
4. Handle CD ROM's by the edge or by the middle. Avoid touching the written side of the disk. Open and close the CD ROM tray with the button.
5. Know simple troubleshooting. When your computer freezes, use Ctrl – Alt – Delete to restart the computer.
6. Use the school software. There is no need to download other software that might be incompatible with the network or the computer operating system.
7. Handle digital cameras and video cameras carefully.
8. Close the lid on a laptop before moving it.

Safe use of ICT

Some examples of using ICT safely include:

1. Your passwords are private. Do not let others know your password to log on to a computer or passwords for email or other password protected sites.
2. Follow safety rules for Internet chatting and other social networking sites. Never give out your name, age, sex, hobbies, or other personal information to strangers.
3. Freeware often comes bundled with spyware or viruses. Be sure you have updated anti-virus software and anti-spyware software.

What is Ethical Use of ICT?

Using ICT ethically means following copyright laws and avoiding plagiarism. This means that students need to acknowledge authorship of property available on the Internet. Just because the information is in a public place, it does not mean it is public information.

How do Copyright Laws Affect my Students?

Starting from an early age, students need to know the information on the Internet belongs to others. When students use a picture or other resource directly from the Internet, they could copy and paste the URL of the image. As they get older, they need to learn to find copyright free resources or how to obtain permission to use other people's work.

What About Images?

The simplest way to use copyright free images is to create your own. Create artwork or take digital photos to use in your work. Next, students could use clip art installed on their computer.

If students do use online images, they should site the source of their image and/or look for copyright free images. Some places students can find copyright free images include:

- [Pics for learning](#)
- [PB World Database](#) - mostly copyright friendly images
- [Open Photo Project](#)
- [Free Pixels](#)
- Giant List of Copyright Free Stuff
<http://www.sdst.org/shs/library/cfimages.html>

Music for the Classroom

Students can obtain clips of copyright free music for use in their projects from <http://www.freeplaymusic.com>

Copyright Questions

Why not have your students look on the <http://library.concordia.ca/help/copyright/> website and find the answers to these questions? In many cases, the answer is..it depends. Have students explain the law to the class. You might find out you were not breaking as many laws as you feared you were.

1. Can you record a TV program and show it in your classroom?
2. Can you record a radio program and listen to it in your classroom?
3. Can you play music in your classroom?
4. Can students use music in their presentations?
5. Can teachers copy and show digital images in their classroom?
6. Can teachers use copyrighted images on their web page?
7. Can students use copyrighted images for their papers or projects?
8. Can teachers or students rent movies and show them in class?

I'm Convinced. What resources can I use to teach copyright issues to my students?

1. <http://www.2learn.ca/copyright/copy.html>
Easy to read and understand common questions with answers. Rules for digital pictures with suggestions on obtaining permission.
2. <http://library.concordia.ca/help/copyright/>
Concordia University's copyright help site.
3. http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/resources/legislation/canadian_law/federal/copyright_act/class_prov_copyright.cfm
Media Awareness easy to understand copyright rules.

How can I encourage my students to use ICT Ethically?

1. Encourage students to use music that was purchased. Students can use a CD they purchased or from a web site that sells music. Many sites such as iTunes allow users to purchase music for .99 per song.
2. Students should site the source of images or information they used for their work.