

Handout for

Teaching Students Right from Wrong in the Digital Age

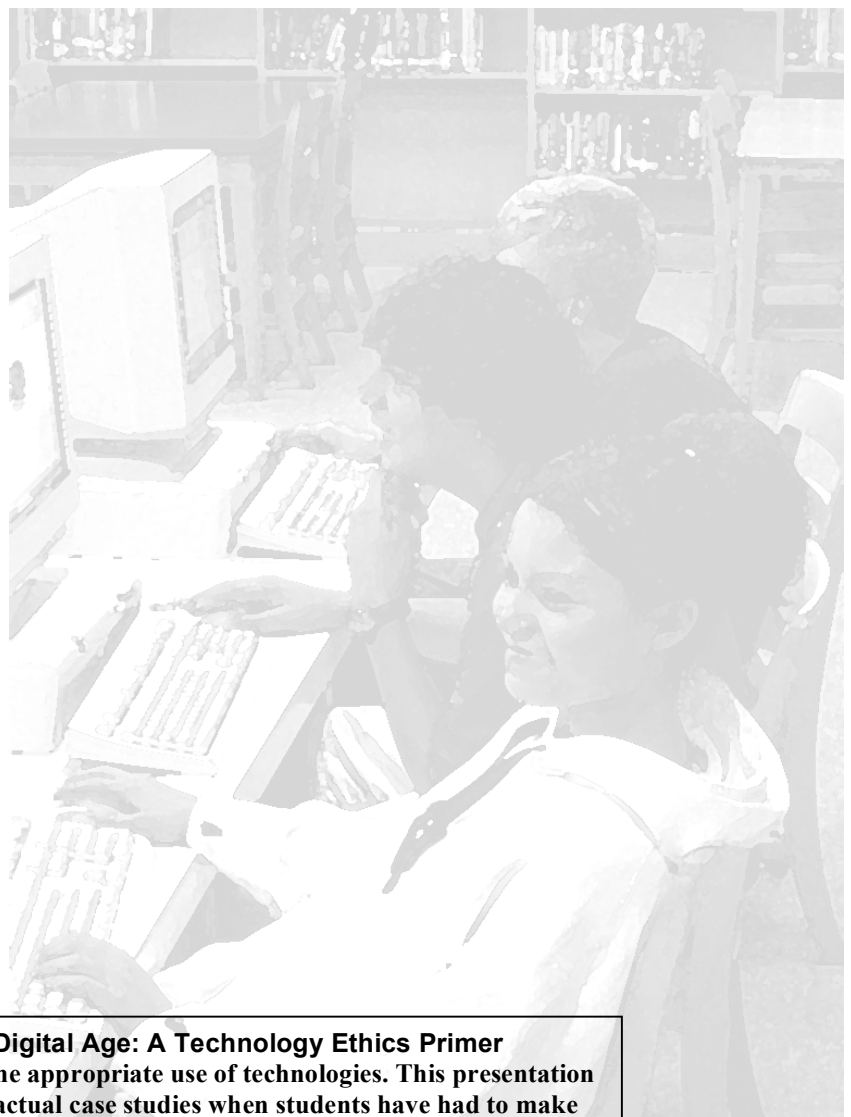
Doug Johnson

dougj@doug-johnson.com

www.doug-johnson.com

Copyright 2007

Ethical Issues Surrounding Technology Use in Schools	p.2
Ethical codes	p. 3
Major areas of concern	p. 5
What activities teach ethical behaviors?	p. 8
Ethics Questionnaire I	p. 9
Ethics Questionnaire II	p. 12
CHEATING and how to avoid it	p. 14
Policies 2.0: Rules for the Social Web	p. 18



Teaching Students Right from Wrong in the Digital Age: A Technology Ethics Primer
Studies show that misconceptions abound about the appropriate use of technologies. This presentation examines basic ethical issues, some ethical codes, actual case studies when students have had to make ethical decisions, and techniques teachers can use to promote ethical behaviors in the classroom.

Ethical Issues Surrounding Technology Use in Schools

Abstract: Computer ethics, better called information technology ethics, is an important but under-taught subject in our schools. New technologies bring about the need to interpret old values in new ways, but also may call for the creation of new codes of conduct when new actions are made possible with the use of technology.

Several ethical codes dealing with technology use exist and many schools have adopted Acceptable Use Policies that include rules for the proper use of information technologies. Teachers, students, and parents need to know and understand these codes.

For children, the major issues surrounding technology ethics can be categorized into three areas: privacy, property, and appropriate use. School related cases can be found in each of these areas.

Teachers need to develop learning objectives and activities that specifically address technology ethics. Proper use needs to be taught at the same time that other computer skills are taught. Students' understanding of ethical concepts need to be assessed. Technology use privileges, especially those involving on-line use, should not be given to students until the assessments show that a student knows and can apply ethical standards and school policies.

Two worlds

Even very young children can quickly identify whether the behaviors in these examples are right or wrong:

A boy finds a magazine with sexually explicit photographs and brings it to school. He shows its contents to others in his class who become upset.

A student steals a set of keys and uses them to gain access to the school office where she changes her grades and views the grades of other students.

A student locates a story, recopies it in his own writing, and submits it to the teacher as his own work.

A student steals a book from a local store. She says the only reason she stole it was that she did not have the money to purchase it.

When students start using technology, especially information technologies that consist of computers and computer networks, they start operating in a new world: a virtual world. Suddenly behaviors may not be as easily judged to be right or wrong. What would your students' responses be when given these situations?

A girl downloads a sexually explicit picture from a site on the Internet on a computer in the school library. Her classmates can easily view the computer screen.

A student finds the teacher's password to the school's information system and uses it to change his grades and view the grades of other students.

A student uses the copy and paste command to place large parts of an electronic encyclopedia article into an assigned paper. She turns the paper in as her own work.

A student makes a copy of software program borrowed from another student to use on his computer at home.

What's different about "computer ethics?"

Computer ethics, better labeled "information technology ethics," deal with the proper use of a wide range of telecommunication and data storage devices. Ethics is the branch of philosophy that deals with moral judgements, issues of right and wrong, and determining what behaviors are humane and inhumane. Most (Western?) codes of ethical behavior describe actions as "ethical" that do one or more of the following:

- promote the general health of society
- maintain or increase individual rights and freedoms
- protect individuals from harm
- treat all human beings as having an inherent value and accord those beings respect
- uphold religious, social, cultural, and government laws and mores

A simplistic way of saying this is that an "ethical action" then, is one that does not have a damaging impact on oneself, other individuals, or on society.

In direct or indirect ways, children begin to learn ethical values from birth. And while families and the church are assigned the primary responsibility for a child's ethical education, schools have traditionally had the societal charge to teach and reinforce some moral

values, especially those directly related to citizenship and school behaviors. Most of the ethical issues that surround technology deal with societal and school behaviors and are an appropriate and necessary part of the school curriculum.

Why do technology ethics then deserve special attention? There are a variety of reasons. Using technology to communicate and operate in a "virtual world," one that only exists within computers and computer networks, is a new phenomenon that is not always well understood by many adults who received their primary education prior to its existence. Both fear and romance usually accompany new technologies. Our mass media has produced movies like *War Games*, *The Net*, and *Mission Impossible* that capitalize on the unfamiliarity many adults have of communications technologies. Movies, as well as book and television programs, often make questionably ethical actions such as breaking into secure computer systems seem heroic or at least sympathetic.

Our new technological capabilities also may require new ethical considerations.

- The ability to send unsolicited commercial messages to millions of Internet email users (spamming) was not possible before there was email or the Internet. Does the fact that the financial burden of unsolicited advertisements now fall on the recipient rather than the sender create the need for new rules?
- Digital photography has made the manipulation of images undetectable, an impossible feat with chemical photography. What obligations do communicators have to present an undoctored photograph, even if its message may not be as powerful as one that has been digitally "enhanced?"
- Prior to the Internet, minors faced physical barriers of access to sexually explicit materials. What safeguards do schools, libraries, and parents need to take to keep children from freely accessing inappropriate materials? Which will better serve our children in the long run - software filtering devices or instruction and practice in making good judgements?
- Intellectual property in digital format can now be duplicated with incredible ease. Do we need clearer definitions of property? Can an item that is taken without authorization, but leaves the original in place, still be considered stolen?

One of the most significant reasons that computer ethics deserve special attention is because of our rather human ability to view one's actions in the intangible, virtual world of information technologies as being less serious than one's actions in the real world. Most of us, adults or children, would never contemplate walking into a computer store and shoplifting a computer program. Yet software piracy (the illegal duplication of computer programs) costs the computer business billions of dollars each year. Most of us would never pick a lock, but guessing passwords to gain access to unauthorized information is a common activity.

Information technology misuse by many people, especially the young, is viewed as a low-risk, game-like challenge. Electronic fingerprints, footsteps, and other evidence of digital impropriety have historically been less detectable than physical evidence. There is a physical risk when breaking into a real office that does not exist when hacking into a computer database from one's living room or den. Illegally copying a book is costly and time consuming; illegally copying a computer program can be done in seconds at very small expense. The viewed pornography on a website seems to disappear as soon as the browser window is closed.

Not long ago, ethical technology questions were only of interest to a very few specialists. But as the use of information technologies spreads throughout society and its importance to our national economies and individual careers grows, everyone will need to make good ethical decisions when using computers. Studies show that persons involved in computer crimes acquire both their interest and skills at an early age.

Ethical codes

Many organizations and individuals have written lists of ethical standards for technology use. One of the mostly widely used and easily understood sets of computer use principals comes from the Computer Ethics Institute.

The Ten Commandments of Computer Ethics by the Computer Ethics Institute

1. Thou shalt not use a computer to harm other people.
2. Thou shalt not interfere with other people's computer work.
3. Thou shalt not snoop around in other people's computer files.
4. Thou shalt not use a computer to steal.
5. Thou shalt not use a computer to bear false witness.
6. Thou shalt not copy or use proprietary software for which you have not paid.
7. Thou shalt not use other people's computer resources without authorization or proper compensation.
8. Thou shalt not appropriate other people's intellectual output.
9. Thou shalt think about the social consequences of the program you are writing or the system you are designing.
10. Thou shalt always use a computer in ways that insure consideration and respect for your fellow humans.

Association for Computing Machinery's *Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct* (1993) stresses many of the same ideas as *The 10 Commandments of Computer Ethics*. Their "moral imperatives" include:

1. I will contribute to society and human well-being
2. I will avoid harm to others.
3. I will be honest and trustworthy.
4. I will be fair and not discriminate.
5. I will honor property rights including copyrights and patents.
6. I will give proper credit for intellectual property.
7. I will respect the privacy of others.
8. I will honor confidentiality.

Arlene Rinaldi has written a well-respected set of Internet guidelines called "The Net: User Guidelines and Netiquette." This more informal set of expected behaviors helps new users learn the manners and etiquette of an often-impatient online community. In her guide, newbies (inexperienced telecommunications users) learn that:

- typing in all capital letters is considered shouting and therefore rude
- sending chain letters via email is improper and a waste of resources
- humor and sarcasm are easily viewed as criticism and should be used with care in electronic communications

Rindaldi isolates proper conduct for a variety of areas of telecommunication use including telnet, FTP, e-mail, discussion groups, and the World Wide Web.

Most schools now have adopted an "Acceptable Use Policy" that governs the use of the Internet and other information technologies and networks in a school. The rules in these policies often apply to both staff and students. Everyone in the school, as well as parents, needs to know and understand these policies. The Mankato School's Acceptable Use Policy (adopted from the Minnesota School Board Association's recommended policy) can be found at: <www.isd77.k12.mn.us/guidelines.html>. Included in the policy are some explicit rules of use:

Users are prohibited from using school district Internet resources or accounts for the following purposes:

1. *To access, upload, download, or distribute pornographic, obscene or sexually explicit material.*
2. *To transmit or receive obscene, abusive or sexually explicit language.*
3. *To violate any local, state or federal statute.*
4. *To vandalize, damage or disable the property of another person or organization.*
5. *To access another person's materials, information, or files without the implied or direct permission of that person.*
6. *To violate copyright laws, or otherwise use another person's property without the person's prior approval or proper citation, including the downloading or exchanging of pirated software or copying software to or from any school computer.*
7. *Unauthorized commercial use or financial gain.*

Internet uses shall be consistent with other school district policies. (These are listed.)

A variety of guides should be made available to staff and students and one should either be adopted or an original set of guidelines written. While an entire school or district may wish to use a single set of guidelines, each classroom teacher needs to understand, teach, and model the guidelines. Simple, easily remembered for children are probably the best:

Johnson's 3 P's of Technology Ethics:

1. *Privacy - I will protect my privacy and respect the privacy of others.*
2. *Property - I will protect my property and respect the property of others.*
3. *a(P)propriate Use - I will use technology in constructive ways and in ways which do not break the rules of my family, church, school, or government.*

Educators need to be aware and understand that another, counter set of "ethical" behavior also exists - that espoused by hackers. Being described as a "hacker" once indicated only a strong interest and ability in computer use. Popular use of the word has changed, so that now "hacking" describes gaining unauthorized access to computerized systems and data. The term "cracker" is also used, but is often used to describe a hacker who has a malicious intent. Some common hacker beliefs, stated by Deborah Johnson in *Computer Ethics*, 2nd Edition (Prentice-Hall, 1994) include:

- all information, especially digital information, should be free and available to all people
- breaking into computer systems points out security features to those who are responsible for maintaining them
- hacking is a form of learning about computers and is harmless
- hackers help monitor the abuse of information by the government and business

Teachers need to know and understand these counter-culture beliefs and be able to offer reasons why they need to be questioned for their logic and ethics.

Major areas of concern

The scope of information technology ethics is very broad. For the purposes of this short guide, we will be looking only at some common cases where younger children will need to make ethical choices or have the unethical actions of other effect them. I have categorized the issues under the major headings of privacy, property, and appropriate use. These cases and others like them should be used to foster classroom discussion. Other areas of ethical concern for older children and adults are listed below in the section "Further Objectives/Questions."

Privacy - Does my use of the technology violate the privacy of others or am I giving information to others that I should not?

John fills out a survey form on a computer game web page. In the following weeks, he receives several advertisements in the mail as well as dozens of email messages about new computer games.

Children need to understand that businesses and organizations use information to market products. Information given to one organization may well sell it to others. An interesting discussion can revolve around how much a person would like a company to know about him or her. Will a company who knows a lot about me use it to customize products for me or only to manipulate me?

Adele "meets" Frank, who shares her interest in figure skating, in an Internet chat room. After several conversations in the following weeks, Frank asks Adele for her home telephone number and address.

All individuals need to know that a stranger is a stranger, whether on the playground or on the Internet. The same rules we teach children about physical strangers apply to virtual strangers as well.

The principal suspects Paul of using his school email account to send offensive messages to other students. He asks the network manager to give him copies of Paul's email.

Schools (and businesses) have the right to search student and employee files that are created and stored on school owned computer hardware. Ask students if they know the school's search policy on lockers and book bags, and whether the same policy should be extended to computer storage devices.

Helen is using the word processor on the classroom computer to keep her journal, but Mike keeps looking over her shoulder as she types.

As one librarian puts it, just because information appears on a computer screen doesn't make it public. Students who are accustomed to the public viewing of television monitors need to realize that student created work on a computer screens should be treated as privately as work created in a paper journal.

Ms. Eastman, Terry's teacher, needs to leave the room to take care of an emergency. While she is gone, Terry finds that Ms. Eastman had been working on student progress reports and that her grading program is still open. He checks to see what grade he is getting and finds the grades for several other students.

Information inadvertently left accessible does not mean that it is appropriate to access it. Ask students: "Is forgetting to lock one's home is the same as allowing anyone to enter it?" While information may be about students (such as grades), that information does not necessarily belong to them. And students certainly do not have the right to look at information about other students. One question that might be raised is: "What right do I as a student have to check the accuracy of the data gathered about me and what would be correct procedure for making that check?"

Property issues - Do my actions respect the property of others and am I taking the correct steps to keep my property safe?

Jerry borrows Ben's game disks for Monster Truck RallyII and installs them on his home computer. He says he will erase the game if he does not like it, or will buy the game for himself if he likes it.

Students need to know that computer software is protected by copyright law. It is unlawful, as well as unethical, to make copies of computer programs without permission or payment of the producer of those programs. It also needs to be understood that when purchasing software, one is usually only purchasing the right to use the software. The ownership of the code that comprises the program stays with the producer. This means that one cannot alter the program or resell it. The vast majority of software licenses require that one copy of a program be purchased for each computer on which it is to be run. And no, the inability to pay for software is not a justification for illegal copying anymore than the inability to pay for a book is any justification for shoplifting it from a bookstore.

Betty downloads a solitaire card game from the Internet that is "shareware." It can be legally used for 30 days and then Betty must either delete it from her computer or send its author a fee. Betty has been using the game for 30 days.

Software falls into three main types: freeware (that which can be used without payment indefinitely); shareware (that which can be used for a trial period and then must either be erased or purchased); and commercial software (that which must be purchased before use). Understanding the concept of shareware is a good way of helping students understand why purchasing software benefits them. The profits that software producers make are partially used to fund the development of more software. If the profit motive is lost from software creation, less software and fewer improvements are likely to be made.

Cindy finds some good information about plant growth nutrients for her science fair project on a CD-ROM reference title. She uses the copy function of the computer to take an entire paragraph from the CD-ROM article and paste it directly into her report. She also forgets write down the title of the article and the CD-ROM from which it was taken. When she writes her report, she does not cite the source in her bibliography.

Plagiarism is easier than ever, thanks to the computer. Students need to understand when and how to cite sources in both print and electronic formats.

Albert finds a site on the Internet that is a repository of old term papers. He downloads one on ancient Greece, changes the title, and submits it as his own.

Academic work is increasingly becoming available for sale or downloading from the Internet. On-line services now offer help in writing "personal" essays requested for college admissions offices. How are such services alike or unlike ghostwritten biographies and speeches of celebrities and politicians?

Fahad is upset with his friend George. He finds the data disk on which George has been storing his essays and erases it.

Does deleting a file or erasing a disk constitute the destruction of property? After all the magnetic medium of the hard drive or the plastic case of the computer disk is left intact. All that has changed is the polarization of some magnetic particles bonded to a circle of plastic. Students need to learn to treat intellectual property, existing only in virtual spaces, the same way they would treat physical property and that the theft or destruction of such property is unethical (and unlawful).

With her teacher's permission, Lucy uses the classroom computer to download a program from the Internet that has instructions on how to make paper airplanes. After using the program, the classroom computer does not seem to work very well, crashing often and randomly destroying files. Lucy thinks she might have downloaded a virus along with the paper airplane program.

Students need to know about the unethical practices of others and how protect themselves from those practices. Computer viruses, often infecting a computer through downloading software from the Internet, can be detected and destroyed by virus protection programs. Students need to know how to find, install, and use these programs.

Henry's older friend Hank, a high school student, has discovered the password to the school's student information system. Because Hank feels a teacher has unfairly given him a poor grade, he plans to create a "bomb" which will erase all the information on the office computer.

Citizens (including students) have the ethical responsibility for reporting wrongdoing, including destruction of property. And while there are lots of reasons why students are reluctant to do so, as adults we need to express our beliefs that reporting unethical or criminal behavior serves a social purpose. Younger students often believe that school property is owned by the teachers and administrators, and are surprised to learn that it their parents' taxes or fees that must be used to pay for vandalized or stolen school resources.

Appropriate use - Does this use of the technology have educational value and is it in keeping with the rules of my family, my church, my school and my government?

Jack's class has been using the digital camera to take pictures for the school year book. Jack has found that he can use a computer program to change the photographs. He has used the program so far to make himself look like the tallest boy in the class, to blacken out the front tooth of a girl he doesn't like, and to give his teacher slightly crossed eyes.

While this example may seem frivolous or even like "good fun," journalistic integrity is a serious issue which even young writers and photographers need to be aware of. Deliberate distortion of events whether through words or pictures may harm both those involved in the event as well as the reputation of the reporter.

Just for fun, thirteen year old Alice tells the other people on her electronic mailing list that she is twenty years old and a nursing student. Others on the list have begun emailing her health-related questions.

Disguise, impersonation, and other forms of "trying on" new personalities are common childhood and adolescent behaviors. The anonymity of the Internet limits such impersonation only to the degree that a lack of a student's writing skills or sophistication of thought allows discovery. Role-playing in a physical context is often seen as both healthy and educational. We need to help students ask when such activities are productive and when they might be harmful.

Penelope has found a Web site that has "gross jokes" on it. She prints the pages out and shares them with her friends.

A good deal of Internet content, if not obscene, is certainly tasteless, offensive, and lacking in educational value. Schools should define and teachers should help students understand the qualities and conditions under which an item becomes inappropriate for school use. Students need to understand the concepts of pornography, racism, and sexism. Students may be exposed to information produced by hate groups and political extremists. Such experiences may be springboards to meaningful discussions about propaganda and free speech issues.

Chang sends an email message to his sister who attends a school across town. In this email he uses profanities and racial slurs.

Most schools have harassment policies. Students need to understand that such behavior is wrong regardless of its medium.

The computers in the library always seem to be busy. Otis tells the librarian he is working on a research project, but actually uses the computer to access the latest soccer scores posted on the Internet.

Most schools allow students to use free time in school to complete personal tasks -to read a book or magazine for enjoyment, to write a letter to a friend, or to draw for pleasure. Technology, too, should be available for student to use to pursue individual interests - to play a game, to send personal email, or to search for Internet information of personal value. The ethical issue here becomes that of an allocation of resources. For most schools, the demand for technology has outpaced its acquisition. Computers and Internet access are usually in short supply, and priority needs to be given to students who have an academic task to complete.

Just for fun, Nellie sets the print command on her computer to print 50 copies of an electronic encyclopedia article she's been reading, and then walks away.

Deliberate waste of school materials is not uncommon, and students again need to understand that it is wrong to waste finite resources. As with the vandalism questions, students need to understand that everyone is effected by such activities.

What students need to understand.

It is quite obvious that students need to understand and apply both school rules and local and national laws that apply to information technology use, especially those related to privacy, property and appropriateness as described above. They need to know the consequences, both immediate and in the long term for society, if they choose to act against school rules or their country's laws.

Students also need to know that the ability of officials to catch individuals breaking these rules and codes of conduct is growing. Network security systems are becoming more sophisticated in tracking who uses what resource at what time. Students need to realize that most web browsers keep a viewable log of recently visited sites, that most email includes a return address, and that some schools are using programs that record all the keystrokes a student makes during a computer session. All of us need to understand that organizations have the right to search file server space and read the email of students (and staff), especially if there is probable cause. Electronic fingerprints, virtual footprints, and broken digital locks are growing more visible each day.

Students need to understand both their rights and responsibilities related to information technology use. In your school is Internet access a right or a privilege? As the Internet becomes a more indispensable source of information and learning activities, it may

become viewed as an integral part of one's right to an education. We have an obligation to teach students that they have a right to due process if charged a violation of rules or laws. Our Acceptable Use Policies need to articulate what that due process entails. Pragmatically, students need to know how to protect themselves and their data from strangers, hackers, computer viruses, and unauthorized use.

What activities teach ethical behaviors?

Business Ethics magazine suggests that businesses take a proactive approach to ethical issues. That advice is also good for schools and classrooms: Teachers must:

- *Articulate values.* Clearly display lists and create handouts of conduct codes.
- *Reinforce ethical behaviors and react to non-ethical behaviors.* Technology use behaviors should be treated no differently than other behaviors - good or bad - and the consequences of student behaviors should be the same. It is important not to over react incidences of technological misuse either.
- *Model ethical behaviors.* Students learn more from what we do than what we say. All rules of ethical conduct we expect from our students, we must display. Verbalization of how we personally make decisions is a very powerful teaching tool.
- *Create technology environments that help students avoid temptations.* Computer screens that are easily monitored (no pun intended), passwords not written down or left easily found, and the habit of logging out of secure network systems all help remove the opportunities for technology misuse in a classroom.
- *Encourage discussion of ethical issues.* "Cases," whether from news sources or from actual school events, can provide superb discussion starters and should be used when students are actually learning computer skills. Students need practice in creating meaningful analogies between the virtual world and the physical world. How is reading another person's email without their permission like and unlike reading their physical mail?
- *Stress the consideration of principles rather than relying on a detailed set of rules.* Although sometimes more difficult to enforce in a consistent manner, a set of a few guidelines rather than lengthy set of specific rules is more beneficial to students in the long run. By applying guidelines rather than following rules, students engage in higher level thinking processes and learn behaviors that will continue into their next classroom, their homes, and their adult lives.

Additionally, students' understandings of ethic concepts need to be assessed. Technology use privileges should not be given to students until they have demonstrated that they know and can apply ethical standards and school policies. Testing of appropriate use needs to be done especially prior to student gaining on-line privileges such as email accounts or Internet access. The teacher should keep evidence of testing on file in case there is a question of whether there has been instruction on appropriate use.

Schools also have an obligation to educate parents about ethical technology use. Through school newsletters, talks at parent organization meetings, and through school orientation programs, the school staff needs to inform and enlist the aid of parents in teaching and enforcing good technology practices.

Finally, ethical instruction needs to be on going. A single lesson, a single unit, or a single curriculum strand will not suffice. All teachers, librarians, and staff members must integrate ethical instruction into every activity that uses technology.

Updated resource list can be found at <http://www.doug-johnson.com/ethics/index.html>

Ethics questionnaire I

Privacy

- **Whose privacy is at risk?**
 - **What danger or discomfort might the unethical action cause?**
 - **Is there a parallel in the physical world to this scenario?**
 - **Other comments? Other incidents?**
- 1) John fills out a survey form on a computer game web page. The survey asks for his email address, mailing address, and telephone number which he fills in. In the following weeks, he receives several advertisements in the mail as well as dozens of email messages about new computer games. Were John's actions:
 - a) Right
 - b) Wrong
 - c) Sometimes right and sometimes wrong
 - d) I don't know
 - 2) Adele "meets" Frank, who shares her interest in figure skating, in an Internet chat room. After several conversations in the following weeks, Frank asks Adele for her home telephone number and address. Adele likes Frank and gives him the information he asked for.
 - 3) The principal suspects Paul of using his school email account to send offensive messages to other students. He asks the network manager to give him copies of Paul's email.
 - 4) Jennie's sister needs to leave the computer to take laundry from the dryer. While she is gone, Jennie finds she has been working on an email to her best friend and that her email program is still open. She checks to see what sis has to say.
 - 5) Ms. West, Terry's teacher, needs to leave the room to take care of an emergency. While she is gone, Terry finds that Ms. West had been working on student progress reports and that her grading program is still open on her computer. He checks to see what grade he is getting and finds the grades for several other students.
 - 6) Alfreda received an unsolicited email in her student account for a product. Included in the email was an email address she could respond to if she did not wish to receive any additional email from this company. After replying, the volume of spam in her account has increased dramatically.
 - 7) Mr. Black, the school library media specialist, posts lists of overdue materials on the school Intranet. The list includes student names and titles of the materials. Clarice is upset by this policy and asks the principal how it can be changed and for her parents to intervene.
 - 8) Joel shared his password for his email network access account with his buddy Lyle. He has found that several documents are missing from his online storage space.
 - 9) While the teacher was out of the room, Trixie decided to visit a site that she knew violated the school and classroom rules. The next day, the teacher brought Trixie and her parents in for a conference. A program on the computer she was using logged the Internet sites she visited. Trixie felt her privacy had been violated
 - 10) Ike and Tina created a webpage to meet the requirements of a school assignment. On the webpage they included their pictures and email addresses hoping to get feedback on their page.
 - 11) Anne has a credit card with the permission of her parents. She finds a music CD that is not available locally on a website. She fills in the online order form with her name, address, telephone number and credit card, and hits the "submit" button.
 - 12) In Sun-Kim's house the computer with Internet access is in the family room. Sun-Kim has been lobbying her mother to let her have a computer with Internet access in her room since her younger brothers often make it difficult for her to concentrate while she is online.

Property

- **What is the property?**
 - **Who is its owner?**
 - **What danger or discomfort might the unethical action cause?**
 - **Is there a parallel in the physical world to this scenario?**
 - **Other comments? Other incidents?**
- 1) Jerry borrows Ben's game disks for *Monster Truck Rally II* and installs them on his home computer. He says he will erase the game if he does not like it, or will buy the game for himself if he likes it. Jerry has been using the game now for over a month and has not erased it from his computer and has not bought his own copy. Is Jerry's use of the game:
 - a) Right
 - b) Wrong
 - c) Sometimes right and sometimes wrong
 - d) I don't know
 - 2) Betty downloads a solitaire card game from the Internet that is "shareware." It can be legally used for 30 days and then Betty must either delete it from her computer or send its author a fee. Betty has been using the game for 30 days.
 - 3) Cindy finds some good information about plant growth nutrients for her science fair project on a CD-ROM reference title. She uses the copy function of the computer to take an entire paragraph from the CD-ROM article and paste it directly into her report. She writes down the title of the article and the CD-ROM from which it was taken. When she writes her report, she provides a citation and lists the source in her bibliography.
 - 4) Albert finds a site on the Internet that is a collection of old term papers for students to read and use. He downloads one on ancient Greece, changes the title, and submits it as his own.
 - 5) Fahad is upset with his friend George. He finds the data disk on which George has been storing his essays and erases it.
 - 6) Lucy uses the family computer to download a program from the Internet that has instructions on how to make paper airplanes. After using the program, the computer does not seem to work very well, crashing often and randomly destroying files. Lucy thinks she might have downloaded a virus along with the paper airplane program.
 - 7) Henry's older friend Hank, a high school student, has discovered the password to the school's student information system. Because Hank feels a teacher has unfairly given him a poor grade, he plans to create a "bomb" which will erase all the information on the office computer. Henry tells his dad about Hank's plan.
 - 8) Brady has been taking advantage of a Napster-like peer-to-peer service to download all his favorite songs, save them on his hard drive, and loading them to his MP3 player. He can cite articles that show the sales of music CDs have actually risen as a result of music "swapping" on the Internet.
 - 9) Sara has begun working and has some money she would like to invest. She receives an email that promises a 500% return on her investment. She sends the company a check for \$200.
 - 10) Raul is creating a videotape for his History Day project. As background music he is using Billy Joel's song "We Didn't Start the Fire" that he has digitized from a CD he owns. The song works well for his exploration of the causes of global conflict. The projects will compete initially within his school and winners will advance to regional competitions.:
 - 11) Barry is very careful about not plagiarizing. When using information from the online encyclopedia, he is careful about changing at least a few words in each sentence.
 - 12) Benita is rightfully proud of her personal Internet site. She has found pictures, cartoons, and sayings on the web and copied them to her site. She links to lots of other favorite sites. When asked if her use of items she has found on the web might violate copyright, she replied that she was careful to use only those things that did not have a copyright notice.

aPppropriate use

- **What is the inappropriate action?**
 - **Who committed it?**
 - **What danger or discomfort might the unethical action cause?**
 - **Is there a parallel in the physical world to this scenario?**
 - **Other comments? Other incidents?**
- 1) Jack's class has been using the digital camera to take pictures for the school year book. Jack has found that he can use a computer program to change the photographs. He has used the program so far to make himself look like the tallest boy in the class, to blacken out the front tooth of his best buddy who will think it is funny, and to give his teacher slightly crossed eyes. Jack's actions are:
 - a) Right
 - b) Wrong
 - c) Sometimes right and sometimes wrong
 - d) I don't know
 - 2) Just for fun, thirteen year old Alice tells the other people on her electronic mailing list that she is twenty years old and a nursing student. Others on the list have begun emailing her health-related questions, but she hasn't answered them.
 - 3) Penelope has found a Web site that has "gross jokes" on it. She prints the pages out and shares them with her friends.
 - 4) The computers in the library always seem to be busy. Otis tells the librarian he is working on a research project, but actually uses the computer to access the latest soccer scores posted on the Internet.
 - 5) Just for fun, Nellie sets the print command on her computer to print 50 copies of an electronic encyclopedia article she's been reading, and then walks away.
 - 6) As a joke, Chang sends an email message to his sister who attends a school across town. In this email he uses profanities and racial slurs.
 - 7) Clark downloads a page with sexually explicit photographs from the Internet to a computer in the classroom. He shows its contents to others in his class.
 - 8) Linda suffers from an eating disorder. She has been accessing "pro-anorexia" sites on the Internet and participating in chats with other young people who share her condition in order to get support for the continuation of her behaviors.
 - 9) All the students at Peter and Paul's school have been given PDAs (personal digital assistants – small, handheld computers). The boys have been using the wireless transmission features to exchange notes and test answers in class.

- 10) Bill has created an "alternative" school website on a commercial website. His site satirizes school activities, holds doctored photos of staff members, and makes fun of fellow students. When the principal discovers the website, he withdraws the recommendation he has written for Bill in application for a college scholarship.
- 11) Debbie is running for class president. She uses an electronic mailing list (listserv) to send regular emails to all the students in her class explaining her platform and actions she would take as president.
- 12) Alex is observed by the library media specialist accessing "adult" sites. When asked about his choice of sites, he readily admits that he has chosen to do his senior thesis on Internet pornography.

Web 2.0 Issues: Are these really new?

- 1) Helena is proud of her MySpace account. By keeping it accessible to everyone, she has over 100 friends listed.
- 2) Bob feels his teacher treated him unfairly and creates a "Kill This Teacher" blog that invites other students to submit "creative" means of harming teachers in his school.
- 3) Lisa posts photographs from recent party that involved drinking on the Flickr website along with a really funny video of kids making out on YouTube.

Permission is freely given for teachers to use this material with students as long as credit to the source is given. I welcome comments about your student's responses.

Doug Johnson
dougj@doug-johnson.com

Ethics questionnaire II

Privacy

- 1) John fills out a survey form in a computer magazine. The survey asks for his mailing address, and telephone number which he fills in. In the following weeks, he receives several advertisements in the mail as well as dozens of telephone solicitations about new computer games.
- 2) Adele meets Frank, who shares her interest in figure skating, at the shopping center. After several conversations in the following weeks, Frank asks Adele for her home telephone number and address. Adele likes Frank and gives him the information he asked for.
- 3) The principal suspects Paul of writing offensive notes to other students. He asks the custodian for a key to Paul's locker so he can read through his notebooks.
- 4) Jennie's sister needs to leave her diary on the coffee table to take laundry from the dryer. While she is gone, Jennie checks to see what sis has to say.
- 5) Ms. West, Terry's teacher, needs to leave the room to take care of an emergency. While she is gone, Terry finds that Ms. West left her grade book open on her desk. He checks to see what grade he is getting and looks at the grades for several other students.
- 6) Alfreda received an unsolicited catalog for products that made her uncomfortable in the mail at home. She called the company, asking to be removed from its mailing list.
- 7) Mr. Black, the school library media specialist, posts lists of overdue materials on the bulletin board outside the media center. The list includes student names and titles of the materials. Clarice is upset by this policy and asks the principal how it can be changed and for her parents to intervene.
- 8) Joel shared his locker combination with his buddy Lyle. He has found that several books are missing from the locker.
- 9) While the bus driver wasn't looking, Trixie decided throw a paper wad at another student, an action that she knew violated the school and bus rules. The next day, the teacher brought Trixie and her parents in for a conference. A video camera on the bus showed her throwing the paper. Trixie felt her privacy had been violated.
- 10) Ike and Tina wrote a newsletter to meet the requirements of a school assignment. In the newsletter, which they distributed through the school and town, they included their pictures and phone numbers hoping to get feedback on their writing.

- 11) Anne has a credit card with the permission of her parents. She finds a music CD that is not available locally in a catalog with a toll-free telephone number. She gives the operator who answers the call her name, address, telephone number and credit card in to complete the order. What Anne did is:
- 12) In Sun-Kim's house the telephone and encyclopedias are in the family room. Sun-Kim has been lobbying her mother to let her have a telephone access in her room and move the encyclopedias there as well since her younger brothers often make it difficult for her to concentrate. Would allowing Sun-Kim to have a telephone and the encyclopedia in her room be:

Property

- 1) Jerry borrows Ben's comic book *Monster Truck Rally II* and photocopies it. He says he will throw the copy away after he's read it or will buy the comic for himself if he likes it. Jerry has had the comic now for over a month and has not thrown it away and has not bought his own copy.
- 2) Betty orders a "free trial version" of a solitaire card game. It can be legally used for 30 days and then Betty must either pay for it or return it. Betty has been using the game for 30 days.
- 3) Cindy finds some good information about plant growth nutrients for her science fair in an encyclopedia. She copies an entire paragraph from the encyclopedia article directly into her report. She writes down the title of the article and the encyclopedia from which it was taken. When she writes her report, she cites the paragraph and lists the source in her bibliography.
- 4) Albert tells his older brother he had to write a report on ancient Greece. His brother trades him a report that he wrote two years ago for the same class for a t-shirt. Albert recopies the report, changes the title, and submits it as his own.
- 5) Fahad is upset with his friend George. He finds the notebook in which George has been writing his essays and tears out all the pages with writing.
- 6) Lucy visits a friend who is not feeling well. A few days later, Lucy and her brother get a rash and headache. Lucy's friend had the chicken pox.
- 7) Henry's older friend Hank, a high school student, has found a key to the school's office. Because Hank feels a teacher has unfairly given him a poor grade, he plans to sneak in at night and destroy all the student records. Henry tells his dad about Hank's plan.
- 8) Brady has been taping songs off the radio and from CDs he has borrowed from his friends.
- 9) Sara has begun working and has some money she would like to invest. She receives a flyer in the mail that promises a 500% return on her investment. She sends the company a check for \$200.

- 10) Raul is creating a newspaper for his History Day project. He has used photocopies of photographs from library books to help illustrate his stories. The projects will compete initially within his school and winners will advance to regional competitions.
- 11) Barry is very careful about not plagiarizing. When using information from a magazine, he is careful about changing at least a few words in each sentence.
- 12) Benita is rightfully proud of the inside of her locker. She made photocopies of pictures, cartoons, and sayings in magazines and has taped them to the locker. When asked if her use of items she has found in magazines might violate copyright, she replied that she was careful to use only those things that did not have a copyright notice.

aPpropriate use

- 1) Jack's class has been using the camera to take pictures for the school year book. Jack has found that he can change the photographs if he draws on them carefully. He has blackened-out the front tooth of his best friend who thinks it is funny and gives his teacher slightly crossed eyes.
- 2) Just for fun, thirteen year old Alice calls into a radio talk show and says that she is twenty years old and a nursing student. She offers some health-related advice.
- 3) Penelope has a book with "gross jokes" in it. She brings the book to school and shares the jokes with her friends.
- 4) The tables in the library always seem to be full. Otis tells the librarian he is working on a research project, but actually uses his time in the library to read *Sports Illustrated*.
- 5) Just for fun, Nellie sets the print command on the photocopier to print 50 copies of an article she's been reading, and then walks away.
- 6) As a joke, Chang calls his sister who attends a school across town. During the call, he uses profanities and racial slurs.
- 7) Clark brings a copy of his dad's *Penthouse* magazine to school. He shows its contents to others in his class.
- 8) Linda suffers from an eating disorder. She has been meeting at a local coffee house with other young people who share her condition in order to get support for the continuation of her behaviors.
- 9) Peter and Paul have been passing notes in class and devising schemes to share answers in class using a set of hand signals.
- 10) Bill has created an "alternative" school newspaper that he sells off school grounds. His paper satirizes school activities, holds doctored photos of staff members, and makes fun of fellow students. When the principal

discovers the newspaper, he withdraws the recommendation he has written for Bill in application for a college scholarship.

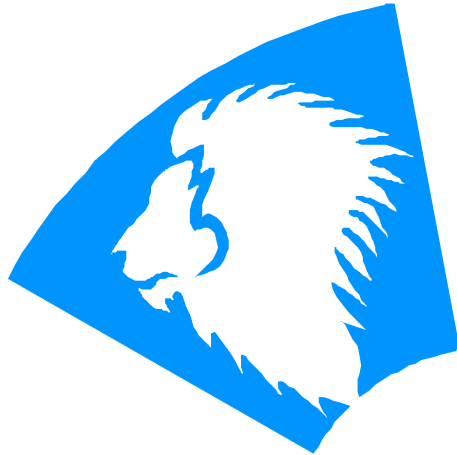
- 11) Debbie is running for class president. She makes posters and hangs them on the walls of the school and on student lockers. Her campaign committee calls students at home and sends "elect Debbie" messages to their pagers.
- 12) Alex is observed by the library media specialist reading "adult" novels. When asked about his choice of reading material, he readily admits that he has chosen to do his senior thesis on the history of pornography

Permission is freely given for teachers to use this material with students as long as credit to the source is given. I welcome comments about your student's responses.

Doug Johnson
 dougj@doug-johnson.com
 www.doug-johnson.com

CHEATING and how to avoid it

**A student guide to plagiarism, cheating, and intellectual property use
in Anytown Public Schools, AnyTown USA**



What's Inside?

Definition of Cheating
Examples of Cheating
Why You Shouldn't Cheat
How We Know You Cheat
How You Get Caught
Consequences of Cheating
How to Avoid Cheating

Adapted with permission from Battle Creek (MI) High School

Definition of Cheating:

Anytown Public Schools defines cheating as using some else's words, work, test answers, and/or ideas and claiming them as your own.

Examples of cheating:

- Hiring someone to write a paper, buying a paper or project or downloading a paper from an online service
- Not properly citing the works, pictures, music, video or other forms of communication in your research projects.
- Rewording someone else's words (paraphrasing) and not giving them credit for the ideas you have built on thereby passing someone's ideas off as your own.
- Sharing files (e.g. an Excel worksheet) in a business class
- Copying math homework
- Letting your project partner do all the work and just putting your name on the final report
- Letting your mom or dad build your project
- Looking at another's test or sharing what is on a test with students in other sections of that class
- Turning in your brother's or sister's old project

Why you shouldn't cheat:

- People's words, work, and/or ideas are considered "intellectual property" – meaning the creator owns them. Some types of plagiarism not only violate school rules, but state and federal laws.
- You are not practicing skills you will need to know to succeed in college or the workplace: how to write, analyze, form conclusions or generate new ideas.
- Others will look at you as a "cheater" and your character and reputation will suffer.
- You will feel bad about yourself when you take credit for others work.

How you get caught:

- **New technology** Teachers and media specialists can simply plug a phrase from your work into a simple search engine and find where in cyberspace you scammed an idea or paper.
- **Teachers talk** Teachers do talk to one another. You would be surprised to find out that some students have tried to turn in work in one class that their friends have turned in in another teacher's class.
- **Teachers remember** Work that was turned in by a friend or relative years before can still be recognized by teachers if you try to turn it in again as your own. When teachers read a set of tests, lab reports, essays, or papers, they do not forget what other students have written. There is a fine line between collaboration and plagiarism – be aware of it.
- **Teachers know your writing** Teachers know how students write. It doesn't take much to recognize what was written by a particular student or what was written by someone else – say on a website.

Consequences of cheating:

The consequences for getting caught plagiarizing someone else's words, work, and/or ideas will range from receiving no credit for the assignment until the work is yours to losing credit for the entire class. Check with your teacher and school handbook for more specific information.

How to avoid cheating:

- The best way to avoid cheating and plagiarism is to find ways to personalize your assignments. React in your writing about how your topic might personally affect YOU, your family, your school, or your community. An original conclusion which is supported by facts from other works properly cited is never cheating. Write in your own voice, not just in your own words
- Organize your work so that you don't run into a last minute time crunch that keeps you from studying, writing, creating, revising, reflecting and making your work your own.
- Keep good records as you do research of where you found your supporting ideas. It's easier than doing research twice – once for finding the information and again for doing the bibliography.
- ALWAYS include a bibliography. list of resources, or acknowledgement whenever you use the work or ideas of others. If you can't provide a citation, don't use the source.
- Understand that using other's work IS permissible and usually necessary to create well-supported arguments, conclusions and answers to questions. Giving credit to the source of this work keeps it from being plagiarism.
- Make as large a percentage of your work original as possible. Use direct quotes or paraphrasing only when what you find is written in such a way that it clarifies or make memorable the idea expressed.

Choosing when to give credit

Taken from the Purdue University's Website: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_plagiar.html Used with permission.

Need to document:	No need to document:
When you are using or referring to somebody else's words or ideas from a magazine, book, newspaper, song, TV program, movie, Web page, computer program, letter, advertisement, or any other medium	When you are writing your own experiences, your own observations, your own insights, your own thoughts, your own conclusions about a subject
When you use information gained through interviewing another person	When you are using "common knowledge*" — folklore, common sense observations, shared information within your field of study or cultural group
When you copy the exact words or a "unique phrase" from somewhere	When you are compiling generally accepted facts
When you reprint any diagrams, illustrations, charts, and pictures	When you are writing up your own experimental results
When you use ideas that others have given you in conversations or over email	* Material is probably common knowledge if . . . <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ You find the same information undocumented in at least five other sources ▪ You think it is information that your readers will already know ▪ You think a person could easily find the information with general reference sources

Making sure you are safe:

Taken from the Purdue University's Website: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_plagiar.html Used with permission.

	Action during the writing process	Appearance on the finished product
When researching, note-taking, and interviewing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mark everything that is someone else's words with a big Q (for quote) or with big quotation marks ▪ Indicate in your notes which ideas are taken from sources (S) and which are your own insights (ME) ▪ Record all of the relevant documentation information in your notes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Proofread and check with your notes (or photocopies of sources) to make sure that anything taken from your notes is acknowledged in some combination of the ways listed below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In-text citation ○ Footnotes ○ Bibliography ○ Quotation marks ○ Indirect quotations
When paraphrasing and summarizing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ First, write your paraphrase and summary without looking at the original text, so you rely only on your memory. ▪ Next, check your version with the original for content, accuracy, and mistakenly borrowed phrases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Begin your summary with a statement giving credit to the source: According to Jonathan Kozol, ... ▪ Put any unique words or phrases that you cannot change, or do not want to change, in quotation marks: ... <i>"savage inequalities" exist throughout our educational system (Kozol).</i>
When quoting directly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Keep the person's name near the quote in your notes, and in your paper ▪ Select those direct quotes that make the most impact in your paper -- too many direct quotes may lessen your credibility and interfere with your style 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mention the person's name either at the beginning of the quote, in the middle, or at the end ▪ Put quotation marks around the text that you are quoting ▪ Indicate added phrases in brackets ([]) and omitted text with ellipses (. . .)
When quoting indirectly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Keep the person's name near the text in your notes, and in your paper ▪ Rewrite the key ideas using different words and sentence structures than the original text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mention the person's name either at the beginning of the information, or in the middle, or at that end ▪ Double check to make sure that your words and sentence structures are different than the original text

If you have any questions whether something you are doing may be cheating or plagiarism, talk to your parents, teacher, or media specialist.



Policies 2.0: Rules for the Social Web

Threshold Magazine, Summer 2007

In the spring of 2006, the television news program *Dateline* aired a story about how pedophiles use information gleaned from the social networking site MySpace <www.myspace.com> to locate and abduct children. The story set off a storm of reactions in schools and communities around the nation so strong that even federal legislation was proposed to address this perceived threat to children. Parents learned almost overnight that their children were leading two lives – the one they knew about and one they didn't – online. And if the television news was to be believed, it was a certainty that their children's online activities put them at risk in the physical world.

As a result, schools are still struggling to determine just how to deal with the problems and possibilities of MySpace and other social networking sites.

What is “the social web?”

MySpace is only one incarnation of what is popularly being called Web 2.0, the social web or the read/write web. The simplest explanation of this phenomenon is that the World Wide Web is changing from a “read only” resource to one which user input is not just allowed, but encouraged. The development of online tools that allow content to be entered, uploaded, edited, displayed and made public has made this Web 2.0 possible.

These are some of the more popular manifestations of the social web as of spring 2007. But be warned: new online applications for sharing personal information seem to surface on a weekly, if not daily, basis.

- **MySpace and Facebook** are among the most popular sites where users can easily post information about themselves, create lists of friends, and share comments about interests. According to the Pew Internet & American Life project <www.pewinternet.org/pdfs/PIP_SNS_Data_Memo_Jan_2007.pdf> 55% of all online American youths ages 12-17 use online social networking sites.
- **Blogs** (web logs) started as personal journals, often with highly political overtones. A blog in its most generic sense is a website that is updated on a regular basis, displays the content in reverse chronological order (newest entries first), and allows, even invites, reader response. Technorati <technorati.com> estimates there are about 55 million blogs as of early 2007.
- **Wikis** are online tools that allow group editing. The most popular wiki is Wikipedia <www.wikipedia.org>, a user-edited encyclopedia that rivals traditional encyclopedias for student use.
- **Social bookmarking** sites such as del.icio.us <del.icio.us> allow users to share their Internet bookmarks and create descriptive “tags” to help organize these resources. **Flickr** <www.flickr.com> does the same for photographs, and **YouTube** <www.youtube.com> allows video tagging and sharing.
- **3-D virtual environments** like Second Life <secondlife.com> and Teen Second Life <teen.secondlife.com> allow users to create avatars, pictorial representations of themselves, and explore these worlds, converse with other avatars, participate in their economies, create habitats, and attend events, some educational.

A comprehensive list of sites for social networking and user created information appears in *The Horizon Report- 2007* published by The Media Consortium and EDUCAUSE <www.nmc.org/pdf/2007_Horizon_Report.pdf>.

How do Web 2.0 safe and ethical use issues differ from those of Web 1.0?

Educators have been concerned about the safe and appropriate use of the Internet for as long as it has been available as a resource in schools. Our district's board-adopted acceptable use policy (AUP) <www.isd77.k12.mn.us/district/isd77policies/524.pdf> reflects the requirements of the Childhood Internet Protection Act (CIPA) of 2001. This law requires schools make efforts to ensure that students cannot access materials that can be classified as “child pornography, obscenity and harmful to minors” and requires that a content filtering system be put in place. When such devices are properly installed and updated, access to content that meets CIPA's definitions can be deterred – at least from school networks.

The social web, however, is creating a new set of concerns about safe and ethical behaviors of the Internet by students – ones less easily controlled by mechanical solutions such as filters. These include:

- **Protecting children from predators.** Pedophiles using the information gleaned from sites like FaceBook and MySpace is arguably the area of greatest concern to parents and educators. According to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children <www.missingkids.com>, “Approximately one in seven youths (10 to 17 years) experience a sexual solicitation or approach while online.”
- **Protecting children from each other (cyberbullying).** Nationally recognized Internet safety expert Nancy Willard <www.cyberbully.org> defines cyberbullying as “sending or posting harmful or cruel text or images using the Internet or other digital communication devices,” and she documents instances when such activities have resulted severe psychological damage to the victim.

- **Protecting children from themselves (making inappropriate and personal information public).** Larry Magid and Anne Collier in their book *MySpace Unraveled: What it is and how to use it safely*. (Peachpit, 2006) argue that the greatest likelihood of children and young adults doing harm to themselves on the social web is by posting pictures and messages that portray them in a negative light and that can be viewed by teachers, coaches, relatives, college admission officers, and potential employers. Few students (and adults) understand that material once placed on the Internet and made public has the potential of always being accessible. Projects like The Internet Archive <www.archive.org> store snapshots of the Internet and make them available as historical documents long after websites have changed.

In other words, the danger to kids in Web 2.0 comes not from what they may find online, but from what they themselves put online for others to access.

Our current acceptable use policy (cited above) does include the following language:

Users will not use the school district system to post private information about another person, personal contact information about themselves or other persons, or other personally identifiable information, including but not limited to, home addresses, telephone numbers, identification numbers, account numbers, access codes or passwords, labeled photographs or other information that would make the individual's identity easily traceable....

As educators, we must respond proactively to these real dangers children face in using social networking and read/write web resources. But unfortunately the knee-jerk reaction has been to block *all* social networking resources – blogs, wikis, YouTube, Flickr, and virtual worlds. The well-named, but misguided, Federal 2006 Deleting Online Predators Act (DOPA) proposed last May would have required all schools and libraries receiving E-Rate to filter out all interactive websites since they might lead to students' contact with online predators.

American Library Association president Leslie Berger issued a statement highly critical of the nearly unanimous vote (96%) that passed the bill in the House:

This unnecessary and overly broad legislation will hinder students' ability to engage in distance learning and block library computer users from accessing a wide array of essential Internet applications including instant messaging, email, wikis and blogs.

The attempt to pass similar (and worse) legislation continues. Andy Carvin on his learning.now blog for PBS teachers reports on what he calls "DOPA Jr." <www.pbs.org/teachers/learning.now/2007/01/lifting_the_hood_on_dopa_jr.html>

What is problematic about DOPA and school districts' decisions to block blogs, wikis and chatrooms is that these policies block formats, not contents. In other words, since a student might place personal information on MySpace, all blogs are blocked. This would be like a school banning all magazines because *Penthouse* is published in magazine format. Formats are content-neutral, but many adults seem to be having a difficult time understanding this.

Safety comes from education, not blocking.

Even if social networking sites are effectively blocked in schools, most students will still get access to them. The Pew study cited earlier in this article found:

Teens often use the Internet in several locales, especially home and school. This survey shows that teenagers' use of social network sites relates to the place where he or she uses the internet most often. Teens who go online most often from home are more likely to report using social network sites than are teens who go online most often from school (42%). Home users are more likely to have profiles posted online (59% compared with 38%) and are more likely to visit social networks once a day or more frequently than are those who go online mostly from school.

Proxies and mobile networking devices also help the ambitious student avoid district filtering efforts. Do you know about SchoolBoredom.com <www.schoolboredom.com/>? Trust me, your kids do. Highly portable, personal networking devices that use cell phone signals to access the Internet are gaining in popularity among students – who, of course, bring them to school.

To think simple Internet filters will eliminate or even minimize the real risks associated with social networking, is a dangerous misconception. It will take educating students about the appropriate use of the Web 2.0 to genuinely protect them.

Responsible adults are using online curricula from organizations like iLearn <ilearn.isafe.org/>. (See sidebar for a list of resources for parents and teachers.) One site, NetSmartz, has created eye-opening videos such as "Tracking Theresa" and "Julie's Journey" <www.netsmartz.org/resources/reallife.htm>. Teachers find these ready-made curricula simple to integrate into their classrooms when teaching safety units.

Our school district, like others, has been actively working to educate communities and parents on issues surrounding Internet safety. We have developed a resource list of websites for parents about safe Internet use <www.isd77.k12.mn.us/parents>, have worked with

our parent-teacher organizations and community education department to arrange programs about the topic, and have sent home reminders about good computer use in building newsletters home.

The need for the social web in schools – and children’s lives

Pioneering educators are finding exciting ways to make good use of Web 2.0 resources. Schools and libraries are replacing their newsletters with blogs that can be rapidly updated and allow readers to respond. Teachers are using wikis to facilitate peer-reviewed and collaborative writing projects – including student created textbooks. Social book marking sites are proving to be an efficient means of creating bibliographies and reading lists. Creative teachers are asking students to create Facebook-like profiles for literary characters. (Who *would* be on Juliet Capulet’s friends or music favorites list?) Virtual literary worlds are allowing students to walk through Orwell’s world of *1984* and Richard Wright’s *Native Son* Chicago setting.

But the issues are larger than these resources simply being used to facilitate traditional learning experiences. Henry Jenkins Director of the Comparative Media Studies Program at the MIT and author of the McArthur report, *Confronting the Challenges of Participatory Culture* <www.digitalllearning.macfound.org> writes: “We are using participation as a term that cuts across educational practices, creative processes, community life, and democratic citizenship. Our goals should be to encourage youth to develop the skills, knowledge, ethical frameworks, and self-confidence needed to be full participants in contemporary culture,” he asserts, and adds, “What a person can accomplish with an outdated machine in a public library with mandatory filtering software and no opportunity for storage or transmission pales in comparison to what person can accomplish with a home computer with unfettered Internet access, high bandwidth, and continuous connectivity... The school system’s inability to close this participation gap has negative consequences for everyone involved.”

Obviously, districts must create a balance between opportunity for student engagement and new teaching methods and the need to protect children. But it is not a simple determination to make.

How are good decisions made about filtering and policy?

Look at the language of CIPA – “obscene, child pornographic and harmful to minors.” These terms are open to a broad range of interpretations. Our own district’s board set AUP includes phrases like:

- The school district system has a limited educational purpose, which includes use of the system for classroom activities, professional or career development, and limited high-quality, self-discovery activities.
- Users will not use the school district system to access, review, upload, download, store, print, post, or distribute materials that use language or images that are inappropriate to the educational setting
- An individual investigation or search will be conducted if school authorities have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover a violation of law or school district policy.

“High-quality,” “inappropriate,” “reasonable.” Lovely, but ambiguous terms. Again, all open to interpretation.

Which leads to questions like this that I hear regularly from teachers and students – “Is there any definitive answer to what should or should not be filtered to meet CIPA requirements? Our technology director has been checking more little boxes on our filter.” Or, “Our district has blocked access to all blogs. How can we get this policy changed?”

Who in a school *should* ultimately decide what is blocked and what is accessible to students and staff?

Ultimately, school boards rule on specific instances of resource selection. But in our district, these daily procedural, rather than policy decisions, are made by our district Technology Advisory Committee, the same folks who make lots of technology planning and budget decisions. This committee is comprised primarily of educators - teachers, media specialists, and administrators - but also includes parents, students, businesspersons, college faculty members, and public librarians. And of course the committee includes our technical staff for their important input on security, compatibility and implementation issues. And we DO listen to everyone. Most of our building technology committees work in the same way. (You can find some tips on forming and running an advisory group at <www.doug-johnson.com/dougwri/advice.html>.)

This has worked well for us. On the difficult filtering issue for example, the committee decided that as a result of CIPA, we would install a filter, but it would be set at its *least* restrictive setting. Any teacher or librarian can have a site unblocked by simply requesting it – no questions asked. Adults are required to continue to monitor student access to the Internet as if no filter were present. The technicians know that it is the responsibility of the teaching staff to see that students do not access inappropriate materials, not theirs. This is a good policy decision that could not have been reached without a variety of voices heard during its making. And has held up well even as Web 2.0 resources have become available.

It is also a decision that I believe honors the spirit of intellectual freedom – that a resource is innocent until proven guilty. If anyone requests that a site or resource is blocked, the same due process accorded to print or audio visual materials is followed unless it is immediately apparent that the resource violates the “obscene, child pornography or harmful to minors” dictate of CIPA. Without a

formal process for the blocking of Internet-based materials, censorship becomes a real possibility. When a teacher complains to me when I refuse to block a game site, I explain that if I blocked every individual request, I would have to honor the request of the next parent who asks that a political or religious site is blocked. And I add that a formal reconsideration request can be made using the same form used to remove print instructional materials from the school.

Vicki Davis on her Cool Cat Blog <coolcatteacher.blogspot.com/2007/02/including-classmate-with-leukemia.html> reflects:

...it is not the tools that are inherently good or evil but rather the use of the tools.

A hammer can kill someone but it can also build a house.

A nail can be driven through a hand but it can also hold the roof over your head.

A fist can hit but a fist can also be clasped in your hand in love.

We do not outlaw hammers, nails, or fists -- we teach people to use them properly.

So should we do with blogs, wikis, podcasts, Skype, and any other tool that becomes available for use in the human experience!

Well said.

Sidebar: Recommended websites about Internet safety for parents

Center for Safe and Responsible Internet Use <csriu.org>

Children's Partnership <www.childrenspartnership.org>

CyberBullying information <www.cyberbully.org>

CyberSmart <cybersmart.org>

Family Guide Book <www.familyguidebook.com>

Get Net Wise <www.getnetwise.org>

iKeepSafe.org <ikeepsafe.org/PRC/>

McGruff Online Safety for Kids <www.mcgruff.org/advice/online_safety.php>

MediaWise <www.mediafamily.org/resources.shtml>

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children <www.ncmec.org>

NetLingo: Top 20 Internet Acronyms Every Parent Needs to Know <www.netlingo.com/top20teens.cfm>

NetSmartz <www.netsmartz.org/netparents.htm>

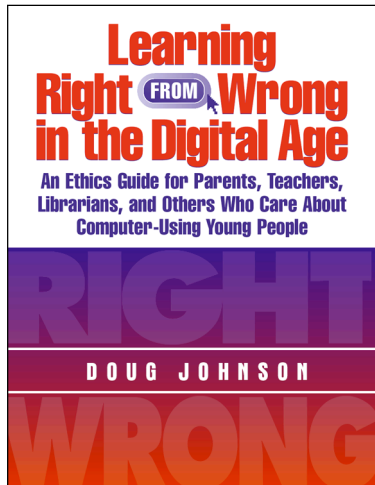
Play It Cyber Safe <www.playitcybersafe.com>

SafeKids.com <www.safekids.com>

SafeTeens.com <www.safeteens.com>

Safety Ed International <www.safetyed.org>

Wired Safety Website <www.wiredsafety.org/parent.html>



Learning Right from Wrong in the Digital Age:

An Ethics Guide for Parents, Teachers, Librarians, and Others Who Care about Computer-Using Young People

By Doug Johnson

Is it OK to download text from a Web site right into a term paper? What should you say about computer chat rooms or copying software programs? This book offers clear guidelines for appropriate behavior in the virtual world of computers, helping students of all ages explore the ethics of digital technology, from downloading explicit picture to guessing passwords. This timely resource includes questionnaires to be used with students, cheating guidelines, sample policies, a glossary of terms, and an extensive resource bibliography as well as the “Ten Commandments of Computer Ethics” with key moral imperatives for student of all ages.

Make sure your students know right from wrong!

ISBN 1-58683-131-3; May 2003; 175 pages; \$44.95

OTHER BOOKS BY DOUG JOHNSON:

THE INDISPENSABLE TEACHER’S GUIDE TO COMPUTER SKILLS

- Presents practical technological skills teachers can and want to use and teach to students
- Provides reproducible handouts, assessment, and evaluation forms

ISBN 0-938865-69-2; 119 pages; \$39. 95

THE INDISPENSABLE LIBRARIAN:

Surviving (and Thriving) in School Media Centers in the Information Age

- Relevant examples and useful advice on budgeting, facilities design, planning and evaluating, public relations, staff development, and more!
- Practical methods for leveraging technology’s popularity and effectiveness

ISBN 0-938865-64-1; 162 pages; \$36.95

ORDER FROM:

Linworth Publishing, Inc., 480 E. Wilson Bridge Rd., Suite L ,Worthington, OH 43085 Call: 800-786-5017; Fax: 614-436-9490 or email: www.linworth.com

Your Library-to-Classroom Connection with Books, Magazines, and Online