



May 2017

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

Collectively, in this digital age, we need to be aware of issues when they arise. Nationally and locally, schools are working to address concerns with regard to Internet safety. Recently, it has been brought to our attention that there is a gap in our system with respect to the filters used for screening images. LEPAC and administration have met and formed a committee to explore ways to address safe and responsible use of technology. This is an initiative to keep up with changing technology. Part of our response will be to work with our elementary colleagues and the district to develop a student code of conduct similar to the one our middle and secondary schools use.

Presently:

- We teach students through a variety of lessons how to use the internet appropriately and safely (such as sharing personal information) and talk about inappropriate searches
- The grade 4 and 5 students complete a digital portfolio each year that is available to parents – at <https://www.digitalpassport.org>
- We use district wide filters and we can request particular sites/web addresses be blocked

What we are working on:

- We are creating a link to an image search engine that is filtered for appropriate content named Kiddle. Note that our current text filters are very good, however content in images is tagged differently and is harder to filter.
- We are exploring the ability to create an 'alert' system for when students engage in searches that are inappropriate, so that we are aware of the situation and we can address the issue as a teachable moment
- We are reviewing our procedures, expectations and developing a code of conduct to include internet safety,
- We will review our supervision during Internet use, particularly with respect to use of portable devices.

Recently our district brought in speakers and provided parents an information evening on this topic. Sometimes there are incidents regarding students' use of the Internet and we wish for educators, parents and guardians to have the tools to understand how to deal with these situations. We look forward to continue with our diligent work in this area. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at school or contact LEPAC at lochsidepac@sd63.bc.ca.

Respectfully,

Erika Moser
Principal

Joan O'Leary
Vice Principal



Safety Tips - Things to Consider

School:

- There is an increasing prevalence of elementary school children coming to school with a camera in their pocket or backpack every day whether in the form of a cell phone, tablet, or iPod. • During the school day, devices are stored in backpacks and are not in use • Students are not to use the cameras on their electronic devices during the school day including the walk or bus ride to or from school
- Children do not have permission to take pictures of one another other than as directed by a teacher for a school project. Even for this purpose, the school must collect release forms for each student each year if these images are to be posted online in any way. Students cannot give permission to their friends to post images of themselves

Home:

- Set clear guidelines with your child about use and storage of devices you provide: devices are kept in backpacks and make it clear that taking pictures at school and/or on the way to and from school is not permitted
- Have a chat with your child about responsible usage of social media. Although services like Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and Snapchat allow friends to stay connected, it is important that kids understand most anybody can see what is posted to these services and there are often ways around privacy settings. Although your child's use of it might be innocent and appropriate, they are open to comment from anyone. This is not to say that access to these programs should be denied, but rather that conversations and instruction about safe and appropriate usage should be had
- Some possible ideas for guiding conversation or practice of use of social media might include insisting that your child includes you as a follower or "friend" so that you are able to see their posts, having them share their login information with you, and going through the privacy settings with your child to ensure that only people they know are able to interact with them online
- Parents can review their child's browsing history (at school) by having them sign into Google and looking at their history. This would be a great way to discuss topics of interest and provide an opportunity to talk about positive choices when using the internet. Social Media & Privacy: School & Home