K-12 Cyber Awareness Month 2025

October 1st - 31st, 2025

User Guide for Parents and Guardians

RESOURCES IN 2025:

CYBER HEROES UNITE!	/DIGITAL {ME}	YEAR-ROUND RESOURCES
Grades K-8	Grades 9-12	Year-round resources – all ages

Follow the Cyber Awareness Month
social media channels and share the content!

ECNO
Technology Leadership for
Ontario's School Boards

Funded by:

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For more information: www.k-12cyberawareON.ca

Overview

Since 2020, ECNO, school boards, and the Ministry of Education have partnered to develop a K-12 cyber awareness campaign for English and French language school boards in Ontario.

The primary goal of the campaign is to help school boards and families create a culture of cyber awareness and vigilance amongst educators and staff, students, and families. The K-12 Cyber Awareness Month (K-12 CAM) resources will help to encourage important discussions about cyber awareness, promote increased awareness of online risks, and encourage safer and more secure practices when using digital technologies and the internet.

The purpose of this document is to provide parents and guardians with an overview of the 2025 K-12 CAM campaign and resources that are available at no charge on the website. The resources on this website have been carefully developed by cyber security and education experts to connect with school aged children.

Why is this work so important?

Over the past decade, we have seen the adoption of digital technologies and Artificial Intelligence (AI) at an unprecedented pace, affecting every aspect of our lives including work, education and staying connected. Most recently, Generative AI and Adaptive AI have further influenced our relationship with technology. These evolving tools, communities and practices influence the way we learn, work, create and innovate.

The quick and vast adoption of digital technology has increased cyber risks and online threats, as evidenced in the media and through various warnings issued by industry and government entities. Cybercriminals have taken advantage of this exponential increase in internet usage and continue to look for new ways to exploit users, regardless of age.
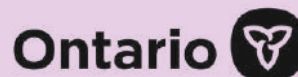
By adopting safe and secure practices we reduce the likelihood of cyber-attacks. Collectively, we can make our online and virtual lives safer for everyone by developing and maintaining safe personal online habits.

The K-12 CAM campaign has been developed to promote best practices in cyber safety, cyber security and online privacy in the K-12 sector. It is an adaptation – tailored for the K-12 environment – of the internationally recognized October Cyber Security Awareness Month.

K-12 Cyber Awareness Month themes

All Cyber Awareness Month Resources including posters, videos, infosheets and teacher lesson resources are available on the new website.

Materials are organized in 4 themes:

Cyber Security Basics emphasizes the importance of protecting personal information online by maintaining privacy, creating strong passwords, understanding the risks of oversharing on social media, and knowing steps to take if compromised. It also covers recognizing and avoiding online scams and phishing by identifying suspicious communications, knowing how to respond to phishing attempts, and the importance of reporting scams.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)
Artificial Intelligence focuses on understanding how AI is used in everyday digital tools such as voice assistants, recommendation systems, and chatbots. Students learn how AI gathers and uses data, why it's important to think critically about AI-generated content, and how to use AI tools responsibly. This theme also explores the benefits and risks of AI, including issues around accuracy, bias, and privacy, to help students make informed choices. AI is a useful and interesting tool in education, and it's important that users understand its implications and limits.

Digital Wellness
Digital Wellness highlights the importance of balancing screen time with offline life to support mental health and well-being. It encourages students to recognize signs of digital overload, take regular tech breaks, and build healthy online habits. This theme also explores how digital activities can affect emotions, sleep, focus, and self-esteem, and provides strategies for using technology in ways that feel positive, mindful, and manageable.

Your Online Community
Your Online Community explores how students interact with others through platforms like social media, messaging apps, and online games. It emphasizes respectful digital communication, recognizing and responding to cyberbullying, and the importance of kindness and consent online. Students also learn about digital citizenship, the risks of sharing personal information, and how to build safe, inclusive, and supportive online spaces.

Each theme provides resources that are specifically designed for one of two age/grade groups: K-8 and 9-12.

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YEAR-ROUND RESOURCES

The Grade K-8 resources are themed Cyber Heroes Unite. It is a call to action for everyone to be vigilant in our commitment to online safety, privacy, and responsible use of digital technology whether in class or at home.

The Grade 9-12 resources are themed Digital Me. The Digital Me materials encourage youth in Grades 9-12 to take control of their digital knowledge and online presence, and to make informed choices concerning their digital identity and technology use.
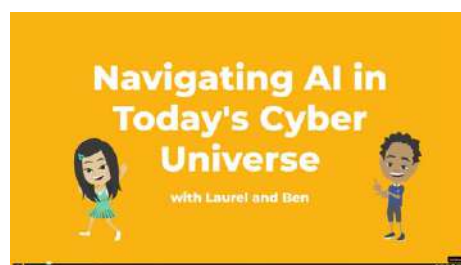
In addition to the themed sections, the Year-Round Resources section includes several generalized materials that are suitable for most grade levels.
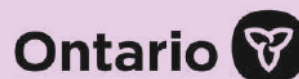
K-12 Cyber Awareness Month Resources

Videos
Each theme introduces three videos that reinforce the message.

Keeping your Devices Secure — with Kaya and Jake

Powering Down and Living Outside your Devices — with Mia and Devon

Navigating AI in Today's Cyber Universe — with Laurel and Ben

/IDENTITY THEFT AND TEENS — /DIGITAL {ME}

/AI: FALSE INFORMATION AND LEARNING — /DIGITAL {ME}

/THE DANGERS OF PHISHING SCAMS — /DIGITAL {ME}

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Posters

A total of 15 colourful posters can be reviewed together to reinforce the key messages of the campaign.

Teacher lesson resources and in-class exercises

Created by educators, several classroom exercises, games, and lesson resources are also available to make it easier for parents and guardians to learn about and discuss introduce cyber awareness at home.
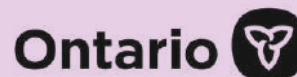

Infosheets

Twelve infosheets provide additional information and context for family discussions. Topics include:

1. Cyber Hygiene
2. Cyber Scams and Phishing
3. Being Kind Online
4. Keep your Information Private
5. Online Grooming and Luring
6. Back Up your Data
7. Safe Gaming and the Metaverse
8. Digital Wellness
9. Social Media
10. Summer Cleanup
11. Connected Homes
12. Understanding Artificial Intelligence

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Events Calendar

Sometimes a themed day such as "World Mental Health Day" can prompt a discussion about the effects of digital technology on student mental health and well being. Use our handy events calendar to help guide focused discussions.

10 Steps for Parents and Guardians to Model and Encourage Cyber Safety at Home

1. **Review the videos, posters and other resources on this website as a family.**
   - Establish a routine to view the resources and encourage an open discussion.
   - Reference the infosheets or other links for additional information.
   - Continue to talk about online risks early and often. Always create a safe space for children to ask questions and share concerns.
   - Discuss real-life examples of online threats in age-appropriate ways.

2. **Model and Encourage Strong Password Practices**
   - Use long, unique passwords for each account.
   - Enable two-factor authentication (2FA) where possible.
   - Teach children never to share passwords — even with friends.

3. **Teach How to Spot Scams and Phishing**
   - Show examples of suspicious emails, texts, or pop-ups.
   - Teach children to never click on unknown links or download attachments from strangers.
   - Encourage them to stay vigilant and ask before responding to anything that seems "off."

4. **Use Security Software and Keep Devices Updated**
   - Install antivirus and anti-malware tools on all devices.
   - Keep operating systems, browsers, and apps up to date to patch vulnerabilities.

5. **Set Up Safe Browsing Tools**
   - Use child-friendly search engines and browser extensions that block harmful content.
   - Enable safe search settings on platforms like Google and YouTube.

6. **Discuss the Dangers of Oversharing**
   - Explain why personal information (like full name, school, address, or photos) should be kept private.
   - Review privacy settings together on social media and gaming platforms.

7. **Encourage Critical Thinking Online**
   - Teach children to question what they see and verify sources.
   - Discuss how misinformation spreads and how to recognize clickbait or fake news.

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8. **Create a Family Cybersecurity Plan**
   - Include rules for device use, password storage, and what to do if something goes wrong.
   - Practice what to do in case of a data breach or suspicious activity.

9. **Monitor and Guide, Don't Just Restrict**
   - Use parental controls as a tool, not a substitute for conversation.
   - Stay involved in your child's digital life — know what apps they use and who they interact with.

10. **Promote Digital Wellness and Balance**
    - Encourage regular breaks from screens and time for offline activities.
    - Talk about how online experiences can affect mental health and self-esteem.

Additional campaigns and resources

The K-12 CAM website theme pages also include links to other website content that may be useful for educators or parents and guardians. In addition to the K-12 CAM campaign described in this document, school boards may also wish to explore the following awareness campaigns:

Ontario Cyber Security Division
Cyber Security Awareness Month and the new K-12 Zone has been created with additional resources specifically aimed at K-12 audiences.

Government of Canada
Get Cyber Safe Cyber Security Awareness Month.

Information Privacy Commissioner of Ontario (IPC)
The IPC has set a goal to champion the access and privacy rights of Ontario's children and youth. Schools, educators, children/youth, parents, and communities can find several practical privacy resources on their Resources for children and youth webpage.

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