



# **SEL IN DIGITAL LIFE**

## **GRADES 6–8 FAMILY CONVERSATIONS PACKET**

*Social and emotional learning is most effective when all members of your school community are included. These conversation starters for families are aligned with the SEL in Digital Life classroom activities. Share these family conversation starters to help your students and their families talk meaningfully about their digital lives.*



GRADES 6–8 FAMILY CONVERSATIONS

## SELF-AWARENESS IN DIGITAL LIFE



### Talk About How Your Child Can Avoid the Negative Effects of Oversharing

Your child is learning how social media can affect how they feel and behave online.

Use these questions to talk with them about how the pressure to share on social media can affect them.

Ask these three questions:

1. *I hear you were talking about **oversharing** on social media in class. Have you seen people share personal feelings or other things on social media that they probably regretted later? How did it make you feel to see that?*
  - If your child is reluctant to talk, share your own example of someone—maybe even yourself—who has overshared. Talk about how that experience made you feel.
2. *Why do you think people overshare?*
  - Listen for (or suggest if needed):
    - *Didn't think about who could see the post.*
    - *Pressure to make your life seem cool/exciting.*
    - *To get attention.*
    - *To express yourself and share emotions.*
3. *How do you think people can avoid the negative effects of oversharing?*
  - Listen for (or suggest if needed):
    - *Think about when and why you're posting something before you share it.*
    - *Talk to your friends (and family!) about your boundaries for tagging or posting about each other.*
    - *Use your device settings to limit how much time you spend on social media.*

Learn more about how to define your digital footprint at [commonsense.org/digital-footprint-tips-for-families](https://commonsense.org/digital-footprint-tips-for-families)!

Family handout for grade 8 lesson [Social Media and Digital Footprints: Our Responsibilities](#), or 6–8 classroom activity [Oversharing and Your Digital Footprint](#)



DIGITAL FOOTPRINT &amp; IDENTITY

We define who we are.





GRADES 6–8 FAMILY CONVERSATIONS

## SELF-MANAGEMENT IN DIGITAL LIFE



### Talk About How Your Child Can Manage Their Digital Habits

Your child is learning to identify and reflect on the habits they have with digital media and devices. Use these questions to talk with them about how to find a healthy balance with their online and offline lives.

Ask these three questions:

1. *I hear you were talking about **digital habits** and **media balance** in class.*

*What do these terms mean?*

○ Listen for (or suggest if needed):

- **Digital habits** are things we do regularly with digital media and devices—like checking your phone when you wake up, listening to music on your way to school, or playing video games before bed.
- **Media balance** means using media in a way that feels healthy and in balance with other life activities.

2. *What are some of our family's digital habits?*

3. *Are there any you think we should try to change? Why, or why not?*

Learn more ways to find balance in your digital lives at [commonsense.org/media-balance-tips-for-families!](https://commonsense.org/media-balance-tips-for-families)

Family handout for grade 6 lesson [Finding Balance in a Digital World](#), or 6–8 classroom activity [Checking Our Digital Habits](#)



MEDIA BALANCE &amp; WELL-BEING

We find balance  
in our digital lives.



GRADES 6–8 FAMILY CONVERSATIONS

# RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING IN DIGITAL LIFE



## Talk About How Your Child Can Stay Safe When Chatting with Others Online

Your child is learning strategies to help them make responsible decisions when they're online. Use these questions to talk with them about the benefits and risks of chatting with people online.

Ask these three questions:

1. *I hear you were talking in class about how you can be safe when talking to people online. What are some of the risks of talking with people you don't know well?*
  - Listen for (or suggest if needed):
    - You don't fully know who you're talking to, so you can't completely trust them.
    - You don't know whether they have bad intentions.
2. *What are **red flag feelings**?*
  - Listen for (or suggest if needed):
    - A **red flag feeling** is when something happens on digital media that makes you feel uncomfortable, worried, sad, or anxious. It's often a feeling in your stomach that something is wrong and is a warning of a possible problem.
3. *What can you do if you ever have a red flag feeling when chatting with someone online?*
  - Listen for (or suggest if needed):
    - Slow down, pause, and think about how you're feeling and what might be causing it.
    - Decide on the best action to take to improve the situation (maybe ignore or block the person, log off, or tell a trusted adult).

Learn more about how to communicate online at [commonsense.org/online-relationships-tips-for-families!](https://commonsense.org/online-relationships-tips-for-families!)

Family handout for grade 6 lesson [Chatting Safely Online](#), or 6–8 classroom activity [Who Are You Talking to Online?](#)



RELATIONSHIPS &amp; COMMUNICATION

We know the power  
of words & actions.



GRADES 6–8 FAMILY CONVERSATIONS

## RELATIONSHIP SKILLS IN DIGITAL LIFE



### Talk About How Your Child Can Resist the Pressure to Always Be Connected

Your child is learning to reflect on the positive and negative effects social media use has on their friendships. Use these questions to talk with them about how to use social media to build and maintain healthy relationships and resist the pressure to always be connected.

Ask these three questions:

1. *I hear you were talking in class about how social media makes you feel. What's your experience? Is it more positive? Negative? A mix of both?*
2. *How has social media affected your friendships?*
3. *What are some things you can do to help you have a positive experience when using social media and to resist the pressure to always be connected?*
  - Listen for (or suggest if needed):
    - *Change my notifications so I'm not tempted or pressured to always be on.*
    - *Consider sharing and posting to a small group of friends instead.*
    - *Be clear with friends about when I might need more space or don't have time to talk.*
    - *Work with friends to decide on the best way to connect with each other.*

Learn more about how to communicate online at [commonsense.org/online-relationships-tips-for-families!](https://commonsense.org/online-relationships-tips-for-families)

Family handout for grade 7 lesson *My Social Media Life*, or 6–8 classroom activity *Friendships & Social Media*



RELATIONSHIPS &amp; COMMUNICATION

*We know the power  
of words & actions.*





GRADES 6–8 FAMILY CONVERSATIONS

## SOCIAL AWARENESS IN DIGITAL LIFE



### Talk About How Your Child Can Understand and Respond to Digital Drama

Your child is learning about emotional conflicts online (also called **digital drama**). Use these questions to talk with them about digital drama and strategies for de-escalating conflicts online.

Ask these three questions:

1. *I hear you were talking in class about digital drama. Do you see a lot of that online?*
2. *Why do you think these kinds of conflicts happen online?*
  - Listen for (or suggest):
    - *People feel more free to say things they wouldn't say face-to-face.*
    - *It's easy to misinterpret what someone says online when you can't see facial reactions or hear tone of voice.*
    - *People can be anonymous online, making it easier for them to say mean things.*
    - *People can feel more pressured to respond where others can see it.*
3. *Did you talk about ways to de-escalate the drama when you see it? What were some ideas?*
  - Listen for (or suggest):
    - *Respond with a positive comment or action.*
    - *Ignore the post.*
    - *Talk (offline) with the person involved to try to deescalate the situation.*

Learn more about how to be kind and courageous online at [commonsense.org/cyberbullying-tips-for-families!](https://commonsense.org/cyberbullying-tips-for-families/)

Family handout for grade 6 lesson *Digital Drama Unplugged*, or 6–8 classroom activity *Dealing with Digital Drama*



CYBERBULLYING, DIGITAL DRAMA &amp; HATE SPEECH

**We are kind & courageous.**