

TELUS Wise®



Bring digital literacy education into your classroom.

Lesson plan: Keep it private

Grades: 9-12

Duration: 45 minutes

Overview:

In this self-guided lesson, students will learn how social media platforms use their information, helping them make safer online decisions and better protect their privacy. The associated activity challenges them to think critically about the information required by social media platforms by researching a privacy policy of their choosing.

Learning outcomes

Students will:

- Learn about privacy policies
- Understand how social media platforms can use personal information
- Learn what they can do to protect their privacy online

Preparation and materials

- Prepare to show the video: [TELUS Wise: Privacy and permission settings](#)
- Print or prepare access to digital copies of the 'Privacy and social media' tips and activity sheet (one per student)

Procedure

Start by asking students to raise their hands if they are active on social media (likely all hands will go up.) Then, ask students to keep their hands raised if they have ever read the privacy policy of any social media platforms they use, like Snapchat, or Instagram (likely most hands will go down.) Ask a few of the students that lowered their hands to volunteer in sharing why they didn't read the privacy policies.

Next, show students [TELUS Wise: Privacy and permission settings](#). Explain to students that privacy and permission settings are one way to help protect their information online, but it's also important to be informed about how their information is being used and who it's being shared with by reading and understanding the privacy policies of the platforms they use.

Last, refer students to the 'Privacy and social media tips and digital activity sheet'.

Privacy and social media tips

Personal, private information that you share on social media, like your location, name, age and more can be collected and used by social media platforms or even third-party companies in ways that may be out of your control. That's why it's important to know what information you're giving away and how it's being used by taking time to understand the privacy policies of the social media platforms you use.

Privacy policies

Privacy policies are required by privacy law for social media platforms and any site that requests or uses personal information. These policies provide an opportunity for companies to be transparent about what kind of data they're collecting, where they're storing it and how they're using it, and allows users to gain insight into how their personal information is used.

Social media platforms collect all of the data that you supply voluntarily, like age, location and name, but they can also indirectly collect more personal information, including your private messages, photos, and videos. You may also be sharing data that you don't provide directly, such as your search history and the sites you visit. Just as you wouldn't give someone a copy of your birth certificate or SIN number without understanding why they're asking for it, what it's going to be used for, and who it will be shared with, it's important to understand who is accessing your personal information online, how they're using it, and why.

Privacy tips

Follow these tips to protect your privacy on social media:

1. Understand the privacy policy.

Before creating a new account on social media, take the time to read the privacy policy to make sure that you fully understand what you're signing up for. Remember, once it's online, it's hard to get back.

2. Adjust your privacy settings.

Do you really know what your privacy settings are? Check the privacy settings on all of your social media accounts to make sure you're only sharing what you want with who you want. It's also good practice to review privacy settings regularly as they often change.

3. Say "no" if it's not required.

If you're prompted with a request for personal information and the information isn't essential for the platform to function, say "no". If information is required and you're not comfortable sharing it, you can always provide false information, like a false date of birth or address.

3. Snapchat

“Location Information. When you use our services we may collect information about your location. With your permission, we may also collect information about your precise location using methods that include GPS, wireless networks, cell towers, Wi-Fi access points, and other sensors, such as gyroscopes, accelerometers, and compasses.”

What this means for you

When you share your location on Snap Map or use a geo-targeted filter, you are granting Snapchat access to your exact location at all times. However, you can choose which friends you'd like to share your location with to ensure you're only sharing with the people you want to.

- Is it clear how Snapchat is using your location information?

- If not, how do you think this statement could be improved so that users understand how their information is being used?

- How does this privacy issue become a possible safety issue for users of the platform?

Activity two: Keep it private research project

For this activity, choose a social media platform from the list below and research its privacy policy.



- TikTok
- Snapchat
- Instagram
- WhatsApp
- Twitter
- Choose your own platform

Next, complete the questions below, thinking about how the site is protecting your information, and how it may be compromising it. As you conduct your research, it can be helpful to read FAQ pages or articles from trusted news sources to help you better comprehend what the policy says.

- What information does the app collect?
- How do they use your information?
- Is the information shared and/or sold to third parties?
- Where is the information stored (i.e. does it stay in Canada? Is the information stored elsewhere?)
- Does the app reference any Privacy Laws?
- What kind of control do you have over your information through the app's privacy and permission settings? For instance, can you restrict the app's access to your location information?