Social Smarts: Privacy, the Internet, and You

You can use *Social Smarts* in your classroom to generate discussion about real-life situations to help young people learn to navigate online privacy risks. This graphic novel explores how a brother and sister start at a new school and learn about privacy risks related to social networking, mobile devices, texting and online gaming.

Learning goals / Big Ideas

Students will demonstrate the ability to:

- Explain why strategies like locking down privacy settings and using different passwords for different online sites can help mitigate risks to online privacy
- Understand how posting many little details can paint a big picture of who you are
- Explain why it can be impossible to delete a picture or comment once it has been posted online
- Suggest strategies to better protect privacy and navigate privacy issues in the online world
- Learn to be aware of the potential privacy risks of new digital communications technologies, such as those used for online gaming

Activity

Divide the class into 4 small groups, A, B, C and D, and have them read the graphic novel. When they have finished reading, give each group a piece of paper and a pencil. Have them put themselves in Dave and Amy's shoes – they are starting a new school and want to make sure that the kids at the school have the right picture of who they are.

Group A: Discuss what steps you can take to make sure that you have control of your online information. Why is it important to lock privacy settings and set strong passwords?

Group B: Discuss how you can make sure that the information you post doesn't give the wrong impression of who you are in real life. What sort of information is best left offline?

Group C: Discuss how you can learn about privacy risks of new technologies, such as online gaming devices, before you use them.

Group D: Discuss the importance of taking steps to protect your privacy on mobile devices.

How much information could someone learn about you if you left your mobile phone on the bus and it wasn't protected?

Class Discussion

When everyone is finished, have a speaker from each group go over the points they came up with. Allow class discussion and guide the discussion by asking the following questions:

For Group A:

- Who can access your personal information if you don't lock your privacy settings tight?
- Why is it important to use different passwords for different online sites?
- Is it always possible to delete a picture or post, permanently, after you've put it online?

For Group B:

- How can little details add up to something big?
- Discuss how someone can figure out where you live from the information you are posting online.
- Can posting where you are going to be at certain times turn into a safety issue?

For Group C:

- Does every new kind of technology pose a privacy risk?
- What are some good ways to figure out if or how a new technology can pose risks to your online privacy?

For Group D:

- If you lost your mobile device, today, and it had no password, what information would you be most worried about?
- Are there any reasons why you wouldn't put a password on your mobile device?

The 10 Tips

If you have time left in the class, look at the *10 Tips to Protect Your Privacy Online* that are listed on the back of the graphic novel. Each tip can generate a separate conversation. Discuss each tip and talk about why each is important.

For more information on the topics mentioned in these tips, and on privacy in general, visit our web site for youth, parents and educators at:

www.youthprivacy.ca