

NEW MEXICO 4-H

Aggie Next Step

Responsible & Respectful Behavior Online



Post Secondary Pathways



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INTRODUCTION

Every day, we interact online – through texts, chats, social media, and classroom platforms. But the choices we make in digital spaces can shape our relationships, reputation, and opportunities. In this lesson, participants will explore what it means to act ethically online by examining real-life situations involving tone, consent, and respect and practice making choices that build trust and protect others.

SET UP

Review lesson materials and determine which worksheets and handouts you will use for the lesson. Print enough pre/post assessments, worksheets, and handouts for each participant.

ACTIVITY

1. Have participants complete the *Pre-assessment*.
2. Think-Pair-Share (think individually, talk to a partner, share with the whole group). Activate prior knowledge with these discussion questions.

Q: What makes tone easy to misunderstand online?

Q: Is it ever okay to screenshot a private message? Why or why not?

Q: What responsibilities do we have in a group chat?

Guide students toward ideas about respect, privacy, and accountability.

3. Discuss and Define "Ethical" and "Unethical."

- Ethical: actions that align with moral principles, professional standards, and social norms (honesty, respect, fairness, protecting others' privacy)
- Unethical: (the opposite) actions that are morally wrong or violate these principles, cause harm, or break trust

Discuss: *What makes ethical online behavior?* (How we treat others, how we communicate, how we participate in online communities)

Supplies

- Worksheets
- Handouts
- Pens/Pencils

OUTCOMES

Students will be able to:

- **Identify** respectful vs harmful online behaviors.
- **Explain** why consent matters when sharing content about others.
- **Apply** online etiquette rules to realistic scenarios.
- **Evaluate** ethical decisions in group chats, comment sections, and social posts.

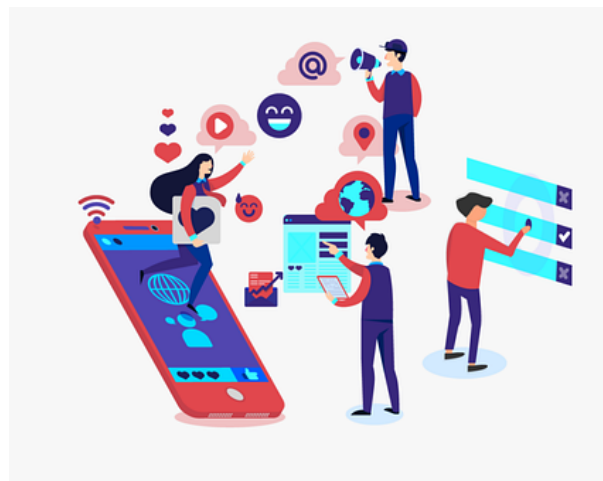


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4. (Materials can be printed and cut in advance for convenience, but students may also cut them during the activity. Alternatively, you can provide the uncut handout and have students mark “ethical” or “unethical” on each box.) Divide students into pairs or small groups. Provide each group with a set of *Ethical or Unethical Card Sort* cards. Ask groups to sort statements into “Ethical” and “Unethical.” There is a mix of clear-cut and “it depends” statements to spark discussion. Encourage participants to debate, justify, and rethink choices.
5. Introduce online consent: *Online consent means getting someone’s permission before sharing, posting, forwarding, or tagging anything that involves them.*
Options for this activity: (1) Distribute *Online Consent: Ask, Don’t Ask, Depends* and allow participants to complete individually, in pairs, or in groups. Encourage participants to debate and explain their thinking. Some situations are not black and white.
(2) Alternatively, you can also complete this activity in a quick round. Read the situations out loud. Participants stand for “Ask Permission,” sit for “Do Not Ask,” and sit on floor for “Depends.” Allow discussion when needed.
6. Distribute *Fix This Message* and have participants rewrite harmful messages into positive, respectful ones. Afterward, allow a brief share-out: *Who has a strong example of a respectful rewrite?* Highlight how small changes in tone or wording can significantly alter how a message is perceived online.
7. *Exit Ticket* – depending on time, this can be done as a class discussion, or students can complete the worksheet in class, as homework, or the following class.
- 8. Have participants complete *Post-assessment*.**

WRAP UP

Ethical online behavior isn’t about being perfect – it’s about being thoughtful. As you move forward, remember that every message, post, or screenshot is an opportunity to demonstrate integrity and treat people with care. When you choose respect and responsibility online, you help create a digital world where everyone feels safe, included, and valued.





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RESOURCES

NM Standards:

NM PED Standards: Career and Technical Education (CTE):

CTE 2.1.2: Demonstrate use of concepts, strategies and systems to enhance communication in the workplace

CTE 2.1.7: Interpret verbal and nonverbal cues/behaviors to enhance communication

CTE 8.1.1: Apply ethical reasoning to a variety of workplace situations to make ethical decisions

Common Career Technical Core (CCTC) Standards: Career Ready Practices (CRP):

CRP-1: Act as a responsible and contributing citizen and employee

CRP-4: Communicate clearly, effectively and with reason

CRP-5: Consider the environmental, social and economic impacts of decisions

CRP-9: Model integrity, ethical leadership and effective management

Optional ELA Alignment (Grades 6-12)

SL1: Participate in a range of conversations and collaborations

Video Resources:

Note: Please preview all videos before showing them to students to ensure they are age-appropriate, relevant, and aligned with your classroom needs.

Ethics and Privacy | What does it mean to be a digital citizen?

<https://youtu.be/PsPPO1R-Zog?si=kAWnJGkWcrybexLu>

What is Digital Citizenship? | CBC Kids

<https://youtu.be/6EtF2C64Iyc?si=Si9XZzNIQl4GBYm>