



Online Overdrive



Teacher's Guide (for Grades 7-12)

CLASS ACTIVITIES

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www.youthspeak.ca

(905) 967 - 0604

office@youthspeak.ca



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Introduction

PURPOSE

At YouthSpeak, our vision is to inspire and empower youth to live resilient and meaningful lives. Our mission is to assist youth facing challenges through leadership training and empowering them by sharing personal stories in order to promote mental health, well-being, empathy, and hope in assemblies and workshops. We aim to make sure no child or youth feels alone, and those who are struggling with mental health or challenges are connected to available support tools to improve their overall well-being.

The purpose of this teacher guide is to provide valuable and easy-to-follow awareness-building activities. This teacher's guide is a resource that teachers can use in their classrooms with their students. The activities in this teacher guide are for the Intermediate and senior divisions but may be modified for your unique classroom.

HOW TO USE

This teacher guide has a number of activities that are designed to address online use. They can be used in the classroom to help students understand and explore important topics about online use and safety from a young age. Each activity has an estimated time frame and a material list at the top of the page. The specific steps on how to run the activity are under it. The activities are also easily transferable to a virtual classroom with alternatives noted when needed for a virtual setting. Teachers do not need to follow every step for each activity and can revise the steps to suit their unique classroom.

SAFE SPACE

Please remind students that the classroom is a safe space and encourage them to have open discussions about bullying prevention and mental wellness. Discussing these topics can bring up strong thoughts and feelings, and it is important to let them know that if students are experiencing any difficult feelings and need help, that the teachers, administration, and other caring adults are always there to listen and support them

1. Digital Dilemmas

ORGANIZATION

GRADE: 7 to 12

TIME: 25-35 minutes

MATERIALS: Blackboard/ whiteboard/ television/ handout/ school/personal computer (optional)

DELIVERY: This activity can be completed both in class, and virtually over google meets.

OBJECTIVE

To reflect on how our relationships are affected by devices and the internet. At the end of the activity, students will be able to identify the qualities of healthy and rewarding relationships. Ultimately the goal is to have students gather new strategies to set boundaries in order to navigate the challenging dynamics of relationships fostered through technology.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Initiate a whole class discussion on how personal devices and social media affect students' relationship with their peers with the following prompts:

- How many students use social media?
- How many students use social media as a means of communicating to one another?
- How often do you chat with your friends? Every hour? Day? Week?
- How has this usage affected the dynamic of your relationship?
- Are these effects more positive or negative?

2. Have students break off into pairs and distribute *Boundaries within Friendships* Handout. For part 1, each student in a pair will have the option to choose either one of the following resources below to review. Students are to capture their thoughts and share a summary of their resources. If not all students have access to school/personal computers, consider playing the following videos to the entire class or astutely pairing students with those that have personal devices to play the videos with students that do not possess the same devices.

Resource 1: [Healthy vs Unhealthy Relationships](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gn7ZQ2x0cOE>

Resource 2: [That's Not Cool](#)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_2ogq_UczAw&t=68s

After conducting their review of the resource, they are to share their notes with their partner. After a few minutes of partner discussion, Invite students to share their notes in a group discussion. Take the time to highlight any comments that you want your students to capture (either on the board or display) and allow time for your students to copy them down.

3. Introduce the following activity by informing students that, when something happens within a relationship that makes an individual feel worried, sad, anxious or uncomfortable, it is called a red flag feeling. This feeling is a warning sign that something off might be going on.

Explain to students that when you experience a red flag feeling that it is important that they do not quickly make reactive decisions but take a moment to slow down and think about how they are feeling. The following routine is meant to provide a 4 step process that supports reflective decision making and supportive social skills when dealing with digital dilemmas.

- a. Identify: *Who is actually involved in this situation? What is the digital dilemma they are facing at this moment?*
- b. Feel: *What could each person in this situation be feeling? Why might it be difficult for them to handle this dilemma?*
- c. Imagine: *Consider the options available for this situation to be dealt with. Be creative! There is never one single "right" answer. Choose the options you think may actually lead to a positive outcome, where the most "good" may occur.*
- d. Act/Say: *After reflecting on what could be done, think about how it will be done. What would people say or do to resolve this dilemma? How would they say/do it? What is the most appropriate medium?*

Have students return to the handout and follow the instructions for part 2. Provide students with a scenario involving a digital dilemma. After 7-10 minutes, have students share their responses using the 4 step routine.

Optional Activity: An alternative or additional component to part 2 of this activity can involve having students create their own scenario involving a digital dilemma. In small groups (3-4), students will have to write a script for a scenario that involves red flag feelings. Students will have to develop the problem and resolve it using the 4 step Feeling Routine. Students will then role-play and present this scenario to the whole class while submitting a written reflection on the thought process behind their scenario.

Digital Dilemma (Handout)

Part 1 Instructions

In pairs, each member will choose **one** of the resources below. Record what the source says about meaningful relationships and whether you agree with these points as you review the resource. Write down your thoughts in the space provided. Share your thoughts with your partner.

Resource 1

Watch: [Healthy vs Unhealthy Relationships](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gn7ZQ2x0cOE)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gn7ZQ2x0cOE>

Resource 2

Watch: [That's Not Cool](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_2ogq_UczAw&t=68s)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_2ogq_UczAw&t=68s

Resource #	What does the source say about positive relationships?	How do you feel about the source's key points? Do you agree, or disagree? Why?

Part 2 Instructions

Read the following digital dilemma and use the 4 step Feelings Routine to brainstorm possible strategies for navigating a potentially unhealthy relationship.

Digital Dilemma

Identify:

Feelings:

Imagine:

Part 1: List the options available

Part 2: Underline or circle the option you feel is best

Action:

Part 1: How would they carry out this option?

In person

Text

Direct Message

Video call (facetime)

Email

Other: _____

Part 2:

What would they say? Who are they saying it to? Write out the conversation.

2. Digital and Real Self

ORGANIZATION

GRADE: 7 to 12

TIME: 30–40 minutes

MATERIALS: Blackboard/ whiteboard/ television/ handout/ cue cards/ personal computer (optional)

DELIVERY: This activity can be completed both in class, and virtually.

OBJECTIVE

Allows students to have an open discussion about the media that they post and interact with. Students will be able to analyze the portrayal of themselves online versus the way they act in reality. They will think critically about the images that they view from others and themselves.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Initiate a class discussion by asking students to think about what they share through digital media, be it from social media posts, text messages, etc. have students consider how accurate that portrayal of themselves is in relation to their real self. Do they present themselves differently online than they do during a face-to-face interaction?

Have students share their thoughts to the group discussion. Take the time to reiterate comments (or write on the board) the varying ways they shift attitudes when presenting their online self compared to their real life interaction.

2. Take a moment to explain to your students that many people present themselves differently than how they act in real life. Pose examples such as famous video game streamers, actors, Youtubers, influencers, etc. Remind students that having a difference between online and real world self is not inherently bad.

Have students watch the following video to further this point.

[Online vs. Offline Self: Who is the Real You? | New Age Creators](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SZAKZ4TzSEA)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SZAKZ4TzSEA>

However, you should remind students that this change between two identities is not always without concern. In some cases, when the differences are so huge, this may be a sign that it can lead to a risky situation.

4. Distribute a cue card to each student (or ask students to write google doc if learning virtually) and inform them to create a nameless profile of their self

portrayal through a digital medium. Have students consider how they present themselves on Instagram, gaming community, TikTok, Youtube, etc. Make sure students do not write their name on their name on the profile. Give students 5-10 minutes to write down a profile describing that cover:

- Personality
- Appearance (more adjective based words and without any direct statement of physical features like specific hair colour)

If the class is large, consider dividing students into even groups (6-10) and have them place their nameless profiles in the centre of a desk so that they are all visible. Ask students to read each profile in order to identify the student they think that profile belongs to and record their answers on another sheet or google doc.

After a few minutes have students share their answers with the class and discuss the results. Consider asking the following questions to foster deeper discussion:

- How many students had correct answers?
- How different were some of the profiles you read from the actual student?
- How accurate were the profiles?
- Does knowing the person in real life change the way you think about the online profile?

3. Social Media Body Image

ORGANIZATION

GRADE: 9 to 12

TIME: 30–40 minutes

MATERIALS: Blackboard/ whiteboard/ television/ personal computers (optional)

DELIVERY: This activity can be completed both in class, and virtually over google meets.

OBJECTIVE

To reflect on their experiences with social media and become more active viewers. This activity allows them to illustrate their awareness of imposed “attractiveness” and beauty ideals. Ultimately developing the notion that these images promote an unrealistic sense of beauty that negatively affects body image and related issues.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Split students into small groups (3–4 people) and display the following prompts on the board (or whichever means you have available):

- Do you feel that you must look a certain way to be considered attractive? What physical features are considered attractive in our society?
 - Discuss beauty ideals that society has imposed on them
- Who or what has communicated those ideals to you? How? What have those messages looked like?
 - Discuss where these ideals are advertised or prompted.
 - Examples can include social media, tv shows, etc.

Students should have about 5 minutes to develop their answers. After which the teacher will facilitate a whole class discussion to have students share their thoughts for another 4–5 minutes. Take the time here to address that the following lesson covers sensitive issues and may bring up negative reactions from some students. Provide a trigger warning for students and remind the class to be mindful of their peers when making comments.

2. Have students access *The Inquisitive Mind's* article, “Selfie Esteem: The Relationship Between Body Dissatisfaction and Social Media in Adolescent and Young Women”.

[Selfie-Esteem: The Relationship Between Body Dissatisfaction and Social Media in Adolescent and Young Women | In-Mind](#)

- Instruct students to read the article and make notes when finished about how Instagram (or other visually based apps like Snapchat and Tiktok) make them feel for 7-8 minutes..
- After every student has finished, have a 5 minutes group discussion.
 - Prompts to further discussion:
 - Do the feelings described in the article match your own? If so, how? If not, how do they differ?
 - Why do instagram photos make you feel that way?
 - If comfortable, Share your own thoughts with the students.

Optional topics to add or save for another date:

- With the article focusing mostly on the female perspective on social media, how do you feel about the disparity in presenting the negative male experience with social media? Is it the same as women? Why is it so hard to find relevant information for males?

3. Present a powerpoint briefly stating the negative effects of internalizing beauty ideals and their effects on mental health. Reiterate “trigger warning” during this discussion session as it may directly address areas of concern for some individuals. Keep it to 5-8 minutes.

- Important points to discuss are:
 - Self objectification
 - Body surveillance

To further expose students to these effects play one of the following Ted Talks on the effects of these imposed beauty ideals from social media:

- [Why thinking you're ugly is bad for you - Meaghan Ramsey](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MyUreckKJIY>

- [Our Bodies are Not an Image - Mary Jelkovsky](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DoDzwm0gybg>

(Each video is around 10-12 minutes so take some time to watch both videos and decide which best fits your goals for the class.)

Have students record notes during the video.

- Have a group discussion with the class on the discussion presented in the video.

Alternatively, this activity can consist of having students divided into groups of 3-4 and assigning each group to watch either video before sharing their thoughts in group discussion.

4. Media Motive

ORGANIZATION

GRADE: 7 to 12

TIME: 10-15 minutes

MATERIALS: Blackboard/ whiteboard/ television/ Personal Computers (optional)

DELIVERY: This activity can be completed both in class, and virtually over google meets.

OBJECTIVE

To provide opportunities for learners to better identify unrealistic, artificial, and altered photos and/or videos that are posted on social media and/or advertising. This activity will discuss the impact media messages have on an individual while also providing strategies to neutralize the impact of such messages.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Using a PowerPoint slide, present the six concepts in media analysis that facilitate media literacy.
 - All media messages are “constructed”
 - Each medium has different characteristics, strengths, and a unique “language” of construction
 - Media messages are produced for particular purposes
 - All media messages contain embedded values and points of view
 - People use their individual skills, beliefs, and experiences to construct their own meanings from media messages
 - Media and media messages can influence beliefs, attitudes, values, behaviors, and the democratic process
 - Allot 5 minutes for this presentation.
- Next, present various Instagram photos from "Instagram model" profiles (i.e., fitness models, influencers, etc.)
- In small groups, have students analyze the pictures and how they were constructed. *Ask them:*
 - What message does this picture convey?

- What was the purpose of posting this picture?
- What values are communicated?
- Is this photo selling a product, service, idea, etc.?
- Does the post focus more on what the woman looks like or what she can do/is capable of?
- How does it make you feel? How might it make others feel?
- After 5–7 minutes, open up the discussion to the entire class. Have the small groups share their thoughts.
 - Allot 5 minutes for large-group discussion.

Class brainstorm: have the class brainstorm strategies to help students become critical viewers of media messaging.

- Provide students a copy of the attached handout *Strategies for Becoming a Critical Viewer of the Media* based on The National Eating Disorders Association Guide.

Link:

https://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/counseling/Tips_for_being_a_Critical_Viewer_of_Media.pdf

- Take the time to discuss with students each of the strategies discussed on the sheet.

5. After going through the strategy sheet. Provide students with the following Take Home Activity:

- Students are to find their own example of an advertisement or social media post that they find particularly impactful on their own body image whether it be negative or positive. Have students write a short reflection piece on their chosen item. Invite students to prepare for sharing their responses in class the following day if they wish to.

Strategies For Becoming a Critical Viewer of the Media (Handout)

Media messages about body shape and size will affect the way we feel about ourselves and our bodies, only if we let them. One of the ways we can protect our self-esteem and body image from the media's narrow definitions of beauty is to become a critical viewer of the media messages we are bombarded with each day. When we effectively recognize and analyze the media messages that influence us, we remember that the media's definitions of beauty and success do not have to define our self image or potential.

Remember:

- All media images and messages are constructions. They are NOT reflections of reality. Advertisements and other media messages have been carefully crafted with the intent to send a very specific message.
- Advertisements are created to do one thing: convince you to buy or support a specific product or service.
- To convince you to buy a specific product or service, advertisers will often construct an emotional experience that looks like reality. Remember that you are only seeing what the advertisers want you to see.
- Advertisers create their message based on what they think you will want to see and what they think will affect you and compel you to buy their product. Just because they think their approach will work with people like you doesn't mean it has to work with you as an individual.
- As individuals, we decide how to experience the media messages we encounter. We can choose to use a filter that helps us understand what the advertiser wants us to think or believe and then choose whether we want to think or believe that message. We can choose a filter that protects our self esteem and body image.

5. Privacy Diary

ORGANIZATION

GRADE: 7 to 12

TIME: 20-30 minutes

MATERIALS: Blackboard/ whiteboard/ television/ Personal Computers (optional) / Handout

DELIVERY: This activity can be completed both in class, and virtually.

OBJECTIVE

To present the risks associated with giving out personal information (be it photos, messages, etc.). This activity presents the different levels of access technology presents to one's personal information while allowing students to reflect on their real world usage.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Begin the activity by asking students what the word *privacy* means to them. Continue discussion posing some of the following questions:

- What is privacy?
- Is it desirable?
- Does privacy mean the same thing when exploring in the online world and the real world?
- When and where would you have privacy? When and where would you not?
- Can this privacy be exposed? In which ways?

Follow students' responses by asking students how their privacy changes when someone:

- knows your age and name?
- knows your location/home and phone number?
- knows your favorite movie and snack to eat?
- eavesdrop a personal conversation?
- reads your email or messages?
- looks through your bedroom window?

- follows you all day?

Explain to the class that these questions pose varying degrees of importance, they all still relate to a loss of privacy. Losing privacy is not inherently a bad thing but we need to be aware of when it happens. Knowing that helps us keep our ability to choose whether or not we want to give up that privacy in the first place.

2. Provide students with the *Privacy Diary* worksheet. This handout will ask students to reflect and write down every time within their average week when they consider they give up their privacy at any level. Ask students to share what privacy score they gave themselves out of 5. Limit this section to 5-10 minutes.

Now present the class with additional information/scenarios within our modern digital society that regularly compromises our privacy when we:

- Download or upload a computer file
- Sign into a website
- Pass a security camera
- Visit a site that uses cookies (and if they even know what sites uses cookies)
- Turn on a cellphone
- Share information such as their name, phone number, email address, etc. when making an account
- Send an email or message

Ask students to reevaluate their privacy scores after considering this information.

3. Provide students the following link that contains tips for protecting online Privacy :[How To Protect Your Privacy Online In 8 Tips : Life Kit](#) (or distribute a printed copy). Read through it together as a class then have students answer the questions on the second handout titled *I can Build a Secure Online Identity*.

4. When you've discussed the questions with the class, make a chart on the front board with three headings:

- Things nobody should see (information that should be kept entirely private)
- Things only your friends and/or family should know
- Things everybody can see

Ask students which elements of their social media profile belong under each heading and discuss which is more important to them: protecting privacy or having high visibility. What factors might affect this decision? What aspects of privacy are important to them and why?

Privacy Diary (Handout)

In the following chart, write down every time you lose or give up some type of privacy within a typical week. Consider both the real world and online situations. For every incident, explain whether or not you had the choice to accept the privacy loss.

When finished, give each example a score between 1 and 5. A score of 1 means that you feel like you have very little privacy and a score of 5 means that you feel like you have a lot of control over privacy. Record your overall privacy score.

How you gave up your privacy	Was it by choice?

Your overall privacy score is (circle one): 1 2 3 4 5

I Can Build a Secure Online Identity (Handout)

1. What do privacy settings on social media actually control?

2. How should you set your privacy settings? Why?

3. What information should you **not** post on social media? Give at least three examples.

4. What should you consider before posting something to a social networking site? List three examples.

Booklists to Check Out

Coming of Age Online: Social Media in YA Literature

<http://www.yalsa.ala.org/thehub/2014/08/0/social-media-in-ya-literature/>

Taking a Stand Against Bullying: 25 Bullying Preventions Books for Tweens and Teens <https://www.amightygirl.com/blog?p=10257>

11 Enlightening and Empathetic YA Novels About Mental Illness

<https://www.readbrightly.com/enlightening-empathetic-ya-novels-about-mental-illness/>

Reality Scoop: Promoting Mental Wellness with YA Literature

<http://www.yalsa.ala.org/thehub/2016/02/02/reality-scoop-january-is-mental-wellness-month/>

You're Not Alone: Mental Health Nonfiction Picks for Teens

<http://www.yalsa.ala.org/thehub/2019/09/09/mental-health-nonfiction-picks-for-teens/>

Resources

- Kids Help Phone: Text- 686868 (24/7 support)
<https://kidshelpphone.ca/>
- Find trusted, culturally competent therapists that know *our* feelings and can help navigate being a black girl.
<https://therapyforblackgirls.com/>
- Black Youth Helpline: a Black youth specific service, positioned and resourced to promote access to professional, culturally appropriate support for youth, families and schools.
<https://blackyouth.ca/> +1416-285-9944 / +1833-294-8650
- Youth Line offers confidential and non-judgmental peer support through our telephone, text and chat services.
<https://www.youthline.ca/> +1647-694-4275
- Naseeha is a 12pm-12am confidential & anonymous helpline for Muslim youth to discuss mental health & wellness struggles.
Text: 1-866-627-3342 Phone: 1-866-627-3342
- Hope For Wellness is a 24/7 helpline for indigenous peoples and the chat is online at their website, phone and chat counseling is available in English and French. On request, phone counseling is also available in: Cree, Ojibway, and Inuktitut.
Phone: 1-855-242-3310 www.hopeforwellness.ca
- If you or someone you know is in crisis or requires immediate support, please contact 310-COPE at 1-855-310-COPE (2673) or visit your nearest emergency department.
- Autistic Self-Advocacy Network (ASAN): to empower autistic people across the world to take control of their own lives through public policy advocacy, the development of autistic cultural activities, and leadership training for autistic self-advocates. <https://autisticadvocacy.org/>

Apps for Students:

- Calm: This app teaches activities to help you sleep, breathe and relax.
- Headspace: Options customized for three age groups—under 5, 6-8, and 9-12. Plus, parents can use the adult version to practice breathing alongside their child.
- HelloMind: Young worriers can significantly benefit from HelloMind, an app which helps change negative thought patterns.
- Smiling Mind: It is designed to help youth through the stresses, and challenges of daily life. It offers programs for a variety of age groups, including 7-9, 10-12, 13-15, 16-18 and adults.
- MindShift: Scientifically proven strategies based on Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) to help you learn to relax and be mindful, develop more effective ways of thinking, and use active steps to take charge of your anxiety.

Want to Get Involved and Help Empower Other Youth and Inspire Change?

Here are some ways you can support:

- Join an event committee
- Attend our events
- Join our Board of Directors
- Follow us on social media



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- Donate to Canada Helps
 - You can click the “Donate” Button on the www.youthspeak.ca homepage
 - OR this link will take you straight to the donation page https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/youthspeak-performance-charity-organization/?utm_expId=.Z0WUQV4rT9mKtKTXtGPdnw.0&utm_referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fyouthspeak.ca%2F
- Share your special skills with our team of youth to help build their leadership
- Perform administrative tasks that are important behind the scenes work

www.youthspeak.ca

905-967-0604

volunteers@youthspeak.ca