

DIGITAL CONNECTIONS EDUCATOR GUIDE



INTRODUCTION

1.1 Making the Most of Digital Connections

Welcome! Digital Connections is an interactive video series for grade 6–8, created by Common Sense Education in collaboration with AT&T and the Public Library Association. Through the six-part video series, students follow two best friends, Daveed and Skylar, as they navigate the complexities of digital life, learning tips and strategies for how to use media and technology safely and responsibly to learn, create, and participate.

This guide provides an overview of Digital Connections and each video, along with recommendations for implementation.

1.2 The Digital Connections Experience

Through this six-part video series, students will learn foundational digital citizenship skills through fun and engaging videos, with built-in pause points for self-reflection and dialogue, along with checks for understanding.

Students will have the opportunity to watch all six videos at one time, or break it up over the course of multiple sessions. The entire video series experience is approximately 50 minutes, but facilitation time may vary depending on how long students spend on the reflections throughout each video. We highly recommend previewing Digital Connections to familiarize yourself with the content. The following chart provides more details about each video.

Digital Connections Video	Video Length	Video Description
Connecting with Balance: Digital Habits	9 minutes	<i>Daveed is reflecting on how much time he spends on his device. In this video, Skylar and Daveed think about their digital habits, how they make them feel, and learn tips to find balance on and offline.</i>
Connecting with Kindness: Online Relationships	6 minutes	<i>Online communication can get complicated! In this video, Skylar leans on Daveed to help navigate a dilemma she experienced with a friend, while learning some useful tips for connecting with kindness.</i>
Connecting with Kindness: Digital Drama	8 minutes	<i>In this video, Daveed and Skylar start to witness digital drama quickly turn into cyberbullying. Understanding the seriousness of this, the duo is quick to respond in helpful and supportive ways.</i>
Connecting with Vigilance: Cyber Safety	7 minutes	<i>Internet scams are all over the place! In this video, Skylar and Daveed help each other with tips on how to keep their personal information safe online and not fall prey to scams (as tempting as some of the offers may be!).</i>

Connecting with Vigilance: Online Misinformation	7 minutes	<i>Drones disguised as birds?! In this video, Daveed and Sklyar put on their detective hats to navigate the world of misinformation. Each clue brings them closer to making sure what they consume and share online is credible.</i>
Connecting with Purpose: Digital Footprint	7 minutes	<i>Is what we do online a reflection of who we are and who we want to be? In this video, Skylar and Daveed think deeply about their digital footprints and how they can use technology with purpose.</i>
Series Run Time	44 minutes	

1.3 Preview & Prep

Technical requirements:

- Digital Connections is a web-based experience. For the best experience, we recommend viewing it on a desktop, laptop, or tablet.
- Digital Connections will save where your students left off if you and your students agree to "enable cookies" and if students use the same device, browser, and login credentials. The game only requires a username (no password).
 - We do not collect any personal identifiable data, but browser cookies are necessary to save students' progress on their local device.
- Check with your school/district about firewalls. You may need to clear this URL: www.digitalconnections.org

WAYS TO IMPLEMENT DIGITAL CONNECTIONS

Digital Connections is designed to be a flexible, interactive viewing experience that can be used both in and out of school, as an independent activity or a co-viewing experience with peers or parents/caregivers. Each video includes two mid-video reflection points, along with three questions at the end, to check for understanding. Once students complete Digital Connections, they will receive a completion certificate that they can print or download to share with you. **Remember, the completion certificate is only generated if students agree to "enable cookies" and if students use the same device, browser, and login credentials.**

Please refer to the subsequent handouts in this packet, which can be used for students who are watching the series individually instead of as a co-viewing experience with peers or a parent/caregiver.

2.1 Onboarding to Digital Citizenship




Introduce students to digital citizenship with the Digital Connections video series. It can be assigned at the beginning of a new school year, as a required summer activity, or before getting school devices. It's a great way to set the tone for responsible and prosocial media and technology use, both in and out of school. The videos can be completed all at once or over a period of time, either in school (e.g., advisory, homeroom) or as homework for a flipped classroom experience. If you're new to Common Sense and our [K-12 Digital Citizenship Curriculum](#), this is a great entry point for middle school students before exploring our more in-depth lessons!




2.2 Family Engagement Activity

Having a whole-community approach to digital citizenship is where the magic happens! It makes all the difference when families are actively engaged in understanding how their children are using media and technology and can have open and honest dialogue that supports all the learning that happens in the classroom. We recommend suggesting to parents/caregivers that they co-view Digital Connections with their child, participating in the video reflections together. See **Parent/Caregiver Letter** below to share with families!

2.3 Complementing Digital Citizenship Curriculum Lessons

The best student outcomes happen when there is ongoing dialogue and reinforcement of digital citizenship throughout the year. Digital Connections is a great way to continue these important conversations, alongside our **Common Sense Digital Citizenship Curriculum** lessons. Each video is aligned with one of six core topics addressed in the Curriculum, so it's a great way to extend the learning after teaching a particular lesson or as an engaging hook before teaching a related lesson. The chart below shows Curriculum lessons that align with each of the six videos.

Digital Connections Video	Learning Objectives	Digital Citizenship Topic & Lesson Recommendations
Connecting with Balance: Digital Habits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect on your digital habits and the different feelings that come with them • Reflect on the places and times when it's important to be device- and distraction-free • Explore strategies for how to achieve more balance around media and technology use 	 <p>Media Balance & Well-Being</p> <p>Finding Balance in a Digital World</p> <p>My Media Use: A Personal Challenge</p> <p>Digital Media and Your Brain</p>
Connecting with Kindness: Online Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect on how you engage and interact with others online • Understand what positive online communication and connections look and feel like • Explore strategies for creating healthy relationships online and off 	 <p>Relationships & Communication</p> <p>Digital Friendships</p> <p>My Social Media Life</p>
Connecting with Kindness: Digital Drama	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand how online life can impact people's behavior • Reflect on how cyberbullying and hate speech can impact you and others • Explore strategies for how to respond to cyberbullying and online hate 	 <p>Cyberbullying, Digital Drama & Hate Speech</p> <p>Digital Drama Unplugged</p> <p>Upstanders and Allies: Taking Action Against Cyberbullying</p> <p>Responding to Online Hate Speech</p>

Digital Connections Video	Learning Objectives	Digital Citizenship Topic & Lesson Recommendations
<p>Connecting with Vigilance: Cyber Safety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the basics of data privacy and why it's important to keep your personal information and devices safe • Reflect on the concept of privacy, including what you feel comfortable sharing and with whom • Identify strategies for protecting your privacy online 	 <p>Privacy & Security</p> <p>Chatting Safely Online</p> <p>Don't Feed the Phish</p> <p>Being Aware of What You Share</p>
<p>Connecting with Vigilance: Online Misinformation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand what constitutes news and the different ways you can access it • Reflect on how we react to news and the impacts of those behaviors • Explore strategies for finding credible news and being responsible creators of online content 	 <p>News & Media Literacy</p> <p>Finding Credible News</p> <p>This Just In!</p>
<p>Connecting with Purpose: Digital Footprint</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand what a digital footprint is and how what you do online can impact both your own footprint and others' • Consider how you can use technology to advance your own interests, goals, and passions • Identify different ways to use technology as a force for good in the world 	 <p>Digital Footprint & Identity</p> <p>Who Are You Online?</p> <p>The Power of Digital Footprints</p> <p>Social Media and Digital Footprints: Our Responsibilities</p>

ANSWER KEYS

Each video in Digital Connections concludes with a three-question quiz. Below is an answer key for each video.

Digital Connections Video	Question 1	Question 2	Question 3
Connecting with Balance: Digital Habits	<p>1. What are digital habits?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The video you watched last week for school b. <u>A behavior we do often with technology</u> c. All the activities we do to relax 	<p>2. Which is a strategy for connecting with balance?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Ignoring how you feel when using technology b. Using your device whenever you're with friends or family c. <u>Limiting digital distractions when you need to focus</u> 	<p>3. After watching this video, I feel more confident about finding ways to connect with balance in my life.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree
Connecting with Kindness: Online Relationships	<p>1. What does it mean to act with empathy?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Talking to friends online and offline b. <u>Thinking about how others might feel</u> c. Never using CAPS when texting 	<p>2. Which is a strategy for being kind to others online?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Avoiding playing games with people that aren't as good as you are b. <u>Considering the impact of your actions before commenting or posting</u> c. Trying to have difficult conversations on a group chat 	<p>3. After watching this video, I feel more confident about knowing how to be kind to others online.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree
Connecting with Kindness: Digital Drama	<p>1. What is digital drama?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. When you don't like how you look in a photo someone else took b. Making a video saying or doing something funny c. <u>Using devices to start or continue conflict between people</u> 	<p>2. What is a strategy for de-escalating digital drama or cyberbullying?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Always respond, no matter what the situation is b. <u>Pause, reflect, and post positive and kind comments</u> c. Share it with friends 	<p>3. After watching the video, I feel more confident about knowing how to de-escalate cyberbullying or digital drama.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree

Digital Connections Video	Question 1	Question 2	Question 3
Connecting with Vigilance: Cyber Safety	1. What is an example of information you should never share online? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <u>Your username and password</u> b. Your favorite color c. The things you would like for your birthday 	2. Which of the following is a strategy for creating a strong password? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Pick one word that is easy to remember b. Use your full name or date of birth c. <u>Use a mix of letters, numbers, and symbols</u> 	3. After watching the video, I feel more confident about knowing how to keep myself and my information safe online. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree
Connecting with Vigilance: Online Misinformation	1. What is bias? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <u>When someone shows a strong preference for or against something</u> b. When someone has a different opinion than you do c. When you share a news article with a friend 	2. What is a strategy for identifying potential misinformation? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Understand that the information your friends share is usually trustworthy b. <u>Check other sources to verify the information</u> c. Never get your news from online sources 	3. After watching the video, I feel more confident about being able to identify misinformation online. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree
Connecting with Purpose: Digital Footprint	1. Which of the following statements is true? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. My digital footprint only includes the things I do for school b. My digital footprint is just the videos I watch online c. <u>My digital footprint can include things that others post about me</u> 	2. Which of the following is a strategy for using technology with purpose? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Record as many things about your life as possible b. Keep up an online appearance that you think others will like c. <u>Use your digital footprint to bring attention to things you care about</u> 	3. After watching the video, I feel more confident about knowing how to build a positive digital footprint. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree



Dear parents and caregivers,

In today's world, digital life is real life. Technology provides amazing opportunities for kids to build friendships, follow their passions, and learn new things. But kids can also experience challenges online. We know that supporting them through those challenges can feel daunting.

To help you and your child on this journey, we're excited to share an interactive video series called **Digital Connections**. Digital Connections was created by Common Sense Education in collaboration with AT&T and the Public Library Association.

The six videos in the series explore:

- Balancing technology use
- Making sure to be kind when connecting with others online
- Standing up for others online and confronting cyberbullying
- Staying safe online by protecting ourselves and our personal information
- Making sure the information we consume and share online is credible
- Using technology with purpose

Our hope is that you can watch this video series together with your child to establish an ongoing, honest, and productive discussion about your child's digital life.

Key information:

- To access Digital Connections, go to www.digitalconnections.org.
- Each video has reflection questions at different points throughout. Use the questions as a starting point for deeper discussions about your child's digital life.
- The six-part video series is about 50 minutes. The total activity time will vary depending on how long you spend on the reflections in each video.
- You can complete Digital Connections all at once or over a period of time.

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions. Working together with Common Sense Education, we can prepare today's kids to think critically and use tech in positive, creative, and powerful ways.

Sincerely,

Connecting With Balance: DIGITAL HABITS

NAME

DATE

Directions

Use the space below to answer the reflection questions in the video.

What is a habit?

What are some habits that make you feel happy and good? What are some habits you have that make you feel the opposite?

Check for Understanding

1. What are digital habits?
 - a. The video you watched last week for school
 - b. A behavior we do often with technology
 - c. All the activities we do to relax
2. Which is a strategy for connecting with balance?
 - a. Ignoring how you feel when using technology
 - b. Using your device whenever you're with friends or family
 - c. Limiting digital distractions when you need to focus
3. After watching this video, I feel more confident about finding ways to connect with balance in my life.
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly Disagree

Connecting With Kindness: **ONLINE RELATIONSHIPS**

NAME

DATE

Directions

Use the space below to answer the reflection questions in the video.

Why do you think the friend was hurt and stopped talking to Skylar?

Have you ever experienced a misunderstanding or unkindness online? What do you wish had happened differently?

Check for Understanding

1. What does it mean to act with empathy?
 - a. Talking to friends online and offline
 - b. Thinking about how others might feel
 - c. Never using CAPS when texting
2. Which is a strategy for being kind to others online?
 - a. Avoiding playing games with people that are not as good as you are
 - b. Considering the impact of your actions before commenting or posting
 - c. Trying to have difficult conversations on a group chat
3. After watching this video, I feel more confident about knowing how to be kind to others online.
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly Disagree

Connecting With Kindness: DIGITAL DRAMA

NAME

DATE

Directions

Use the space below to answer the reflection questions in the video.

Have you ever experienced or witnessed drama online? How did it feel?

Who (like trusted friends and grown-ups) can you talk to if you see or experience cyberbullying or online hate?

What did Daveed and Skylar do to try to de-escalate the situation?

Check for Understanding

1. What is digital drama?
 - a. When you don't like how you look in a photo someone else took
 - b. Making a video saying or doing something funny
 - c. Using devices to start or continue conflict between people
2. What is a strategy for de-escalating digital drama or cyberbullying?
 - a. Always respond, no matter what the situation is
 - b. Pause, reflect, and post positive and kind comments
 - c. Share it with friends
3. After watching the video, I feel more confident in knowing how to de-escalate cyberbullying or digital drama.
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly Disagree

Connecting With Vigilance: **CYBER SAFETY**

NAME

DATE

Directions

Use the space below to answer the reflection questions in the video.

Have you or someone you know ever had an experience with an online scam?

Why was it risky for Daveed to respond to the sneaker email?

Check for Understanding

1. What is an example of information you should never share online?
 - a. Your username and password
 - b. Your favorite color
 - c. The things you would like for your birthday
2. Which of the following is a strategy for creating a strong password?
 - a. Pick one word that is easy to remember
 - b. Use your full name or date of birth
 - c. Use a mix of letters, numbers, and symbols
3. After watching the video, I feel more confident in knowing how to keep myself and my info safe online.
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly Disagree

Connecting With Vigilance: **ONLINE MISINFORMATION**

NAME

DATE

Directions

Use the space below to answer the reflection questions in the video.

Where do you usually hear or get the news from?

Have you or someone you know ever shared misinformation accidentally? What was it? How did you find out it was misinformation?

Check for Understanding

1. What is bias?
 - a. When someone shows a strong preference for or against something
 - b. When someone has a different opinion than you do
 - c. When you share a news article with a friend
2. What is a strategy for identifying potential misinformation?
 - a. Understand that the information your friends share is usually trustworthy
 - b. Check other sources to verify the information
 - c. Never get your news from online sources
3. After watching the video, I feel more confident about being able to identify misinformation online.
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly Disagree

Connecting With Purpose: DIGITAL FOOTPRINT

NAME

DATE

Directions

Use the space below to answer the reflection questions in the video.

What's in your digital footprint? What do you feel proud of? Is there anything you might want to change?

What does "using tech with purpose" mean to you?

Check for Understanding

1. Which of the following statements is true?
 - a. My digital footprint only includes the things I do for school
 - b. My digital footprint is just the videos I watch online
 - c. My digital footprint can include things that others post about me
2. Which of the following is a strategy for using technology with purpose?
 - a. Record as many things about your life as possible
 - b. Keep up an online appearance that you think others will like
 - c. Use your digital footprint to bring attention to things you care about
3. After watching the video, I feel more confident in knowing how to build a positive digital footprint.
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly Disagree