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To verify a School ID#, login at [www.isafe.org](http://www.isafe.org), go to the My Info page and select “Find your school ID.”

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# LESSON PLAN—Netiquette in the Cyber Community

## Suggested grade level 4

### Lesson Guide

This lesson uses the concept of Cyberspace as a community, where real people interact without being able to actually see each other, to introduce and reinforce the concept of netiquette use.

### Learning Objectives

Students will:

- develop an understanding of Cyberspace as a community of real people
- compare characteristics of communication in the physical world with communication in Cyberspace
- develop an understanding that unkind communication in Cyberspace is the same as unkind communication in the physical world
- tell an adult if an unkind Internet message is received
- use the vocabulary terms: community, Cyberspace, online, Internet, and netiquette



### Materials

- materials to create posters
- a copy of the parent page for each student

### Procedures

#### Discussion

Compare the physical community to the cyber community by providing open-ended questions to prompt discussion. Include the following:

1. (Introduce or review) What is a community? (the area where we live, which contains places where we know real people)
2. (Introduce or review) What does the word Cyberspace mean? (A community that contains places to visit, just like in the real community, is called the cyber community.)
3. Discuss what being friendly means.
4. Ask students to explain how they feel when someone is friendly versus unfriendly to them.
5. Discuss how being friendly affects them in school and at home.
6. Ask students how it feels when someone says something mean to them.
7. Have students give examples of what their teachers and parents teach them about how to treat and talk to people.
8. Reinforce that on the Internet, real people use computers to talk to each other.

### Activity

Using a presentation board or large piece of paper, create two columns labeled “Physical World” and “Internet.” Select two students to face each other and read the short message script.

## Message Script:

**Student 1:** I have great news for you! All of your friends are going to have a big party for you.

**Student 2:** I can't believe it.

**Student 1:** Everyone is going to bring gifts for you!

**Student 2:** When is the party?

**Student 1:** Tomorrow. Here at school.

**Student 2:** Thank you so much. What great friends!

Have the class think about the two students communicating and then list the characteristics of communication that may occur in the physical world. The instructor may need to guide the answers to ensure that they are complete. The list should include items such as: can see the person and their facial expression, can hear the person's tone of voice, can change the tone of speaker's voice to sound kind or unkind, etc.

Use the following questions to have students think about communication in Cyberspace via e-mail, instant messaging, etc. Create a list of characteristics in the second column.

- Do the same characteristics apply to Internet communications?
- How would they feel if someone said something mean to them in an e-mail?

Compare the two lists.

- Can you really tell how a person is feeling when they send or read an e-mail or text message?
- Would it feel different than if someone said a mean thing face to face? (The answer should be no; real people are involved.)
- Is it possible that you can be misunderstood in a text message because you can't see or hear each other?

## Introduce the term "Netiquette"

Netiquette means to use good manners when communicating in Cyberspace.

Ask students why it might be easy to forget to use netiquette. Possible answers:

- You can't see each other.
- If someone sends an unkind message to you, you might react quickly and send an unkind message back.

Brainstorm a list of tips to help someone use netiquette. (Example: Tell a trusted adult anytime you see a message that is not kind. Think before you react to a message. If you don't understand what a message from a friend means, call him or her. If you receive an unkind message from someone you don't know in the physical world, don't reply—tell an adult.)

## Options

1. Have students work in small groups to create posters of their tips to post in an area where computers are used.
2. Use the tips to create a bulletin board that can be seen by others in the school.



Have students take the parent page home to share what they have learned with their families.

Children who participate in activities and share what they have learned about Internet safety are more likely to practice safe habits online.

Additional materials and support for students, teachers, and parents on Internet safety topics are available from i-SAFE Inc. [www.isafe.org](http://www.isafe.org).

# PARENT PAGE—Communicating on the Internet

Your child has been learning about the similarities and differences between face-to-face communication and communication on the Internet, and how netiquette can help people online communicate better.

Your child has learned that netiquette means to use good manners when communicating on the Internet using a computer.

To make this a successful learning experience, it is important for parents to reinforce to their children that everyone should use netiquette when communicating online.

**Your child has learned that to be a good cyber citizen, he or she should tell a trusted adult if he or she receives an unkind message over the Internet. A trusted adult is a parent, guardian, or teacher, or someone designated by one of them to oversee the child's Internet use.**



## Safety Tips for Families

- Have the family computer in an open area, never in your child's bedroom.
- Respect your child's privacy – Rather than “policing” your child's online behavior, keep the lines of communication open with him or her.
- Talk to your child about the importance of not giving out personal information over the Internet. User names and profiles can provide a wealth of personal information to strangers on the Internet. Let your child know that if there is a need to give out some information to complete an activity, you will work on it together.
- Let your children know that they can come to you if they ever find themselves in an uncomfortable situation while on the Internet.
- Become a part of your child's online experience. It can be a fun journey to explore the wonders of the Internet as a family. As computer-savvy as children are today, they may even teach you a thing or two!
- Learn about the Internet. The more you know about how the Internet works, the more you can be informed about how online predators and identity thieves work, and what you can do to stop them.