

LET'S TALK ABOUT Digital Literacy

A FAMILY GUIDE TO SUPPORTING DIGITAL LITERACY IN K-2



WHAT IS DIGITAL LITERACY?

Digital literacy describes the knowledge, skills, and habits people need to use technology safely, responsibly, and effectively. It includes communicating, creating, thinking critically, protecting personal information, and making informed choices when using digital tools.

WHAT IS ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)?

Artificial intelligence (AI) refers to computer systems designed to recognize patterns, respond to questions, make suggestions, and generate content such as words, images, or sounds. AI may already be part of familiar tools such as search, voice assistants, translation, spelling suggestions, and learning games.

WAYS TO APPROACH IT IN K-2

In Kindergarten to Grade 2, children are beginning to learn about technology through conversations, modelling, and adult-guided experiences. Digital literacy does not mean young children need more screen time or need to use every type of digital tool. Children can develop digital literacy by learning

when technology is helpful, how to make safe choices, and when it is better to learn, create, play, or solve problems without it.

Children may learn about AI through conversations and adult-guided activities. At this age, children should not use generative AI tools independently.

TIPS TO GET STARTED

- Talk with your child about how technology is used at home, at school, and in everyday life.
- Explore new apps, games, websites, and digital tools alongside your child.
- Keep technology use adult-guided and choose age-appropriate experiences with a clear purpose.
- Encourage your child to ask questions about what they see, hear, or experience online.
- Model safe, kind, respectful, and balanced technology habits.

STAY INVOLVED AND BUILD TRUST.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Young children learn about technology by watching and interacting with the adults around them. Exploring technology together and talking openly about what they see and do helps children develop safe, respectful, and responsible habits from the start.

IDEAS FOR FAMILIES

- Ask your child to show you something they enjoy doing or learning with technology.
- Talk about being kind and respectful online, just

as you would in person.

- Practise what to do when something online is confusing, uncomfortable, or unfamiliar.
- Learn what digital tools are being used at school and how they support learning.

ONLINE ACTIONS AFFECT REAL PEOPLE.

The same expectations for kindness, safety, and responsibility apply online as they do in person.

PROTECT PRIVACY AND CYBERSECURITY.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Apps, games, websites, and digital tools may ask children to share information. Young children are still learning what information is safe to share and when they should ask a trusted adult for help.

IDEAS FOR FAMILIES

- Teach your child to ask a trusted adult before using a new app, website, or game.
- Help your child learn that personal information, such as their full name, address, school, phone number, or passwords, should stay private.
- Talk about why we ask permission before sharing photos or information about other people.
- Use family controls and privacy settings when appropriate.

Settings can help, but regular conversations and adult guidance remain important ways to help young children stay safe online.

QUESTION WHAT YOU SEE ONLINE.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Not everything children see, hear, or read through technology is true. Pictures can be changed, videos can be edited, and digital tools - including AI - can provide incorrect information. Learning to ask questions helps children begin to think critically.

Encourage your child to ask:

- Who made this?
- Is it real, pretend, or changed?
- Is someone trying to teach me, entertain me, or sell me something?
- Can we check with a trusted adult or somewhere else together?

PAUSE • QUESTION • CHECK

When something online is confusing or you are not sure it is true, pause and check with a trusted adult.



FIND A HEALTHY BALANCE.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Technology can support learning, creativity, communication, and fun. Young children also need plenty of time to move, play, read, talk, create, build relationships, and explore the world around them.

IDEAS FOR FAMILIES

- Create simple routines for when and where technology is used.
- Protect time for sleep, active play, reading, creativity, family time, and outdoor experiences.
- Notice how your child responds during and after technology use.
- Model balanced technology habits yourself.

Children learn healthy technology habits by watching the adults around them. Small daily routines can make a big difference.

USE DIGITAL TOOLS WITH PURPOSE

Digital tools can help children communicate, create, practise skills, and explore ideas. Some digital tools use AI, while others do not. What matters most is whether the tool has a clear purpose and supports the child's learning.

IDEAS FOR FAMILIES

- Create a picture or story together using a digital tool.
- Explore an interactive learning tool together.
- Use accessibility features such as text-to-speech, captions, or translation when they support learning.
- Talk about AI that may already be part of familiar tools such as search, voice assistants, spelling suggestions, or translation.
- Protect time to read, write, draw, build, talk, play, and solve problems without technology.

Digital tools should support curiosity and learning—not replace thinking.

GENERATIVE AI

Generative AI can create new content, such as words, pictures, or sounds. K-2 children should not use generative AI tools independently.

IS THIS TOOL SUPPORTING LEARNING?

"Is this tool helping my child learn, or is it doing the learning for them?"

KEEP THE CONVERSATION GOING

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR CHILD

- What do you enjoy doing or learning with technology?
- What can you do when something online makes you feel unsure?
- When is technology helpful - and what do you enjoy doing without it?

HELPFUL RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES

- [MediaSmarts Digital Literacy Fundamentals](#)
- [Common Sense Education Digital Citizenship Resources](#)
- [Canadian Centre for Cyber Security – Get Cyber Safe](#)
- [Digital Moment AI Literacy Resources](#)

