
Legal Trends in Cyber Safety and Security

i-SAFE Lesson Plan

Suggested Grade Level – High School

Learning Objectives

Students will:

- be able to identify the ever-changing and evolving nature of laws as they pertain to the Internet, which is in its infancy
- be able to identify some of the current legislation/court actions regarding four main topics: cyber predators, cyber security, cyber bullying, and intellectual property
- be able to communicate to others their knowledge on legal trends of the Internet
- be able to take an active part in helping to form policy

Enrichment Goal

Learners will interact in the classroom environment through group discussion and examination of current legal trends as they apply to central cyber safety and security issues. Learners will be provided with materials to engage in an enrichment activity, which involves helping to form policy by writing to congressional leaders concerning the legal cyber security/safety issue of their choice. Ideas for further involvement in policy-making will also be given.

Materials/Preparation

- access to research materials
- a copy of reference and activity pages for each student
- materials as selected for the presentation portion of the lesson
- a congressional letter direction page
- online i-MENTOR registration (each student) to receive supporting i-MENTOR Toolkit materials

Pre-Assessment

If beginning the i-SAFE program with this lesson, administer the pre-assessment online at **www.isafe.org** by clicking on “Assessments” prior to the lesson. To verify school ID number, log in at **www.isafe.org**, go to the “My Info” page, and select “Find Your School ID.”

Lesson Procedures

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

Additional lessons and support for students, teachers, and parents on Internet safety topics are available from i-SAFE Inc. at **www.isafe.org**.

Discussion

Direct a class discussion on the following:

- Ask students what types of issues and problems they face when online.
- Ask students what they know/understand on the following issues:
 - cyber predators
 - cyber bullying

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- intellectual property
 - cyber security
 - Ask students if they know of or have school policy, state laws, or even federal laws concerning those topics.
 - Ask students if they have heard of any recent policy or legislation changes regarding Internet topics.
 - Present the idea that laws and policies regarding the Internet are constantly changing and evolving.

Peer-to-Peer (P2P) Activity

- Divide students into four groups.
- Assign each group a topic (cyber predators, cyber bullying, intellectual property, cyber security), and hand them that reference sheet.
- Student groups should read through and discuss the reference sheet they received.
- Students should create a mini presentation on the topic to educate the rest of the class.
- Have student groups present their mini presentation to the class.
- Discuss the legal trends mentioned in presentations.

Concluding Discussion

As a class, discuss the following:

- What legal trends were mentioned in the presentations?
- How are laws and policies regarding the Internet constantly changing? Why?
- What types of things would they, as students, like to see made into laws/policies?
- Lead into a discussion about the enrichment activity.

Enrichment Activity

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

Additional lessons and support for students, teachers, and parents on Internet safety topics are available from i-SAFE Inc. at www.isafe.org.

Inform students that they will write letters to their congressional leaders concerning an Internet safety or security issue, and discuss their ideas for legislation or policy regarding it.

- Pass out the congressional letter worksheet for students to fill out as you discuss getting started.
- Share with students the congressional letter information directions for getting started:
 - A congressional letter should be carefully written, edited, and revised. Make sure to follow basic formal letter-writing standards. Clearly state the problem as you see it, and offer suggestions for ways to solve this problem through legislation or policy changes.
- Have students research their state representatives and make a note of addresses in which to send letters.
- Have students draft a letter to the state representative of their choice.
- Have students exchange letters and offer feedback and constructive criticism.
- Have students rewrite their letters into final draft form based on suggestions for revisions.
- As a class, mail letters to the appropriate state representative.

Post-Assessment

Administer the post-assessment online at www.isafe.org by clicking on “Assessments” if this is your last lesson for i-SAFE. To verify school ID number, log in at www.isafe.org, go to the “My Info” page, and select “Find Your School ID.”

Related Lessons

The i-SAFE lessons: provide additional related information.

Contact us

We'd like to hear from you! E-mail teachers@isafe.org to share any unique ideas and/or experiences you had during implementation of this lesson.

Legal Trends in Cyber Bullying

Introduction

i-SAFE would love to be able to give you a set list of rules and say, "Follow these and you'll be always safe and secure." The problem is that it might ignore some of your rights when it comes to free speech, copyright, fair use, and what's more – it just won't accomplish anything. It also won't work to simply give you a set line and say, "As long as you only do this, you are OK." Those lines are still being drawn in the law books and courtrooms. It is important to remember that the Internet is still very young, and many of the issues that are coming up online are just now making their way to federal and state lawmakers, and courtrooms to decide. So let's talk about that! Think about the issues below, what the lawmakers are considering, your rights, and what you can do to get involved and influence final policy.

Cyber Bullying

Although youth have known about this issue awhile, it is just now coming to the attention of those who make the laws and policies because of some high-profile cases involving murders and/or suicides.

Schools are hurrying to develop school policies regarding cyber bullying that substantially disrupts class, is committed with school equipment, etc.

Federal lawmakers are targeting these issues with laws that encompass other issues like antistalking. One recent federal law makes it illegal to anonymously "annoy, abuse, threaten, or harass" another person over the Internet. However, many critics of such a law say that the wording is too vague and open to interpretation. How does one define what is "annoying," and when should a case be prosecuted? Other federal laws can cover some cases of cyber bullying in which direct threats are made, etc.

To make it even more confusing, various states are also enacting laws to cover the issue of cyber bullying.

Washington has pending legislation: State Sen. Jeanne Kohl-Welles sponsored a bill to end cyber bullying described as: "Harassment, intimidation, or bullying by any intentional electronic . . . act, when that act a) physically harms a student or damages a student's property; b) has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education; c) is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or d) has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Virginia has gone one step further with its legislation: People are guilty of "harassment by computer" if, intending to intimidate or harass they use a computer or network to "communicate obscene, vulgar, profane, lewd . . . or indecent language, or make a suggestion/proposal of an obscene nature, or threaten any illegal or immoral act." Harassment by computer is punishable by up to a year in jail or a substantial fine.

Think about it:

What are your state laws?

What are your school policies?

What types of laws would you like to see in place at various levels?

Legal Trends in Intellectual Property

Introduction:

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Intellectual Property:

Intellectual property and students is a VERY debated topic. There have long been fair-use guidelines covering what is appropriate for U.S. students to use in regard to education. However, the advent of the Internet has changed the whole playing field when it comes to copyright, piracy, fair use, and more.

The relative ease with which one can download material and use it has resulted in numerous court cases as the participants struggle to determine what the law should say. Are peer-to-peer networks legal? Do they have a valid purpose that is not illegal (i.e. downloading copyrighted music, movies, etc.) What about music? How should it be restricted when it comes to downloading, paying for play, use on computers and mp3 players, and more.

To understand many of the issues, it is important to note that intellectual property laws are designed NOT just to protect the creators of a work but also to protect public interests. For example, it is understood that for a creator to want to continue to produce work, there must be some type of ownership and monetary compensation in regard to value. Thus it is considered a person owns what they create and can sell the rights to the work. However, to encourage overall health of the creative community, it is also understood that items should eventually enter the public domain for free usage and that there are reasons for selective use that are valid, such as criticism, commentary, and more. These issues enter all new realms when the environment of the Internet is taken into consideration.

Think about it:

- According to 2005 statistics one in three music discs sold worldwide is an illegal copy
- How common is illegal downloading among your peers?
- Can you think of any effective solutions to illegal use of Intellectual property?

Legal Trends in Malicious Code

Introduction

i-SAFE would love to be able to give you a set list of rules and say, "Follow these and you'll be always safe and secure." The problem is that it might ignore some of your rights when it comes to free speech, copyright, fair use, and what's more – it just won't accomplish anything. It also won't work to simply give you a set line and say, "As long as you only do this, you are OK." Those lines are still being drawn in the law books and courtrooms. It is important to remember that the Internet is still very young, and many of the issues that are coming up online are just now making their way to federal and state lawmakers, and courtrooms to decide. So let's talk about that! Think about the issues below, what the lawmakers are considering, your rights, and what you can do to get involved and influence final policy.

Malicious Code

While malicious code has been around for a long time, it has become more and more of an issue because of the large increase of the online population. As more and more people rely on and use high-speed electronic communications, e-mail attachments, and peer-to-peer file-sharing programs, viruses and worms will continue to spread.

The impact of viruses, worms, and Trojan horses is large-scale. It is economically debilitating and can run into the billions of dollars. There is the potential for homeland security risks and more. With these things to consider, causing damage to our nation's computer networks is a federal crime, one that carries substantial penalties for those convicted. The principal federal law-enforcement weapon in the battle against computer viruses and worms is the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act, 18 U.S.C. ' 1030.

The actual wording of the act is fairly broad. It states that the risk of damage from a computer virus or worm is significant and could impact critical national or personal interests. Penalties for felony violations of the law range from five to 20 years in prison for subsequent offenders, to life imprisonment for those whose knowing or reckless violations result in someone's death.

Unfortunately, because of the way the Internet was formed and the fact that computers are connected worldwide, laws in the United States do not necessarily apply to laws in other countries. Therefore, those who develop malicious code and release it in a different country may never be prosecuted. Their country may not have set laws for the crime, an adequate judicial system, etc. In addition, this leaves open an area of those in foreign countries who are condoned by their government for actions on foreign computers (i.e. terrorism or cyber warfare).

Think About It:

- Why, despite the harsh laws, do we not hear of more court cases and prosecutions in regards to malicious code?
- Is there a need for some type of international courtroom to handle Internet issues like malicious code? And if so, how would it work?

Congressional Leader Letter Instructions

Materials/Preparation

- address of representative or senator
- high-quality paper
- envelope and stamps

Directions

1. Brainstorm.

1. Select the issue on which you will write.
2. Gather information on the issue.
3. Brainstorm your suggested solution about policy.

2. Write the letter.

- Using the information you brainstormed, write your letter.
- See Page 2 for a sample letter.

3. Edit the letter.

Trade letters and offer constructive criticism and feedback.

4. Draft a final version.

1. On high-quality paper, write your final draft.
2. Seal the letter in an envelope, write the address of the representative or senator, and mail.

Sample letter to Congressional Representative

[Date]

U.S. Rep. _____

[See www.house.gov for addresses]

Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear [Mr./Ms.] _____:

1st paragraph: State who you are, the issue, why you are interested in issue.

Example: The purpose of this letter is to inform you of my concerns on . . .

2nd paragraph: Expand on issue.

3rd paragraph: Offer your suggestion for a solution.

4th paragraph: Conclude.

Sincerely,

[Name]

[Address]

[Telephone and/or e-mail]