

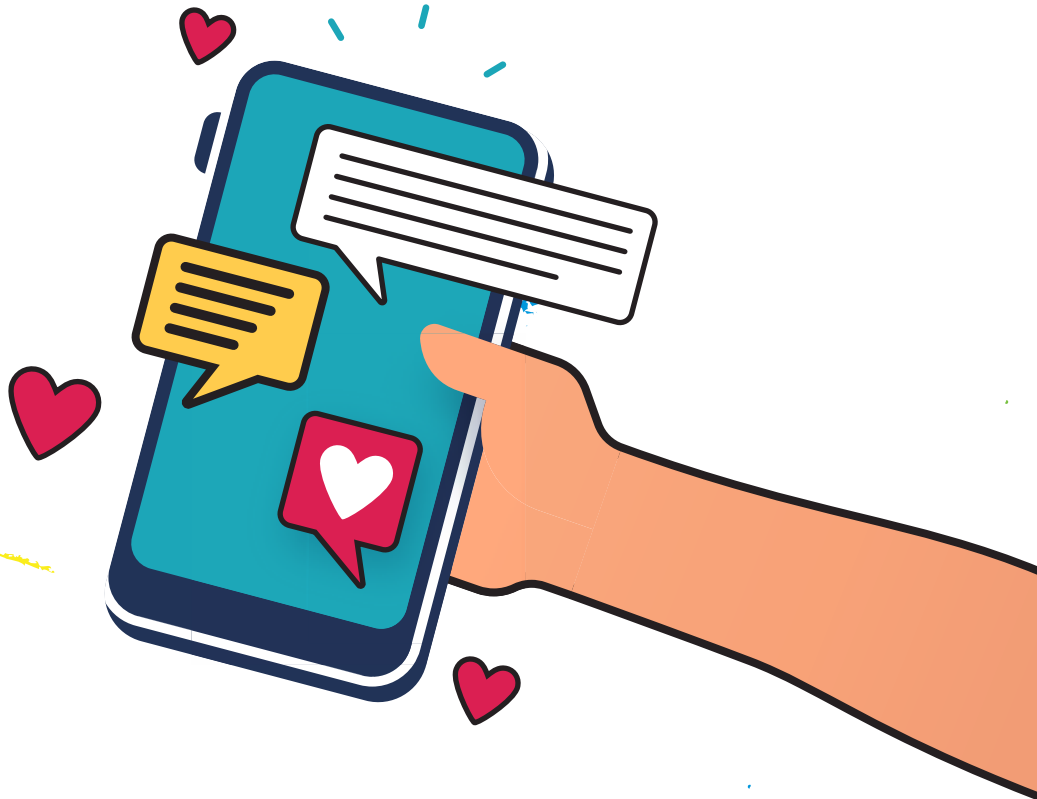
# A Guidebook for Young Change Makers

## Online Citizenship for Canadian Youth

Youth are active and contributing  
citizens in Canada's democracy.

# BEING A RESPONSIBLE CITIZEN

Youth can be agents of change through digital citizenship! This guidebook will help you to learn more about the do's and don'ts of being a responsible citizen online. Digital citizenship is to respect others, accept different points of view and also to build a positive community.



## Be an Accountable Citizen Online



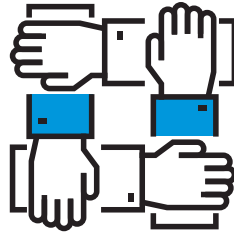
### Be a Critical Thinker:

A critical thinker is someone who asks questions about what they see online, including what they personally share or post. Analyse and reflect on information you see online and think carefully about how that information could shape your actions. For example: ask yourself is this article or blog's content true or false? Does your comment add value to the conversation? Thinking about these kinds of questions can help you be critical about what you see or read online.

### Stay Informed, Stay Current:

Stay informed about topics that you and your peers see and post online. Double check facts and think carefully if the online content is up to date and relevant for others. Checking multiple and reliable sources is the best way to make sure the information is true. Avoid posting or commenting if you do not have reliable evidence to back up what you are saying.

# Promote a Positive Community



## Respect and Consideration:

Youth have the power to create a meaningful and positive community online. A responsible digital citizen adds helpful information that leads to a respectful discussion. Your actions online should support your peers and avoid any negative comments that hurt others. Thinking about ideas from a variety of sources that include diverse perspectives will help build a more inclusive online community.

## Empathy and Gratitude:

Showing empathy towards other people's thoughts can help them know that they have been heard and recognized for their experience. Expressing your gratitude for online community-builders and applauding their valuable contributions, will increase your ability to connect with others who also want to be responsible digital citizens.

## Compassionate and Supportive Behaviour:

Driving positive change online can be inspiring to other users. Youth can support each other by giving useful feedback, encouraging each other's online actions or sharing the work they are proud of. For example, if your peers are looking to join a volunteer club, give them information and connect them to the right people! Youth can also empower underrepresented voices by sharing their experiences and information that exposes gaps in our society.

# Active Responsibilities Online



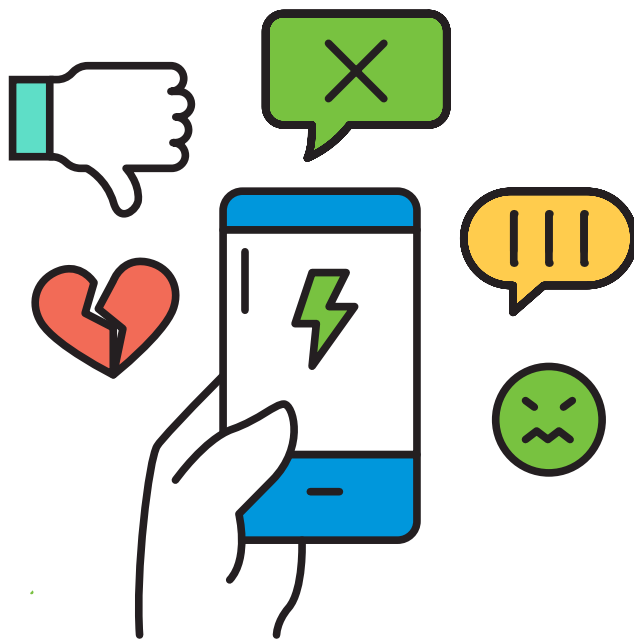
## Monitor, Respond and Share

Monitor your online engagement so that you can make a positive difference. Will the content you post affect other people? Your friends will feel uplifted by the way you respond to their posts! Sharing useful information that is inspiring to others is a great way to practice connecting with people. For example: you may share volunteerism opportunities and your own story to inspire peers to do the same.

## Read Carefully and Double Check the Facts

All online users should read carefully so they understand what is being said. For example: read the entire article or discussion forum first before you post and then participate meaningfully. Posting a particular topic requires you to cite your sources and double check the sources of other people's posts. People's biases should also be taken into account. If you repost an article, blog or story, make sure you are confident that what you are sharing is factual or supported by information from reliable sources.

# Safety and Security



## Secure Personal Information Online



### Share Private Information Only as Necessary

Online users need to make sure that they never share their private information without an adult's consent. Keep your privacy settings up to date and protected on social media sites. Double check with adults about the information you are sharing on your profile. Keep your passwords private and do not share this information with anyone. Always review your privacy settings in all your social media channels. Remember, all photos, videos and other content you upload become the property of the social media giants.

## Report Cyberbullying and Protect Peers



### Protect Yourself and Peers from Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is using the internet to make fun of someone, hurt someone's feelings or spread rumours. This act can be very harmful for you and your peers. As a good digital citizen, you should protect your peers and yourself from cyberbullying. You have the power to make someone feel welcome and promote belonging. Your positive words and support for your peers can stop cyberbullying!

### Report and Inform

If something needs to be reported (dangerous behaviour, bullying, suicide threats, violence), find out who the social media 'authorities' are and report it. For example: If you spot a person sharing abusive content or photos, stand up for yourself and report these issues online just like you would in real life. Most sites have a 'Report' button for reporting an issue.