K-12 Cyber Awareness Month 2023

Communication Products and Resources

Guide for School Boards on the
K-12 Cyber Awareness Month (CAM) 2023 campaign

October 1st - 31st, 2023

Theme for 2023:

"Together We Rise: Cyber Heroes Unite for Online Safety!"

CYBER SECURITY • ONLINE SAFETY • ONLINE PRIVACY

Overview

Since 2020, ECNO (Education Collaborative Computing Network of Ontario), school boards and the Ministry of Education have partnered to develop a K-12 cyber awareness campaign for English- and French- language school boards in Ontario.

The primary goal of the campaign is to help boards promote safer and more secure practices across their school communities when using digital technologies and the internet and encourage safe online practices at home.

The purpose of this document is to provide school boards with an overview of the 2023 K-12 Cyber Awareness Month (CAM) campaign and associated resources. The 2023 October campaign is packaged for boards to use as-is or tailor it to meet specific board internal cyber awareness needs.

Each board can choose to direct their audience to the main K-12 CAM campaign webpage or create their own branded landing page with links to campaign resources. Boards can also find information about other cyber awareness campaigns such as the Ontario Cyber Security Division's Cyber Security Awareness Month and the Get Cyber Safe Cyber Security Awareness Month, and may wish to leverage resources from those campaigns as well. This year, a new K-12 Zone has been created by the Ontario Cyber Security Division with additional resources specifically aimed at K-12.

All boards are encouraged to review the myriad of cyber awareness resources available to them and determine what works best for their own cyber awareness campaign needs.

Introduction

During the past few years, we have seen the adoption of digital solutions and the internet at an unprecedented pace in every aspect of our lives - for work, education and staying connected with friends and loved ones. Between late last year and this year artificial intelligence (AI) has made remarkable strides, influencing the way we learn, work, create and innovate, especially with the expanding availability of generative AI tools.

The use of digital technology is now common practice in our day-to-day lives; this is true for all ages, young and old. The emergence of generative AI is highlighting the need to continually learn about evolving technologies and their cyber risks and best practices to mitigate them.

The quick and vast adoption of digital technology including AI has increased cyber risks and online threats, as evidenced in the media and through various warnings issued by industry and government entities. Cybercriminals have taken advantage of this exponential increase in internet usage and continue to look for new ways to exploit users, irrespective of age.

We can all do our part to increase awareness related to cyber security, cyber safety, and online privacy, and in turn remediate cyber actions that can cause harm. Learning to be cyber safe, secure and responsible is essential to making our online experience more secure, fun and rewarding.

By adopting safe and secure practices you are not only protecting yourself, but also reducing the likelihood of cyber-attacks against all members of the school community. Collectively, we can make our online and virtual lives safer for everyone by developing and maintaining personal safe online habits.

The **K-12 Cyber Awareness Month (CAM) campaign** has been developed to promote best practices in cyber safety, cyber security, and online privacy in the K-12 sector. The campaign is in its fourth year! It is an adaptation – tailored for the K-12 environment – of the internationally recognized October Cyber Security Awareness Month which is often mentioned in the media.

Theme

The theme of the K-12 CAM 2023 campaign is:

"Together We Rise: Cyber Heroes Unite for Online Safety!"

The theme is a call to action for everyone to be vigilant in our commitment to online safety, privacy, and responsible use of digital technology whether in class or at home. Staff, educators, school leaders and students of all ages can become cyberheroes by:

- Using the internet and digital technology for good, spreading positivity and respect.
- Using AI safely and responsibly and being aware of its risks.
- Watching out for and reporting questionable activities such as phishing and scams – letting others know so they don't fall prey to the same phishing attempts and scams.
- Standing up for themselves and others when hurtful or inappropriate online behaviour is noticed.
- Keeping personal or sensitive information to themselves and continuously being thoughtful about which information to share online and with whom.
- Acting as a school and board cyber ally – i.e., helping the board's IT and security team(s) by being the first line of defense in thwarting cyberattacks, being vigilant and doing their part in keeping board systems and information safe and secure.
- Sharing and promoting what they learn about safe and secure practices with friends and loved ones.

Each week in October promotes specific topics.

- Week 1 focuses on cyber essentials – the basics of maintaining a safe digital identity.
- Week 2 focuses on building awareness of the risks of Artificial Intelligence and best practices to consider.
- Week 3 is about navigating our connected worlds such as social media and gaming.
- Week 4 focuses on the importance of digital wellness, as we sometimes lose sight of the fact that we may be spending too much time online.
- Week 5 will recap key themes presented during the month.

Every week will include different resources such as videos, posters, games, and a curated list of resources from other reputable sources.

Below are details for each of the weeks.

WEEK 1: Cyber Essentials

Visit online at www.ecno.org/cyber-awareness/week-1-2023

What's on your cyberhero toolbelt? Get to know the basics of setting a secure starting point for your digital identity and online participation.

Things like managing your accounts and passwords, securing your personal information, and adopting multi-factor authentication are great ways to set a first line of defence against potential online trouble.

By being thoughtful about what information is shared online and with whom, Cyberheroes can successfully use the internet and digital technology for good, spreading positivity and respect – a true kryptonite to the virtual bad guys!

Watch and share the week 1 videos

(To view transcripts, visit the website.)

Download and use these handy posters. School boards may choose to use these as digital resources and/or print and use them in schools. The posters are also available in black and white if colour printing is not available.

Open black and white versions that use less ink.

Click to access Kahoot games for week 1

[Cyber Foundations & Basics - Elementary Students](#)   [Download PDF version](#)

[Cyber Foundations & Basics - Secondary Students](#)   [Download PDF version](#)

Download the [social media share kit](#)**.**

Learn more with these resources:

- Get to know the [online safety basics for kids](#)
- A more secure way to protect private data: [Multi-factor Authentication](#)
- Using [strong passwords or passphrases](#) and a [password manager](#) to keep track of it all
- If unsure, check [how secure is your password](#)
- Protecting your devices with antimalware and [keeping software up to date](#)
- [Adjusting privacy settings](#) on devices and apps

WEEK 2: The Future is Here

Visit online at www.ecno.org/cyber-awareness/week-2-2023

We are all hearing of the rapid technological advancements in Artificial Intelligence (AI). Are you using generative AI tools or considering them?

Get to know the risks and considerations for using AI safely and responsibly. Foster discussions amongst your peers and in your community for what are acceptable, responsible and safe practices as AI tools continue to evolve.

Potential concerns with using Generative AI tools include misinformation, bias, overreliance, skewed understanding, lack of transparency, privacy concerns and more. There are recommended best practices to mitigate and counter some of those risks. Learn more about them this week.

Watch and share the week 2 videos

(To view transcripts, visit the website.)

Download and use the Artificial Intelligence Infosheet

Download and use these handy posters. School boards may choose to use these as digital resources and/or print and use them in schools. The posters are also available in black and white if colour printing is not available.

Open black and white versions that use less ink.

Click to access Kahoot games for week 2

AI (The Future is Near/Here) - Elementary Students   Download PDF version

AI (The Future is Near/Here) - Secondary Students   Download PDF version

Download the social media share kit**.**

WEEK 3: Navigating a Connected World

Visit online at www.ecno.org/cyber-awareness/week-3-2023

Social media and online gaming provide fun ways to stay connected and interact with friends and family. As a major part of our cyberheroes' lives, knowing how to navigate the metaverse safely, respectfully and responsibly is essential.

Even the strongest heroes don't always know who's on the other side of the screen, so navigating the connected world is a battle. Defend yourself! Cyberheroes are aware of threats around them, knowing not to stand for villainous behaviour, abusive or threatening language, or letting strangers into their networks.

Watch and share the week 3 videos

(To view transcripts, visit the website.)

Download and use these handy posters. School boards may choose to use these as digital resources and/or print and use them in schools. The posters are also available in black and white if colour printing is not available.

Open black and white versions that use less ink.

Click to access Kahoot games for week 3

[Navigating a Connected World - Elementary Students](#)   [Download PDF version](#)

[Navigating a Connected World - Secondary Students](#)   [Download PDF version](#)

Download the [social media share kit](#).

Learn more with these resources:

- [How Will You Know If Your Child Is Being Bullied Online?](#)
- Knowing [how to use social media safely](#)
- Learning to [spot a cyber threat on social media](#)
- [Staying cyber secure while playing video games](#)
- [Recognizing the risks of the metaverse](#) and how to reduce them
- [Social media – What parents should know](#)
- Learn about the good and concerns of [video games](#)
- [Your connected life: A Teen's Guide to Life Online](#)

WEEK 4: My Digital Life and Wellbeing

Visit online at www.ecno.org/cyber-awareness/week-4-2023

The strongest power of any cyberhero is knowing their limits. Taking care of personal wellbeing by knowing to rest, pause, and when to set boundaries in their use of digital technology and the internet is an essential part everyday life.

By educating and encouraging ourselves to moderate our own use of digital technology, we reinforce our power as cyberheroes over potential threats. This includes implementing screen time limits, and muting notifications on mobile devices to prevent constant interruptions and knowing when to log off to maintain healthy habits with physical activity, nutrition, and sleep.

Watch and share the week 5 videos

(To view transcripts, visit the website.)

Download and use these handy posters. School boards may choose to use these as digital resources and/or print and use them in schools. The posters are also available in black and white if colour printing is not available.

Open black and white versions that use less ink.

Click to access Kahoot games for week 4

[My Digital Life and Wellbeing - Elementary Students](#)   [Download PDF version](#)

[My Digital Life and Wellbeing - Secondary Students](#)   [Download PDF version](#)

Download the [social media share kit](#)**.**

 Learn more with these resources:

- [How healthy is your relationship with technology?](#) – Quiz
- [Student Mental Health Toolkit](#)
- [Screen time and well-being](#)
- [Building healthy habits and staying safe online](#)
- Seeking [help for mental health](#)
- [Helping kids manage digital technology](#)
- [Sexting and sextortion](#)

WEEK 5: Revisiting Key Themes

Visit online at www.ecno.org/cyber-awareness/week-5-2023

October has 5 Mondays in 2023, providing an additional opportunity during the week of October 30th to encourage awareness and conversations to promote vigilance in our quest for safe and responsible online habits.

Educators are encouraged to revisit the major themes that arose during the month.

- Which areas of cyber awareness prompted the most discussion?
- Which topics were understood the least?
- Which points did students feel were most important for them to be cyberheroes?

In addition, three new posters are available for download and use in the classroom and to post around the school.

[Open black and white versions that use less ink.](#)

Cyber Awareness Calendar and Infosheets
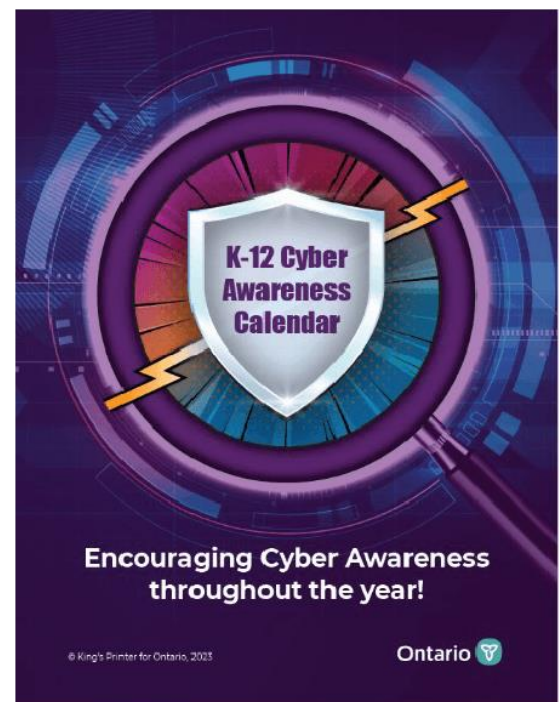
Visit online at https://ecno.org/cyber-awareness-calendar

We're encouraging cyber awareness throughout the year! Use our interactive calendar, monthly themes and infosheets to incorporate cyber safety into your classroom, office, or even your home.

We can all do our part to increase awareness related to cyber security, cyber safety, and online privacy, and in turn, remediate cyber actions that can cause harm. Learning to be cyber safe and secure is essential to making our online experience more secure, fun, and rewarding.

By adopting safe and secure practices you are not only protecting yourself, but also reducing the likelihood of cyber-attacks against all members of the school community.

Collectively, we can make our online and virtual lives safer for everyone by developing and maintaining personal safe online habits.

Download calendar

K-12 Cyber Awareness Calendar

Encouraging Cyber Awareness throughout the year!

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Ontario

Adopting or Tailoring the Campaign

School boards can choose to use the K-12 CAM campaign as defined; it is ready for use as a "campaign-in-a-box". School boards can also choose to tailor it to align with specific board needs and cyber awareness plans.

Boards may also want to supplement the campaign information with board-specific information such as policies, processes and procedures as a reminder to school communities.

Communication and Engagement Strategies

The K-12 CAM campaign is for board staff, educators, students, and parents. Everyone can benefit from increased awareness of online risks, threats, and measures to protect themselves.

Many of the topics and tips are universal to all audiences and can apply both in school and at home. Some of the resources and associated messaging may be better for a younger audience and others for an older audience.

Communicating the campaign information and resources to your staff, educators, students, and parents is key to the success of achieving awareness outcomes of this campaign. School boards are encouraged to involve their communications officer/department and support their awareness of the campaign theme, the focus for each week, and associated topics.

Boards should strategize with their communications department on how the campaign will be communicated to the target audience and what channels will be used. Examples of communication and engagement channels include:

- promoting on the school and board's website, intranet or social media channels
- distributing posters and printouts
- sending emails to staff, teachers, and students
- involving Technology Enabled Learning and Teaching Contacts and promoting classroom discussions around the different topics
- involving parent councils
- posting on your board's Virtual Learning Environment

For greatest attention and impact, keep the communication succinct and catchy!

Other Awareness Campaigns

In addition to the K-12 CAM campaign described in this document, school boards may also wish to explore the following awareness campaigns from the Ontario Cyber Security Division (CSD) and Get Cyber Safe, a national public awareness campaign provided by the Government of Canada.

Ontario's Cyber Security Division (CSD)

The theme for this year's CSD campaign is "Halt the Hack!" with a different mission every week focusing on different cyber security topics. Throughout the month of October, CSD will share with the Broader Public Sector (BPS) – campaign information, interactive games, videos and articles through the Cyber Security Ontario website. BPS organizations, including school boards, will be able to leverage the resources within their organization. In addition to the CSD campaign, a new K-12 Zone is also being made available specifically for schools. It will contain videos, games, articles, and quizzes specifically geared towards students, parents, and educators.

The K-12 Zone is open to the public (no registration or login needed). Free user registration is required to access the CSD campaign.

Get Cyber Safe, Government of Canada

This year, the Get Cyber Safe Cyber Security Awareness Month theme is "Step up your cyber fitness" covering the following weekly themes:

- o Week 1: Warmup week
- o Week 2: Account workout
- o Week 3: Learning self -defence
- o Week 4: Maintaining muscle
- o Week 5: Strength in numbers

For more information refer to the Get Cyber Safe Cyber Security Awareness Month webpage.