About the Digital Citizenship program:

NSW Department of Education Digital Citizenship program is designed to educate young people about positive digital citizenship. There is often concern among parents and carers about the appropriate use of social media tools by their children, as well as a concern about the dangers their children may be faced with when contributing to social networking sites. These concerns, combined with the negative image portrayed by the media, can be addressed through education.

Parents and carers will learn about how they can support the positive use of social media by their children at home.

Students will learn about how to stay safe and healthy while using digital technologies, appropriate and inappropriate online behaviour and being a positive contributor in an online world.

Implementing the program:

What’s in the program?

A Digital Citizenship website gathers all of the resources in one place. It includes links to relevant videos and online resources that support positive digital citizenship.

There are eighteen secondary and nine primary lessons that provide a range of activities for students to explore what good digital citizenship looks like and provide them with strategies to deal with dangers encountered while engaging in social networking. Two online mystery games called Digital Dilemma and Party Planner allow them to test their approaches to social networking and the use of technology in a number of social situations.

Professional learning

There is also a video and online professional learning course for teachers to provide a run-through of the program and learning materials and to help them prepare to deliver the Digital Citizenship program to students as well as informing parents and community members. The course is a highly recommended orientation to the program for all teachers and is registered with the NSW Institute of Teachers. It provides five hours of contribution towards accreditation at the professional competence level. We recommend that any teacher who is new to the use of social media tools should complete the activities in the course.

Digital Citizenship is a global issue

Explore materials from the USA at http://www.digitalcitizenship.net/ where you will also find further resources and publications to support teachers and parents.
Working with parents and carers

There are template materials for a school to customise and use for a parent/carer information session. These include a school flyer for inclusion in a newsletter and completed PowerPoint slides for a presentation. It is essential for schools to inform parents and carers about the digital citizenship program and to encourage them to attend an information session, so that any concerns can be addressed.

Access the parent’s guide to digital citizenship directly at http://tinyurl.com/DC-for-parents. Other valuable resources include NSW Department of Education and Communities’ Technology section on the School A to Z website and Yahoo7’s internet safety page.

Customising for your school

The Digital Citizenship materials have been designed for maximum flexibility when implementing the program in schools. We expect most schools to take one of the following approaches:

• One teacher or one faculty area implements the whole program. For example, it may be part of the Welfare program, faculty staff in PDHPE may run the program, or it might be across a Stage.

  OR

• A group of teachers implement the program concurrently across Key Learning Areas.

  OR

• It is integrated into the school’s regular Teaching and Learning programs across a year.

Questions?

The following pages contain answers to some frequently asked questions.
Frequently asked questions:

*How much of the lesson material (laptop wraps/game) are we expected to cover and how many lessons will it take?*

This is a local decision. However the goal is to present as wide a perspective on social networking issues and related digital citizenship as possible.

It is suggested the materials be reviewed and a program developed that suits the school organisation and staff interest.

*Do you have to know about this topic or be highly technically competent to teach it?*

No the resources are designed to guide teachers as well as students. Anyone who can use a computer and access the internet can access these materials.

*Do teachers have to do any training?*

No, but the professional learning course is available to any teacher who can do it in their own time. It is recommended that all teachers participating engage with the course.

*Will students need their laptops to use this resource?*

Students will need to be able to access computers and the internet.

*Is the course work prescribed or can I add extra resources?*

The resources can be used as they are or as a springboard for lesson development.

*Do parents have to give permission for students to participate?*

No. However there is parent information event material available as well as a website. These have been developed with advice from NSW P&C. It is recommended that parents are made aware of the materials and that a parent education event be held, possibly as part of a P&C meeting.

*What do I do if a student reports a problem relating to online bullying or unwanted online contact as result of this coursework?*

Use the school’s existing welfare reporting processes. It is your responsibility to report this to a member of the school executive and to ensure it is followed up.