

[Your online reputation]

What it is and how to protect it

For youth aged 16-17 years old

[What is an online reputation?]

Just like your reputation in the real world, your online reputation is how other people see and think of you based on what you say and do online. Our online actions are seen and judged by others in the same way as at school or while hanging out with friends.

[What contributes to it?]

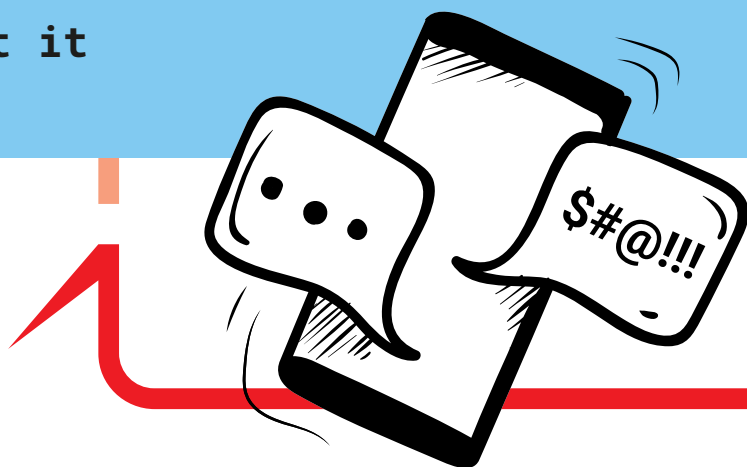
When you are online, you leave a record of what you do and say. Much of this is permanent, so others are able to see, judge, and respond to it. Things that can contribute to your online reputation include:

- The stories, videos and pictures you post or share with others
- Opinions you express or statements you make
- What you like or dislike and agree or disagree with
- Comments and posts you make about yourself or others
- Comments and posts other people make about you
- Things you buy and rate online

[How can it affect you?]

Friends, teachers, neighbours, parents, employers – if anyone is curious about you, they can check you out online. If your online reputation is good, it can help you find friends, connections and future opportunities. On the other hand, if you have a history of cyberbullying others, or saying, agreeing with or sharing negative or inappropriate things, it can:

- Give others a negative impression of you
- End, change or limit your friendships and relationships
- Open the door to more negative comments or cyberbullying
- Leave you feeling isolated, resentful or full of despair or regret
- Limit your future social, education or career opportunities and credit rating



[How can you protect it?]

There are many ways to improve and protect your online reputation, including:

- Think twice before you post: Is what you are saying, showing, liking or sharing going to make fun of or hurt someone else? Is it meant to be private?
- Assume everyone will see it: What you put on the internet may not stay private, so how would you feel if your friends, parents, teachers or future employers saw it?
- Protect your privacy: Frequently update your social media privacy settings, use strong passwords and don't share them with anyone
- Know who your friends are: Be careful who you accept, pare down your list, and restrict access for friends of friends and the public
- Clean up after yourself: Delete accounts you no longer use and negative content where possible, go to [NeedHelpNow.ca](https://www.needhelpnow.ca) if you need help removing sexual images from the Internet
- Build a positive presence: Make your posts and comments empowering or encouraging, or about a cause or subject you are passionate about
- Ask for help: If you made a mistake or are worried, feel threatened or are being cyberbullied, talk to your parents or another adult you can trust



[#StopCyberbullying]

Learn more at Canada.ca/cyberbullying



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