

Ministry of Education

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Dear colleague,

Last May, I met with almost 50 elementary and secondary students from across the province to discuss an important topic – online respect and responsibility.

I am pleased to share with you a summary of that discussion, and hope that this will spark discussions within your own organization, schools, and communities. **Get Connected, Get in the Know: Online Respect and Responsibility** will also be available on the Ministry of Education website at www.edu.gov.on.ca, and is being shared with schools, student organizations and the broader education community.

Most of us use technologies like cell phones, email, the Internet, or BlackBerrys on a daily basis. Young people in particular have a growing understanding of technologies and the online world, and are regularly using them. That is why I wanted to hear from students about their experiences and perspectives on the responsible and respectful use of technology.

As students said at the forum, these technologies have many positive uses. They can help us to stay in touch, conduct research, and enhance learning opportunities. However, we also know that sometimes these technologies are being used in inappropriate ways.

Students at the forum shared with us their thoughtful insights on how they are using technology and provided promising suggestions for responding to some of the issues raised about inappropriate use, such as cyberbullying. Their suggestions included strengthening student leadership and improving awareness about technology and online activity in the school community.

By sharing this document broadly and discussing it in meetings, classrooms, assemblies, and informal conversations, you can help to engage members of your school communities in this important dialogue and develop your own local solutions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathleen Wynne".

Kathleen Wynne
Minister of Education