

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

Introduction

Your online identity is a lot less private than you probably think. In today's exercise you will work in small groups to answer some questions about two stories from teens who broadcast to the world a lot more about themselves than they probably would have preferred.

Before you watch each story, preview the questions so you can know what you'll be discussing in your groups.

Oops! I Broadcast It on the Internet

Brittney's Story

1. Why do you think Brittney and her friends wanted to broadcast themselves in the first place?
 2. Brittney regrets posting the photos, but are there situations when you think it would be okay, even helpful, to get comments from others online? What are those situations?
 3. In what ways did Brittney's actions impact her later? Can you imagine how the posts may impact Brittney in the future, even beyond college?
 4. Is there anything that you learned from Brittney's story that made you think about incidents in your own life or your friends' lives? If so, can you share those stories (leaving out personal details)?
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Eva's Story

1. What kinds of things do you think Eva and her friend were IMing to one another?
2. Do you think it was fair of Eva's friend's dad to look at the chat transcript?
3. What might be the consequences for Eva of her mom knowing about the IM chat?
4. Why might Eva have said things on chat that she wouldn't say in person?

Case Studies

Case Study 1 Emma's Secret Crush Goes Viral

Over the past few weeks, Emma has developed a huge crush on José. She thinks he might like her, too. She knows gossip travels like lightning at school, so she tells only her best friend, Chantal, by texting her after school: "Do you think José likes me? I kinda have a little crush on him." Emma also swears Chantal to secrecy over the phone later that night. Though Chantal vows to keep her secret, she forwards Emma's text to Zeke, who forwards it to a friend, who ... you know the rest! The next day at school, one of the soccer players, Ted, texts Emma: "Emma+José=so adorable." Emma is shocked and embarrassed because she told only her best friend, and then swore her to secrecy.

Adapted from Common Sense Education's Digital Citizenship series. www.commonsense.org.
CREATIVE COMMONS: ATTRIBUTION-NONCOMMERCIAL-SHAREALIKE



1. If you were Emma, what would you do when you got Ted's text? Who, if anyone, is most at fault for spreading Emma's secret?
2. How would this situation be different if Emma had told her friends about the crush in person instead of by sending a text message?
3. How could Emma resolve or fix the situation herself? Is there a way she could make the situation better?
4. Has anyone ever shared information about you or someone you know over IM, text, the Internet, etc. that you wanted to keep private? If so, what did you do?

Case Study 2 My Secret Diary ... Sort Of

Tommy has been writing a blog about his life that he thought was pretty private because he used a username that wasn't his real name. But when his parents ask him why he decided not to try out for the basketball team, Tommy figures out that they have been reading his blog, because it's the only place he describes being picked on for being so short. Tommy is annoyed and surprised because he never told his parents about the blog and certainly didn't give them his username to access it. His blog is technically public, but he didn't think anyone could connect his blog with the "real" him. Tommy later finds out that his best friend's parents told his parents about the blog.

1. What would you say, if anything, to your parents if you were Tommy?
2. How is Tommy's parents' reading his blog similar to or different from reading a diary that he's written in a notebook or paper journal?
3. Do you think it's fair for Tommy's parents to read the things he posts on the Internet, given that his blog is technically public? Why or why not?
4. Why might Tommy's parents want to read his blog? Given these reasons, how would you react if your parents asked to read your email or text messages?
5. Have you ever been in a situation where your parents or someone else has asked to read something that you felt was private? If so, how did you feel? What did you do?

Reflection Exercise:

On a separate sheet of paper write about your own experiences sharing information online and how you can protect your online identity. Be sure to answer the following questions:

What are some examples of people sharing in a rewarding way?
What things can you do to minimize oversharing in your own life?
How can you create a positive digital footprint?

