

For the month of January, the SEL program will focus on how students' current actions affect their long-term goals. One of the areas of focus will be their social media presence. A major area that can affect a student's future is his or her digital footprint. Students' digital footprints encompass all of the information that is or has ever been posted about them online or sent electronically, like through a text message, even if the information is later deleted. It is important to remember that anything students post, including pictures, videos, and comments, lasts forever. Colleges, employers, and law enforcement have access to virtually anything they post; therefore, making poor digital choices can greatly affect their future.

Sadly, some studies suggest that 20% of teen girls aged 13-16 have "electronically sent, or posted online, nude or semi-nude images of themselves" (National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy). It is important for parents to be aware of their students' digital media usage and to have frequent conversations about responsible digital citizenship. Comprehensive resources for doing so are available here:

<http://mediasmarts.ca/sites/mediasmarts/files/guides/digital-citizenship-guide.pdf>

<https://www.common sense media.org/blog/digital-citizenship>