Digital Smudge Toolkit

No one knows better than US, the people who grew up with the internet, how scary the online world can be! But it doesn't have to be this way! That's why DIGITAL SMUDGE is helping others understand online hate, its real-world impacts and how to confront it.

You've probably heard the term 'digital literacy' – but what is it? We think about digital literacy as the tools we need to stay safe, thoughtful and informed online. Digital literacy shapes how we understand and interact with the online world and includes things like: verifying and identifying false information, knowing how to protect yourself and your personal information, communicating and using social media responsibly, understanding online interactions, and even how to adapt to changing technology!

Digital Literacy is a super important part of understanding and confronting online hate, and creating a kind online world. We encourage you to think carefully and critically about what you see and who you interact with online.

ONLINE HATE. It's Everywhere

Hateful, hurtful and racist comments can be found in all corners of the internet – from Instagram stories to tweets by elected officials, from TikTok to group chats – it's everywhere.

We use our phones and computers in our home, we scroll through social media in bed, and – especially since the pandemic – we rely on the internet for community, connection and even school and work! We spend so much time online! Hateful, racist, misogynistic, homophobic comments can make you want to delete everything and go offline forever BUT we are building a new online culture. One that is radically kind, supportive, inclusive, accessible and community-focused.

The first step in building this new online world is thinking about how to confront online hate. There isn't one right way! What we have learned from each other, experts and community members is that the best way to respond is the one that feels right to you.

Here are some of our approaches:

Block and report a hateful commenters

Hold people accountable! Whether they are a random commenter, a close friend, an elected official or a media outlet – reach out and explain why the thing they said was harmful

Respond to inaccurate or biased information with accurate, fact-checked resources

Reach out to someone you trust for support

Knowing your limits and logging off when that feels like the safest option

Talk to others!! Our communities, peers and Elders hold so much knowledge.

A NEW ONLINE WORLD!
Social media can be a powerful tool to inform, empower, educate and gather.

We use the internet in positive ways everyday – sending memes to friends (a Digital Smudge favorite), a Facebook message to keep in touch, an Instagram post sharing art. There is so much power and healing in creating intentionally and radically kind, supportive, inclusive, accessible and community-focused spaces!

Some of our favourite examples of kind and healing ways to be online

Bringing attention to important issues and sharing knowledge

Finding, building and gathering in community – this may look like community meetings, youth groups (like Digital Smudge!), events (like the Youth Conference!) and so much more

Sharing stories and cultural knowledge

Learning and healing ourselves and inspiring others to do the same

Sharing and inspiring creativity

And most importantly, we want to see Indigenous youth take up space and sharing your voices online!!

Digital Smudge is what we want to see online: a safe, healing space to find community. We are hopeful because we have seen the power of these radically kind online spaces – we have created them and you can too!

How can YOU promote online kindness?

Confront online hate and support others to do the same

Set boundaries to maintain a healthy relationship with the internet!

Start a group – maybe an Indigenous book club or weekly creative hour

Host a community event – think: movie night

Create a Facebook group for sharing memes with your friends (make it private to prevent trolls)

We would love to hear your ideas!! Tell us how you're confronting hate and inspiring positivity online!

Financé par le gouvernement du Canada | Funded by the Government of Canada | Canada