

6 Degrees of Information

● SUGGESTED GRADES

Middle and High School

● INTERNET SAFETY

ISSUES

Cell phones
Inappropriate content
Revealing too much
Social networking

● VIDEO SYNOPSIS

Five teens have agreed to participate in an online experiment. They all accept the Facebook friend request of Matt, an Internet researcher. From there, Matt has just six clicks to find out as much as he can about each teen. Some teens are surprised by the results, while others are not. “6 Degrees of Information” encourages teens to ask themselves two questions—“What information is online for people to find?” and “Do I want them to find it?”

● RELATED RESOURCES

- » “6 Degrees of Information” Middle School Activity Card
- » “6 Degrees of Information” High School Activity Card
- » “Your Guide to Social Networking” Tip Sheet
- » “Tips for Teens” Tip Sheet
- » Teen Internet Safety Presentation

● DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How was Matt able to find so much information with just six clicks?

Teens post a lot of information online in a lot of different places. It’s not unusual for a teen to be using several different social networking sites, apps and games. Many of these sites and apps intersect. For example, a teen might take a picture using Instagram and later post it to both Twitter and Facebook.

Some of the characters in the video, like Kayla, Nick, and Elise, linked to their other accounts from Facebook. Nick and Kayla’s mom also had their email addresses visible, and Matt was able to Google those addresses to find their other accounts.

2. What are some things Matt found that the teens didn’t want him to find?

Kayla didn’t know that her mother was blogging about her and was really embarrassed by it. Nick wasn’t happy that Matt found his playlist of boy band songs; that’s something he thought was private. Logan was angry that Matt exposed him for cheating on his girlfriend. He thought he hid the secret Twitter account well enough, but didn’t consider that someone else’s post might lead to it.

3. Why was Elise not bothered by how much Matt found out about her?

Elise likes to share everything she does with other people. She likes to document her life online—posting about what she’s doing and sharing a lot of pictures. She says she doesn’t regret posting anything online because she’s not embarrassed by any of it.

4. Why do some people, like Will, post so little online?

Some people are very private. Will doesn’t want everyone to know his business. He also says that he’s really busy. He doesn’t spend much time online and says he has more important things to do. Some teens may refrain from posting a lot of information online because they are worried about what adults, like their parents, coaches, or teachers, might think. Many teens have gotten into trouble for what they post online, lost academic or athletic scholarships, or been kicked off of sports teams.

5. How can you prevent people from finding information you don’t want them to find?

You should keep certain kinds of personal information off the Internet, such as your address and phone number. You should also be careful about posting your email address. Check the privacy settings on your accounts to see if it’s visible to everyone, just your friends, or if you can keep it completely hidden. Go over your accounts and see which ones are linked—do you want all of your Facebook friends to have access to your Twitter account? Are they linked in any way and do you want them to be?

● EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

- » Ask students to consider what they post on social media sites and write a one-paragraph response to the following questions: Have you ever posted anything others might consider to be “TMI”? Do you regret posting it?
- » Ask students to go home and take the six clicks challenge—starting from just one page, such as Facebook or Twitter, what can they find out about themselves in just six clicks? Encourage them to use some of the techniques Matt refers to in the video.

Watch videos and play games at
NSTeens.org

NetSmartz Workshop

A program of the

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EXPLOITED**
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