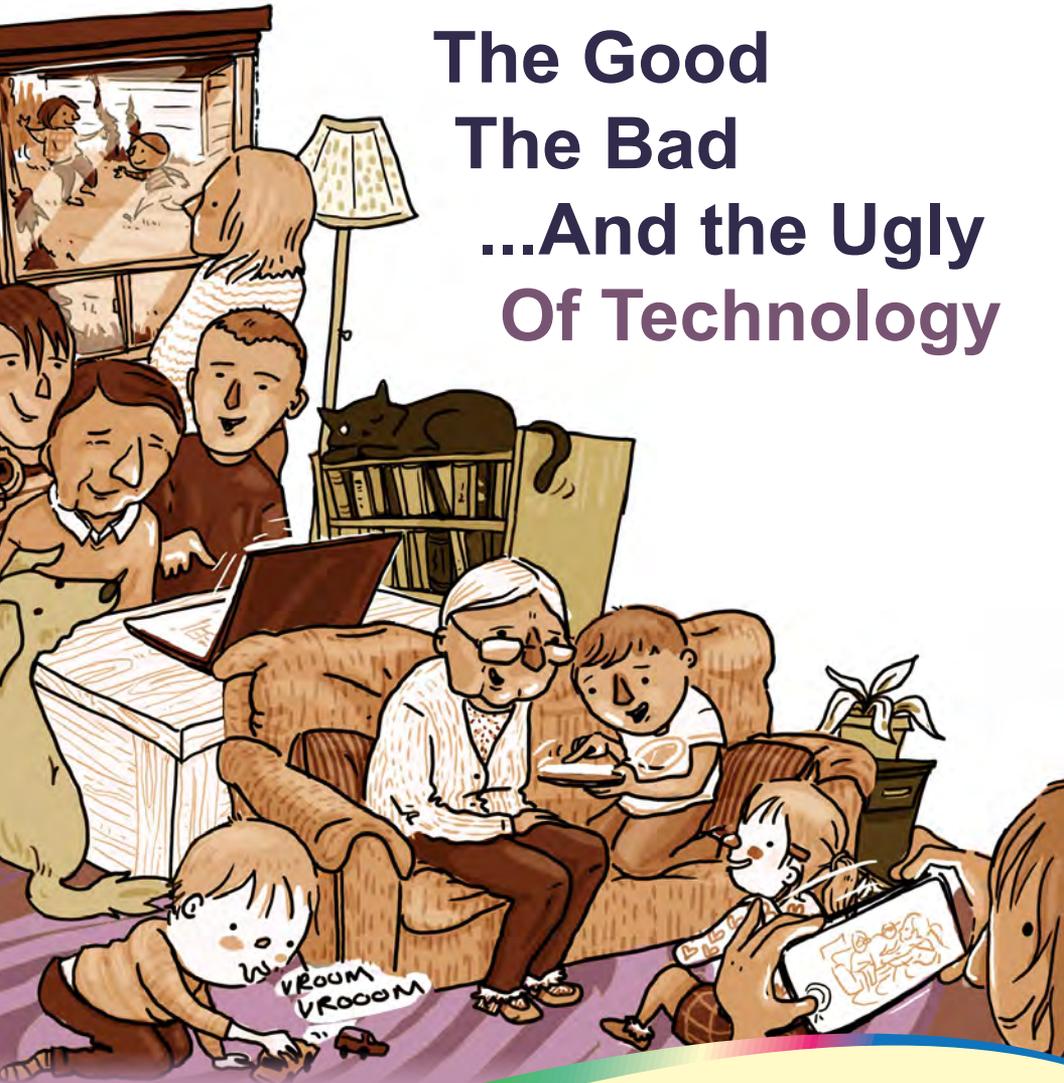


# The Good The Bad ...And the Ugly Of Technology



## Contact Information

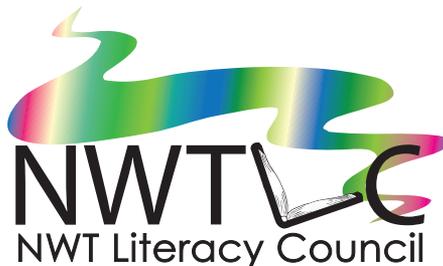
The NWT Literacy Council is a not-for-profit organization with a mandate to support literacy development in all official languages of the Northwest Territories. For more information, please contact:

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# Introduction

Technology has many uses in our everyday lives, at home, at school, at work and in the community. We all use technology in different ways, and for different amounts of time. It is important to think about the ways we use technology, whether it is helping us, or whether it is causing us problems.

This booklet explores the good, the bad and the ugly aspects of technology. You can use this information with your family at home, with your students, or even host an event for your community.

The NWT Literacy Council gratefully acknowledges the financial assistance for this project from the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, GNWT.

# The Good



## Entertainment and Learning with Tech

When used properly, technology can be used to teach people of all ages. The internet contains information on any subject imaginable. How you use it is up to you.

Technology can help you in several ways:

- complete household tasks
- build essential literacy skills
- learn about complex subjects from experts
- find your way

Responsible use of tech can also be a great way to spend downtime. Watching movies with family, playing games with friends, and watching television can appeal to any age and interest. There is a lot of educational, fun content.

## Learn a Little Every Day!

1. Choose any subject you like, such as pirates, space, animals, cooking or learning a language. Perhaps choose a new subject each week.
2. Manage learning about your subject to approximately 50% fact and 50% entertainment to keep it fun for everyone! For example, you could watch *The Golden Age of Pirating* on the History Channel, then follow that up with *Pirates of The Caribbean*.
3. Talk with others about your favourite facts and favourite entertainment parts of your online learning. Choose five new things you learned.



## Household Tasks

Technology can help with things like cooking. There are millions of recipes online in various forms, from standard text on the web, to videos available across social media.

### Cooking Challenge

Find 5 healthy, new recipes that involve the major food groups. Make them together with your family, each taking turns using the computer and doing the cooking.

An example of a recipe could be stir fry. With vegetable like carrots, peppers, broccoli and protein options such as beef or chicken, there are plenty of ways to mix up this recipe. Children will have fun trying new vegetables that they help pick for the stir fry.

Full instructions for the stir fry can be found at [allrecipes.com/recipe/228823/quick-beef-stir-fry](https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/228823/quick-beef-stir-fry)

It is important to have balanced and diverse meals to keep things interesting.

Mix up different foods for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

## Finding your way!

Technology can be a great tool for travelling, or just exploring the world around you. There are programs like Google Earth and Google Maps, as well as schedules for buses, planes, and trains to get around.

This aspect of technology is especially good for planning trips. For example, you can find the driving distance between your community and the NWT border with a simple search.

The distance between Yellowknife and our territory border is well over 500 kilometers, and 1,500 kilometers to Edmonton. That's a lot of driving.

Use Google Maps to:

- find the distance you would have to travel from your community to the border
- plan your route
- explore your dream destination with Google Earth

# Communication

Technology has brought a huge change to how we communicate with each other. Through texting, phone calls, emails and social media we are able to communicate instantly over long distances. Whether trying to reach family living across the country or friends across the street, tech makes it easy to connect.

It is important not to abuse this technology though. Face-to-face communication is an essential skill and can be lost if too much time is spent in front of screens, something that will be discussed in the next section.



## Learn a Language

There are lots of websites and apps that can help you learn a language, including many NWT Indigenous languages. Pick a language you would like to learn, and download the app. You can work on it with your class, with your family in the evenings, or use it on your walk to work each day.

## Activities on Social Media

1. Develop a Twitter post (140 characters or less including spaces) about why you love the north and your community. Use the hashtag #nwtlitweek to connect your post with what others post during NWT Literacy Week.
2. Navigate to the Literacy Council Facebook page and like it. Our postings have literacy information and links to our free resources.
3. Post a photo of your community on Instagram. Remember to ask for permission if you include people in your photo.
4. Watch a video on YouTube about internet safety.
5. Start a new board on Pinterest to collect ideas for family activities for this winter.

# The Bad



## Screen Addiction and Early Exposure

Unfortunately, technology isn't always used properly. You can always have too much of a good thing, and technology is no exception. An article published by the New York Times outlines the dangers of screen addiction<sup>1</sup> – mostly among children.

These dangers include:

- the inability to develop healthy personal relationships
- physical pain in fingers and wrists
- sleep deprivation due to late night use of technology

Children spend an average of eight to 10 hours a day with technology. Doctors quoted in the article recommend a child should *never* have access to tech before the age of two, and have a maximum of two hours of tech a day until adolescence in order to guarantee healthy development. Get children outdoors and having fun face-to-face!



<sup>1</sup>Source: [http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/07/06/screen-addiction-is-taking-a-toll-on-children/?\\_r=0](http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/07/06/screen-addiction-is-taking-a-toll-on-children/?_r=0)

## Tech Activities to get Outdoors!

An excellent activity that balances technology and nature is Geocaching. Geocaching involves finding hidden items using Global Positioning System (GPS) coordinates. A Geocaching organizer will hand these out or post them online. You must then use a GPS to follow the coordinates<sup>2</sup>.

Another new phenomenon is Pokémon Go! an app that uses the geolocation of your phone, and lets you go out in the real world and catch and train Pokémon! It is a great way to mix technology and nature, as well as meet new people.

More information on this game can be found at:

[www.washingtonpost.com/news/to-your-health/wp/2016/07/15/pokemon-go-leading-to-a-population-level-surge-in-fitness-tracker-step-counts](http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/to-your-health/wp/2016/07/15/pokemon-go-leading-to-a-population-level-surge-in-fitness-tracker-step-counts)

<sup>2</sup>[www.geocaching.com/guide](http://www.geocaching.com/guide)

## Using Tech Responsibly

Children ages two to 10 should use technology for a maximum of two hours a day. During the school week, they may use this time up at school. Ask your child's teacher how much they use technology, and what kinds of activities they are doing with it.

You can decide what kind of technology you want your child to use outside of class, and for how long. One fun idea to help limit the use of technology in your home is to involve your child in making a chart that helps monitor tech use. You could turn making the chart into a fun craft project.

Your child can add stickers to the chart for each day they limit their tech use to two hours or less. Once they have a number of stickers you could offer a prize.

Good prizes are a new book, getting to pick the movie for a family movie night, or choosing dinner one evening. This could encourage your child to put down their device without an argument.

## Privacy

Privacy can be a tricky issue for parents. Giving a child access to tech, usually a cellphone, is a major step towards their independence. The child is able to go and do things on their own and call you when they need to speak with you, which is great! But this issue can be a tightrope which some parents may find difficult to walk.



## The Helicopter Parent

These parents feel the need to be involved in every aspect of their children's lives from the time they are born until they leave home (and even past then) which can be a nightmare for the child. They are overprotective and do not let their children experience life. Being careful is not being a helicopter parent, but denying them independence is. More information on helicopter parenting and the effect it has on the child can be found at [www.parents.com/parenting/better-parenting/what-is-helicopter-parenting](http://www.parents.com/parenting/better-parenting/what-is-helicopter-parenting)

## The Detached Parent

The opposite of a helicopter parent, detached parents give complete control to the child. It is important to teach your child the dangers they face, as explained in the next chapter.

**Balance is key.** Find a balance between parenting extremes when it comes to your child's privacy. It is a tough balancing act between respecting their right to privacy, and ensuring they are safe. Have a constant and open dialogue about online safety. Set clear rules about online activities, and make your children aware of how you will be monitoring them. Ensure they know that you are watching, and that you are always there to help if they get into a tough situation online. This way everyone knows the rules and expectations ahead of time.

# The Ugly



# Dangers for Children

Although technology has a lot of good aspects, it can also be frightening if not managed properly. As previously mentioned, privacy can be a grey area for parents, but your child's safety is the most important thing, so do what is needed to ensure it. There are two main dangers a child can face online.

## 1. Bullying:

Bullying can come in many forms, but online bullying is usually a problem that follows from school to home through social media. Sometimes there is no particular reason a specific child is targeted, and this form of abuse can range in severity. Make it a priority that your child has adults they can speak to at all



times during the day. Your child should know they do not have to talk to their abusers online. They should feel comfortable turning off the computer.

## 2. Predators

Perhaps scariest of all to parents is knowing that there are people who may use technology to their your child. They may pretend to be someone they are not. Make sure you are with your child if they are meeting someone they only know online. More info can be found at [www.whoishostingthis.com/resources/protect-kids-internet](http://www.whoishostingthis.com/resources/protect-kids-internet)

## Talk to Your Children

Ask your children what they know about online bullying and predators. Our children are surrounded by so much technology that they may surprise you with how much they already know. Some things to ask are:

- Do you see bullying taking place online?
- Have any of your friends been bullied online?
- What would you do if you were bullied online?
- How is online bullying different than bullying someone in person?
- How do you know if someone who talks to you online is a real person? (Some danger signs are a profile with many contacts who you don't know, only a few photos, or a brand new profile.)
- What do you do if someone talks to you who you don't know?

Make a plan with your child about what steps they should take if they see online bullying, or if they are the target of an online bully or predator.

## Keeping Photos and Posts Safe

It is so common to post photos and information about ourselves online now, that many people forget about keeping things private. Through your posts it could be easy enough for someone to know where you are, who you are with, and what you are doing at any time. It is important to talk to your children and think about these things yourself.

- Check your privacy settings on all social media, and make sure they are as private as you would like them. Some social media outlets make this more difficult by making you change the settings for photos, locations, and posts all separately. There are several YouTube videos that will show you how to change the settings on different social media.
- Remember that once you post a photo to social media, that company now owns it, and can use it. So think about this before posting.
- If your friend posts a photo of you that you do not like, you are able to untag it. This will remove the link to your profile, but will not remove the photo from the site. You need to ask your friend to delete it for that to happen. Always think about this before posting a photo of your friends. Ask yourself, "Would I want someone to post this photo of me?"

# Dangers for Adults

There are also people that use technology to exploit adults. There are a few main concerns about adult safety, especially for the elderly or those less familiar with technology.

Adults are usually targeted for:

- money
- information
- identity

Here are a few ways scammers will use technology to exploit their targets.

## 1. Phone calls:

The caller will pretend to be someone they aren't, such as the Canada Revenue Agency, and will try to trick you into paying them. An Ottawa woman was targeted by this type of scam<sup>3</sup> and lost over \$12,500. Refuse to give any personal information over the phone or payments to a caller who says they are from a government office, bank or business. Look up the number of the agency yourself, rather than call back a number the caller gives you.

A great tip for staying safe from these simple scams is to never give out any information about yourself unless you are the one that started the conversation.

## 2. Emails:

<sup>3</sup>[www.ctvnews.ca/canada/police-warn-of-heartbreaking-scam-after-ottawa-woman-defrauded-12-500-1.2960051](http://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/police-warn-of-heartbreaking-scam-after-ottawa-woman-defrauded-12-500-1.2960051)

Following the same principle as phone calls, people send emails with links pretending to be someone they aren't. These links will send you to webpages that contain all sorts of viruses and malware.

Spam and scam emails can look real. On the following page you will find an activity to try to find the clues that make an example email suspicious.



## Keeping Photos and Posts Safe

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- Check your privacy settings on all social media, and make sure they are as private as you would like them. Some social media outlets make this more difficult by making you change the settings for photos, locations, and posts all separately. There are several YouTube videos that will show you how to change the settings on different social media.
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## What Makes These Emails Suspect?

SPAM email example.

---Original Message---

From: Nkrumah K.Akufo [<mailto:akwares@gc2.pl>]

Sent: August-12-16 1:09 AM

Subject: My Transaction

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

My "VIP" client is looking for lucrative investment opportunities with excellent Return on Investment (ROI) in your Country and has mandated me to seek for someone with wealth of experience and connections in the economic world and leverages that will invest and manage his personal acquired funds on a Long Term. Your reward is fantastic and very attractive should you find this offer to be interesting. I am located in the Republic of Ghana and my client is a "VIP" in the Government of Republic of Ghana. Kindly get back to me for more details only if interested.

Yours Regards,  
Mr. Nkrumah K.Akufo  
Financial Advisor/Attorney

**From:** Apple-Server [<mailto:noreply@ipodobserver.com>]

**Sent:** Thursday, July 28, 2016 6:34 AM

**To:** Kathryn Barry Paddock <[kathryn@nwtliteracy.ca](mailto:kathryn@nwtliteracy.ca)>

**Subject:** iN872448956



Apple Management

2016

Hey [kathryn@nwtliteracy.ca](mailto:kathryn@nwtliteracy.ca),

You are kindly requested to confirm your Profile Details!

To confirm your details Continue and SignOn.

[Continue and SignOn](#)

Thank you,

AppleInk Community Online

## Reasons to Question Emails

- Bad vocabulary
- Spelling and grammatical errors
- Asking for information
- Telling you to click on links
- Asking for banking information
- Asking for personal information
- How it is addressed
- Saying your information has been “compromised”
- Unknown or wrong email addresses

