

Parent Documents

Dear parents/guardians,

I wanted to provide you with further information regarding Kidblog to aid in your decision to give consent for your child to use Kidblog. Please read the following and if possible visit the links provided.

What is Kidblog?

Kidblog is designed for K-12 teachers who want to provide each student with an individual blog. Students publish posts and participate in academic discussions within a secure classroom blogging community. Teachers maintain complete control over student blogs and user accounts. For further information please visit: <http://kidblog.org/why-kidblog/>

What is blogging? A blog is a website for which an individual or a group frequently generates text, photographs, video or audio files, and/or links, typically (but not always) on a daily basis. The term is a shortened form of weblog. Authoring a blog, maintaining a blog or adding an article to an existing blog is called "blogging". Individual articles on a blog are called "blog posts," "posts," or "entries". The person who posts these entries is called a "blogger." (Wikipedia) Here is an animated explanation and review of safety that students will review at school: <http://www.brainpop.com/english/writing/blogs/>

Why am I using Kidblog?

Kidblog provides teachers with the tools to help students safely navigate the digital – and increasingly social – online landscape.

Kidblog allows students to exercise digital citizenship within a secure, private classroom blogging space. Kidblog's security features put safety first:

- Teachers have administrative control over all student blogs and student accounts
- Students' blogs are private by default, viewable only classmates and the teacher.
- Teachers can add password-protected parent and guest accounts to the community at their discretion.
- Comment privacy settings block unsolicited comments from outside sources.
- Kidblog is fully Children's Online Privacy and Protection Act ("COPPA") compliant and does not require any personal information from students.

Adapted from original document created by T. Cameron. Changes may occur; this document is current as of terms of service on Sept. 8, 2014. Check with your own school to make sure it meets your school's privacy policy. Review completed by Breanne Quist.

Risks that could arise

While no internet-based experience can ever be 100% risk-free, know that I will take every reasonable measure to manage expected risks.

Please refer to Kidblog's Privacy Policy for further information: Kidblog agrees to treat your personally identifiable information in accordance with the terms of their current privacy policy which is available for review at: <http://kidblog.org/home/privacy-policy/>

The Privacy Policy will be reviewed and discussed with students prior to using Kidblog.

What's 'personal information'?

"People have different standards of what they consider 'personal' information. Sharing over social media has done a fair bit to reset our expectation. Regardless of personal definition, if the information, data, or content could be used to identify you, it's 'personal information' – though professional or business contact information may be treated separately." ¹(Hengstler, 2013). A student's personal information could include: name, date of birth, address, telephone number, email address, educational information, and anything that identifies an individual, including photographs. If any information, data or content could be used to identify you it is then qualified as "personal information".

Why is BC so sensitive to privacy laws regarding data?

"Shortly after the 9/11 attacks on the US in 2001, the American government enacted the United States Patriot Act that allowed the United States government to search private and public data housed on servers on United States soil. At the time, The British Columbia Medical Services Plan was hosting our provincial medical records in the United States. Unions in British Columbia expressed concern over the ability of the American government to search through British Columbian's personal medical records and histories. Ultimately, the rule is: if you transfer or authorize the transfer of your personal information outside of Canada, that data is subject to the laws and practices of the country where it sits – be it the United States, China, or India. (Remember that minors, under the legal care of an adult, cannot authorize such a transfer.) Not all locations have similar notions about your right to privacy. Since cloud computing is a relatively new technology, the laws and best practices governing it are still changing and there is a need to stay current." ¹(Hengstler, 2013)

Why is a consent form necessary?

Various provinces in Canada – and other jurisdictions across the world – have enacted laws to protect personal privacy. In BC, the Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA) covers all independent schools. It is one of the most defined privacy protection frameworks in Canada. PIPA states that 'private bodies' such as independent schools have defined legal requirements for handling your personal information when it is within their 'custody' and 'control'. Generally, private bodies must make sure that your personal information cannot be stored or accessed outside of Canada without your expressed permission – 'consent' (Note: there are certain expectations in the law like data covered by treaties, etc.). PIPA states that your consent must be in writing, state to whom your personal information may be disclosed, and how your information will be used. Also, if you post personal information about others, their permission must also be secured.

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What if I don't want to consent?

You have the right as a parent/guardian to withhold consent to your child using Kidblog. Alternate activities will be provided to students in the event that parents/caregivers choose to withhold consent and that selection of an alternate activity will not affect a student's grade.

While no internet-based experience can ever be 100% risk-free, know that I will take every reasonable measure to manage expected risks.

Further information:

Kidblog Home: <http://kidblog.org/home/>

Kidblog Terms of Service: <http://kidblog.org/home/terms-of-service/>

^[1] Julia Hengstler is the Educational Technologist with the Faculty of Education at Vancouver Island University & an Instructor in Educational Technology. Please visit this site for more background information about her:
http://www.viu.ca/education/faculty/profiles/hengstler_j.asp

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