ARCS News

Advancing Rural Computer Science

Announcements

Greetings and welcome to our June newsletter all about Ethics in Computing! We wanted to thank all of the busy educators who participated in our program this year. Several of you came to our new KITS sessions, now available on our **You Tube channel** and offered us helpful feedback to offer more of these in the coming year.

We hope you have an amazing summer! As always, we welcome your comments, questions, and ideas.

The ARCS team

Concept Corner

Students today have an entire world in the palm of their hands - mobile devices provide access to a wealth of information and multiple methods of communication. Sometimes, however, communication can be unwanted, as in the case of cyberbullying.

The Cyberbullying Research Center in partnership with the Cartoon Network published a report about Tween Cyberbullying in 2020 which revealed that one in five (9-12 year-olds) have been victims of or witnesses to this activity. Barriers that students reported to combat cyberbullying included not knowing how to report it and being afraid of making it worse. **Click here** for the full report and recommendations. Being a victim of cyber-bullying can result in emotional stress, lack of interest in school, running away, or even self-harm.

As an educator, there are many things you can do to help fight cyberbullying. In developmentally appropriate ways, talk with students about cyberbullying and how it is unacceptable. Discuss how it affects others. Re-mind students that cyberbullying does damage that bullies never see. Bring up examples, as it will help students to visualize the harm it does. They must understand the importance of addressing cyberbullying and its impact. Finally, make sure students know what to do when they witness it. They must seek help from a responsible adult, such as their parents, teachers, counselors, or administrators.

Pedagogy Pointers

Cyberbullying is an important part of teaching students about Digital Citizenship. Common Sense Education has a number of resources for students of all ages to learn more about how to recognize and respond to cyberbullying. Resources include full lesson plans, activities, and videos for educators. More children are experiencing this today due to increasing amount of time spent online. We encourage educators to be proactive and talk with their students about how to identify and prevent cyberbullying when possible. Students also should know what to do when they encounter this behavior. **Click here** for a great introductory video about the definition of this and strategies for combatting it. To access all of the Digital Citizenship Curriculum addressing Cyberbullying, Digital Drama, and Hate Speech click on the appropriate grade level: **(K-2nd)** or **(3rd–5th)**

Code.org partnered with Common Sense Media to create lessons and engaging activities for elementary school students. In **this lesson**, student learn how to apply critical thinking skills while learning about the fundamental concepts of digital citizenship (including cyberbullying). Resources align with VDOE CS 2.14, 3.15, 3.16, 4.16, 4.17, 5.15, & 5.16.

Computer Science in the Commonwealth

Computer Science Educator Regional Conferences this Summer!

The Virginia Department of Education and CodeVA will host eight regional computer science conferences for summer 2023. These conferences are intended to address regional needs and engage with educators within the region. As school divisions actively work towards full implementation status, build innovative programs, and expand computer science learning opportunities for all students; it is critical that we collaborate and connect to ensure high-quality computer science instruction and build computer science education programs that meet the needs of today and tomorrow. **Click here** for more information. We look forward to educators sharing their strategies, resources, and educational experiences throughout the conference and have opportunities for educators to serve as conference presenters. All presenters will have registration fee waived.
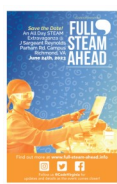
CodeVA is offering a Full STEAM Ahead annual event to celebrate collaborative success in Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts, and Mathematics. The conference will be held on Saturday, June 24th, 2023, at J. Sargeant Reynolds Parham Rd. Campus. **Click here** for more information and to preregister.

Engaging All Learners

This month, the ARCS newsletter is focusing on ethics in computing. Ethics refers to moral principles such as fairness, integrity, responsibility, and honesty, character traits that we strive to develop in all students. Computing ethics extends those attributes to behaviors that occur through digital tools such as computers, tablets, and cell phones. As we work toward establishing digital citizenship in our classrooms, we are obligated to ensure that our students apply these strategies to their online activity, celebrating those qualities that enhance diversity rather than using them to isolate, bully, or even threaten their peers – or inadvertently do things that may bring harm to themselves such as revealing personal information on a public website or app. Elementary-age students may seem young for such activities, but it is never too early to plant the seeds of online safety. **Click here** to review a brief article from kidshealth.org that outlines simple steps that teachers (and parents!) can take to begin the conversation on computing ethics.