

How To Teach Digital Literacy Skills To Your Family



Digital literacy is the ability to use technology as needed to function. Families need to accurately use computers, technology and smartphones for *daily life, overseeing their children's schooling, searching for jobs, keeping up with insurance, government benefits*, and more. Below are strategies to assist you in teaching digital literacy to your family.

The Basics:

- 1. Define terms:** A family may have never heard of a “mouse,” “keyboard,” or “email” before. The link below provides a list of terms to review and introduce with your family before jumping in to tech help. Consider taking your family to a local library or using their RAA laptop to show them the objects you are referring to while introducing terms.
 - *Website:*
<https://livelearn.ca/article/digital-citizenship/30-computer-terms-every-beginner-should-know/>
- 2. Support family in acquiring technology needs:** Families may already have a laptop from RAA but may need to acquire programming software like the Microsoft Suite and home internet usage.
 - *Miami-Dade and Broward County Library branches:* All local library branches offer free computer use, free WiFi, and free access to the Microsoft Suite. If within short proximity to a families’ location, this is an excellent supplement to home use and can also connect families to additional resources the library offers. For library hours, services, and locations, visit the websites: *Miami-Dade:* <https://www.mdpls.org> and *Broward:* <https://www.broward.org>
 - *Miami-Dade and Broward County Schools:* While the district is not currently offering free home internet for students, this does periodically open up. To stay informed, routinely check the district *website:* *Miami-Dade:* <http://www.dadeschools.net> and *Broward:* <http://www.browardschools.com>
 - *Local internet service providers:* Help families research current internet costs by provider and explain how internet plans and contracts work.
 - *Google Suite:* Alternatively to the Microsoft Suite, you can help the family set up Google accounts for free to access the Google Suite. Then, when teaching computer skills, you can explain how to use the different platforms. Google may also offer translations.
- 3. Teach computer skills:** Some families may never have used a computer before. After introducing terminology and acquiring the technology itself, here are some basic computer skills that may need to be taught to your family:
 - *Typing on an English keyboard:* Visit typingclub.com for free lessons and videos to share for training. While given in English, they are visual enough to help English Language Learners understand the concepts presented. Additionally, this

can supplement how you explain or break down the concept. Typing Club is free and also has a learning portal where families can practice their skills until mastery.

- *Using internet browsers:* This is a great opportunity to show the family on their own laptop or a library computer. Model opening the browser on a computer and smartphone, show pictures of different common internet browsers, model how to use a search engine, open a tab, sign in to online accounts, etc. For a more comprehensive list of internet browser tips, visit this *website*:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OzohDuGk4mM>
- *Using a digital calendar:* Begin by noticing what calendar comes with the devices the family has access to (or which calendar coincides with their email account(s) if they have them). Then, teach that calendar first. Model how to create an event, accept an invite, set reminders, etc. If the family has a SmartPhone and a laptop, consider showing the family how to sync the calendar across devices.
- *Using an email address:* Any email platform will do, but consider the Google Suite as it contains Gmail, Google Docs, Google Sheets, and more. Assist the family in setting up an email address(es) and model basic emails/etiquette as well as settings on the account itself (and tips for avoiding junk mail and scams). Here's a video breaking down how to explain Gmail basics:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6E2JxZ2vKPk>
- *Using video conferencing:* Depending on the type of technology the family has access to, learning platforms like FaceTime, Zoom, Skype, and Google Meets can help connect them to friends and prepare for job opportunities. Model video conferencing calls with the family and review call etiquette (how to mute, turn off camera, enter passcode, etc).
- *Using computer programming software:* This includes (but is not limited to) the Microsoft Suite and Google Suite. It may be more streamlined to teach the Google Suite if the family has Gmail already or if they do not have immediate access to the Microsoft Suite. Within these software programs, teaching families how to format, print, save, and share documents (and many more skills) will prepare them for navigating future projects and necessary documentation for daily life.
- *Using a Smartphone:* Depending on a families' familiarity with Smartphone usage, teaching could range from how to download and use basic apps, data plans and usage, how to connect to wifi, how to add contacts, pay by phone, use a translation app, etc.
- *Online safety for children and adults:* Teach your family how to avoid scams, protect themselves and their children from unsafe content/individuals online, and protect their data.

For full lesson plans, more content ideas, and tips & tricks for teaching visit coresourceexchange.org.