

# STUDENT DIGITAL SAFETY

DISTANCE LEARNING PLAYBOOK

Smarter  
technology  
for all

Lenovo



# HOW SAFE ARE TODAY'S STUDENTS ONLINE?

76.2%  
tweens

78.4%  
teens

experienced cyberbullying as a bully, victim, or witness.

35.1%  
tweens

54.4%  
teens

were involved in a self-harm/  
suicidal situation.

70.7%  
tweens

84%  
teens

encountered nudity or content of  
a sexual nature.

## PROTECTING STUDENTS, GUIDING LEARNING

Student safety has become multifaceted. It's no longer just about physical health and safety. Schools realize that emotional safety, intellectual freedom, and social cohesion are all a critical part of empowering students to learn with confidence. As a trusted advisor to K-12 partners around the world, Lenovo is committed to helping schools and teachers create the safe, focused learning environments that students need for success in 2020 and beyond.

This is hard enough when everyone is sharing physical space and connecting via a common network. Teachers and staff can rely on their eyes and ears to watch over student interactions. IT can rely on local network controls to help keep student devices away from places that are dangerous, inappropriate, or distracting.

The move to remote or even hybrid learning makes the job of keeping students safe infinitely harder.

- How do you keep watch when students are logging in from their home or somewhere else in the community?
- How can you filter content and network traffic when students are connecting from places outside the school?
- How do you balance the need for student privacy with compliance concerns and worries about wellness?

Lenovo knows 2020 has been a challenging year for educators, students, and communities. This playbook is designed to highlight partnerships we're building to help you manage the enormous uncertainty ahead. In this playbook, you'll learn how:

- DNSFilter elegantly modernizes web traffic filtering
- Bark helps protect students while still respecting privacy

DNSFilter

bark 

# SAFETY AT A DISTANCE

As learning moves off campus, and students are scattered to their own home environments, it's important to maintain the same visibility to student safety and well-being. How do schools ensure students are protected from both dangerous content and social threats like cyberbullying and even destructive impulses like self-harm? From our ongoing partnerships with schools and districts evolving in the face of uncertainty, we've learned several things that need to happen to keep kids safe.



School-owned devices must be managed to meet filtering compliance requirements and help ensure instructional continuity in and out of school



Student engagement and communication must be monitored in ways that balance privacy and the need to keep students safe



New solutions shouldn't add to an IT team's already busy workload



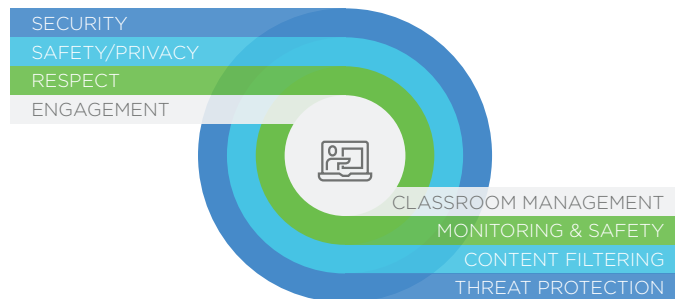
Every solution must drive transparency and accountability through clear data and reporting

Despite these challenges, the mission remains the same. A failure to protect student safety directly impacts school success. If students feel distracted, threatened, or disconnected, they'll struggle to feel empowered to embrace new learning experiences and opportunities. In addition, teachers will never quite know what's happening on the other end of the device connection. Any cracks in social cohesion or classroom management will widen over time — especially with distance.

This means schools must put protections in place to safeguard students from risks on all sides.

# A MULTILAYERED STRATEGY FOR STUDENT SAFETY

There is absolutely no substitute for face-to-face, in-person engagement. This is true for both encouraging student learning and managing healthy peer-to-peer relationships. However, as 2020 has demonstrated, unexpected events can make in-person learning impossible. This means schools must create education continuity plans that address everything from classic cybersecurity threats to protecting students from bullying and inappropriate content.



## MANY LAYERS, ONE GOAL

Student safety and success in the digital age is about new priorities and predators. It's not just about compliance, either — ensuring peace-of-mind for teachers, students, parents, and communities is also of paramount importance.

### Security

How do we keep students safe from security threats like malware and viruses that might impact the learning experience?

### Safety/Privacy

How do we manage browsing and keep students away from restricted sites and content?

### Respect

How do we monitor digital engagement and encourage digital citizenship to ensure students are safe from bullying, peer pressure, or even impulses to self-harm?

### Engagement

How can we help kids fight past constant distractions and disruptions to stay engaged and invested in their own learning outcomes?

Traditionally, these issues are solved at the network and device level, and via human engagement in classrooms, hallways, and beyond. But when centralized network control is lost, and learning is distributed, these priorities can simultaneously become more apparent and harder to address. IT staff and teachers are already very busy implementing new tools and services — on top of the invisible student safety concerns.

Teachers need the confidence that their students are safe and productive. IT needs the convenience and control of solutions designs for maximum elegance with minimal implementation and upkeep.

# MULTILAYERED, MULTISIDED DIGITAL STUDENT SAFETY

Schools and districts can only solve a multilayered challenge with a multilayered strategy. This means bringing together the best in both technology and human know-how. The end goal must be to enable safety while ensuring trust and accountability. These are all essential to a foundational confidence for teaching and learning, especially when students are remote.

## Security

Security controls must protect devices and users from evolving cyber threats, from malware and viruses to advanced data threats.

## Safety/Privacy

Safety solutions must protect students from harmful content on the internet, help them navigate issues of digital citizenship, and ensure CIPA compliance.

## Respect

Content monitoring tools that respect student privacy but still allow teachers and administrators to intervene when students are encountering hostility or are considering decisions that lead to self-harm. This means using advanced methods like AI to “intelligently listen.”

## Engagement

Classroom management to help guide learning, ensuring students can communicate and collaborate while avoiding distractions — all with the goal of keeping students engaged and motivated.

# PROTECTING LEARNERS FROM HARMFUL AND DISRUPTIVE CONTENT WITH DNSFILTER

Beyond basic information security, the first layer in student safety is to keep them, and their school-managed devices, away from sites that contain adult and inappropriate content or too many disruptions to the learning process. These controls have been a mainstay in K-12 IT for a long time. However, the traditional methods of securing these devices have critical flaws, since they:

- Rely on manual filters or allow lists that are time-consuming to set and manage
- Impact device/browser performance which slows down learning
- Require manual updates for new allowed and disallowed sites, demanding more time from teachers and IT
- Are prone to tampering or disabling from motivated students
- Don't always offer easy visibility for teachers and administrators

DNSFilter offers a dramatically different approach. By directly filtering at the DNS level, the solution can manage traffic, protect students, and keep teachers and administrators informed, all while being lightweight and intuitive. DNSFilter provides a more intelligent and elegant approach to control and visibility, giving IT staff the same control they would have managing a local school network.

## AI-Driven

It's best to not rely on human-managed databases which quickly become out of date. The AI-driven filtering solution checks sites in real-time, essentially running ahead of students as they browse. These sites are then analyzed and categorized, compared to a school's unique exclusion list, and managed accordingly. All with no performance hit.

## Proactive

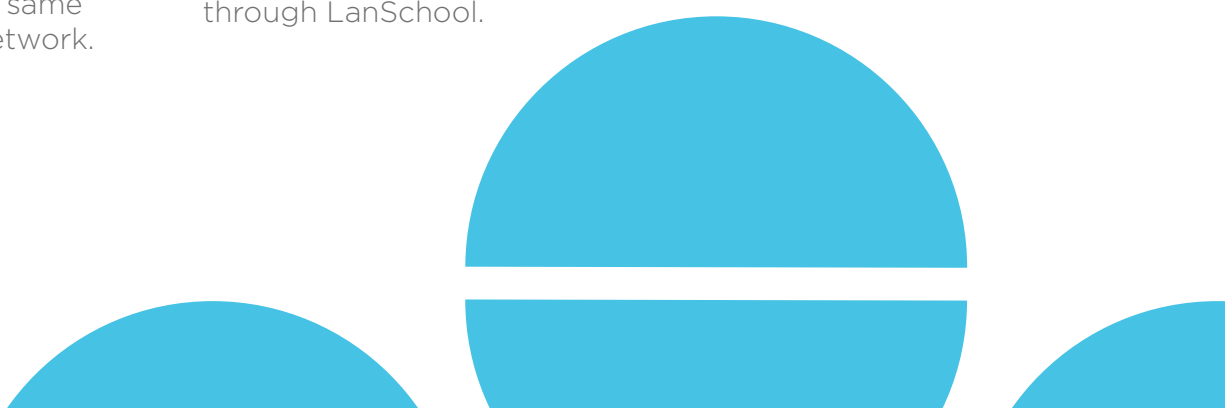
Anonymized browsing at scale gives DNSFilter exceptional visibility into student activity at not just your school, but from their complete installed base. This lets them spot troublesome trends and rising hotspots quickly, locking them down before they even hit a school's radar.

## Transparent

DNSFilter offers powerful out-of-the-box reporting that lets schools see trends and identify issues early. This lets them react, either by adjusting controls or educating students, without disrupting the learning process.

## Lightweight and cost-effective

When a device isn't logged in to a local domain, a lightweight endpoint agent can offer the same control. And, if the agent is disabled or deleted, IT is alerted so they can remediate. Schools get a special discount when purchasing through LanSchool.



# SMARTER LISTENING: PROTECTING STUDENTS AS THEY ENGAGE AND INTERACT

Protecting students from harmful content is one challenge. But keeping them safe as they interact and engage with other students is more complicated. Schools can't rely on technology to replace having eyes and ears "on the ground." Or can they?

Student safety through technology has always been part art, part science. When does watching turn into surveillance? How can schools be proactive without sacrificing budget and headcount to get the job done? And how can it all be accomplished when learning goes remote?

"Bark's been a set it and forget it. We get the e-mails and reports and you can dive in and make sure, in our case, that kids are using the tools we provide for academics."

*Phil Zaubi  
Director of Technology  
Porter-Gaud Schools*

# A BETTER WAY TO LISTEN: BARK

Bark gives schools and districts an AI-driven solution that lets them balance privacy with student protection. By integrating directly into school-issued G-Suite and Office 365 accounts, Bark's machine learning algorithm works in the background, scanning student messages, emails, and other content for red flags. Bark uses surprisingly accurate natural language filters. Schools and parents can then decide what escalation and intervention paths to take. Bark is the leader in AI monitoring for online student safety concerns, and empowers educators to:

## **Give students their privacy while still protecting them.**

Bark doesn't report on every single keystroke, relying on AI to look for signs of trouble and only then raising alert.

## **Create visibility that drives accountability**

Bark reporting can help teachers and parents understand evolving student body dynamics or how an individual student is coping. If Bark finds evidence of bullying or indications students are considering self-harm, parents and teachers can intervene. Bark also offers a parent portal that gives parents direct access to the same reporting.

### Design protection plans that meet their unique challenges

No two schools or districts are alike. Bark understands this, which is why the solution offers flexible configuration and management. Schools can also upgrade to OnCall, a paid service that provides schools with a dedicated specialist 24/7 who will contact the school via email, text, and phone when an imminent severe issue is detected.

### Retain control without increasing IT workloads

Bark is device-agnostic and simple to install. This offloads work from IT teams and ensures the service always runs seamlessly in the background.

### Trusted by parents, free for schools

Bark is already protecting over five million US kids in and out of school. Bark is also completely free for schools to use, empowering communities to keep students safe online and in real life.

“Kids have access to the world, and the world has access to kids 24/7. We’ve got to find ways to keep them safe from others and themselves. Bark helps us do that.”

*Dr. Jim Johnson,  
Morgan Local School District*

Teachers used to be able to count on classroom time to keep a watchful eye on students and intervene as required. The move to remote learning doesn’t make that impossible, it just requires innovation.

2020 has upended a lot more than classroom learning. It has stretched the connections between teachers and students, and between communities and schools — but these bonds are not broken.

If schools can successfully build multilayered security and safety for students, it doesn’t matter where learning takes place. Schools will still be able to balance compliance and peace of mind, and teachers will know how students are adjusting and coping in their new learning environments.

As a trusted partner to schools and districts around the world, Lenovo knows that keeping students safe is absolutely essential to successful student outcomes — no matter where learning happens. We are committed to bringing powerful partnerships to our customers, so they can create safe and secure learning spaces for students and teachers alike. This is critical for not just student happiness and well-being, but for ensuring confident student outcomes, even when everything else can seem to be turned upside down. Lenovo is ready with the partners and expertise to help you make it happen.

For more information, visit the [DNSFilter](#) and [Bark](#) solution pages.