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Boston Children's Hospital
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HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL
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Evaluation of the Copyright and Creativity for Ethical Digital Citizens Curriculum — Summary

The Center on Media and Child Health (CMCH) strives to investigate the impact of educational programs to identify those that help children navigate the complex media environment. In collaboration with Comcast and iKeepSafe, CMCH designed an in-school evaluation of the *Copyright and Creativity for Ethical Digital Citizens* curriculum that iKeepSafe created. The evaluation sought to test the curriculum's success at teaching students the origins and real-world implications of copyright, the limitations to copyright such as fair use, and the practical implications of these concepts as young people create, use, and share digital content.

Approach

During the Fall 2016 school semester, the curriculum was delivered to 6-9th graders in two Ventura County, California middle schools. Teachers attended a one-day training to learn about the content of the curriculum and best practices for delivering the classes to their students. Before and after the classes, students completed online questionnaires designed to assess their knowledge of and attitudes toward copyright and fair use as well as their planned behaviors regarding obtaining, using, and sharing digital content. Analyses compared pre- and post- tests responses to assess the impact of the program.

Results

- The curriculum was successful at teaching students about key concepts of copyright, as well as correcting some widely-held misunderstandings. More participants answered the knowledge questions correctly after the curriculum than before it (for 24 of 34 knowledge questions), and several items showed large changes with as many as 69% more students answering correctly after the classes than before.
- The curriculum was successful at helping students understand that copyright applies and is relevant to their own creative endeavors, not just commercial media. Prior to the lessons, a majority of students (70%) incorrectly responded that copyright did not apply to what they create; following the lesson a majority (75%) understood that their work is protected.
- Students showed statistically significant changes in many attitudes about copyright and fair use and in some self-reported future behaviors, including:
 - Higher likelihood of checking to see if media sources are legal or illegal; and
 - Higher likelihood of checking for public domain or Creative Commons status when seeking to re-use media in their own creations.
- Students found the material new and relevant. Eighty-four percent of students said they learned something new and useful, and more than half reported liking the lessons and activities.

Conclusion

The *Copyright and Creativity for Ethical Digital Citizens Curriculum* succeeded at its primary goal of educating middle-school children about how copyright affects them as they create, acquire, and share digital media. Considering that young people face a complex world of electronic content where they constantly create novel material and share material created by others, they need to be able to successfully, legally and ethically navigate these transactions. This evaluation indicates that the tested curriculum has the capacity to help prepare young people to thrive in the free and open Internet.